

GANDHI

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Sources of Gandhian thought

Religious scriptures/books

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|----------------------|---|
| - Geeta | - From Geeta he gets Karma theory and Swaraj theory |
| - Chandogya Upnishad | - theory of Swaraj |
| - Ramcharit Manas | - concept of Ramrajya |
| - Kooran | - brotherhood and fraternity |
| - Bible | - principle of self sacrifice |
| - Thoreau | - concept of civil disobedience |
| - John Ruskin | - concept of bread labour |
| - Leo Tolstoy | - look kingdom of god within you – anarchism |
| - Edward Carpenter | - Critic of modernity |

Gandhi's concept of Ahimsa

The concept of non-violence is central thread running through out philosophical system of Gandhi. It is the foundation of Gandhism. His concepts like continuity of ends and means, the concept of Satyagraha, the theory of trusteeship, critic of modernity and his other views are based on this foundation. Gandhian concept of non-violence assumes special significance in contemporary times when world is witnessing the rope of political violence.

Sources of Gandhian thought of Ahimsa

He is influenced by Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity as well as Kooran, Geeta.

Explanation of Ahimsa:

Gandhian concept of Ahimsa can be explained with the help of Gandhian concept of man, society and the goal of man's life.

Views on man:

Man is different from animal. Man is superior to other animals. The purpose of man's life is higher than the purpose of life of animals. Animals are concerned with the satisfaction of their appetite. The life of man aims at realization of truth. For Gandhi, truth is god. The soul of animals is sleeping where soul of man is awakened. Hence man can understand truth or god. The life of man combines good and evil. The purpose of life is to conquer evils and move towards good. The lives of great men are testimony to this fact. Thus truth is the objective of man's life. For Gandhi truth has no finality hence everyone's life should be a continuous pursuit for truth. Man can realize truth by following the path of Ahimsa. Ahimsa is a lifelong exercise. Gandhi believed in continuity of ends and means. Ahimsa is a means to realization of truth. No other means can bring man near to god.

Concept of Society:

Man is a social animal. Society is made up of inter-dependent relationships. Man is a soul of society. Society should be conducive for the growth of man. Just like aim of man is development of its soul, the aim of society is development of man. Thus Ahimsa is also a moral philosophy. It establishes that social order should not be exploitative. It should be based on spirit of love and brotherhood since no one can claim final truth, no one has right to punish to others.

Thus Gandhi's concept of Ahimsa tries to purify and reform both individual as well as society.

Explanation of Ahimsa:

Ahimsa is a means or path to reach near to the god. Ahimsa is a multidimensional concept. Gandhi advocates Ahimsa not only towards human beings but also towards animals, non-living as well as towards environment. Ahimsa is both negative as well as positive. In negative sense it means not inflicting injury to any one. He talks about Ahimsa of both thought as well as actions. Since god resides in soul inflicting violence against someone means violence against god. One must try to purify evil doer and not punish the evil doer. The positive aspect of Ahimsa is more important than negative aspect. Positive aspect means spirit of love and brotherhood. The spirit of love and brotherhood is based on feeling of sacrifice. Sacrifice means negation for others. This is the characteristic of god. Hence Ahimsa brings man nearer to god.

Ahimsa is not a passive theory. It is an action theory. It is a continuous experiment to realize god. Ahimsa is not a weapon of weak. It is a weapon of morally strong. Ahimsa is a spiritual power. Ahimsa establishes victory of spiritual power over physical power. Ahimsa is a source of morality. Ahimsa requires intend purity. Ahimsa is not a philosophical system it is to be implemented in actual life. Gandhi said Ahimsa is a role of his life. Gandhi said Ahimsa appeals not to reason but to consciousness.

Continuity ends and means

Continuity of aims and means is the logical calumniation of Gandhian theory of Ahimsa. Gandhi suggested non-violent means to achieve the ideal of Ramrajya. The objective of freedom movement was to end the exploitative regime of British. Gandhi believes that ethical state which is non-exploitative or immoral can't be established through violent and non-ethical means. The above statement throws light on Gandhian political philosophy. Gandhi was influenced by Gokhale. Gokhale was known as political guru of Gandhi. Gokhale talked about necessity of spiritualization of politics. There are two schools of thought in political philosophy one represented by Machiavelli. For Machiavelli ends justify means. Machiavelli established between ethics and politics as well as between religion and politics. The another

school of thought is Platonic and Aristotelian school. For this school politics and ethics are inseparable Gandhi also belonged to this school of thought. Machiavelli gives primacy to ends, Gandhi gives primacy to means. In his book "Hind Swaraj" Gandhi compared seeds with means and ends with fruit. He writes that it is impossible to gain good ends with bad means. True swaraj and true democracy by following unfair means thus Gandhi bridges gap between ends and means and ethics and politics. The political life of man is not different from other aspects of his life. If social life requires ethics politics also requires ethics. For Gandhi politics without religion is like a death trap.

Criticism:**Satyagraha:**

- meaning of Satyagraha
- origin of Gandhian idea of Satyagraha
- difference between passive resistance and Satyagraha
- fields of application of Satyagraha
- critical evaluation

Meaning of Satyagraha:

It comprises of two words "Satya" and "Agraha" it means Satyagraha is a continuous effort for realization of truth. We see continuity of means and ends theory in Gandhian concept of Satyagraha. If end is realization of truth only Satyagraha can be means.

Relation between Satyagraha and Ahimsa:

Satyagraha is a behavioral component of Ahimsa. It is a technique to practice Ahimsa. Satyagraha comprises three components:

- i) Truth
- ii) Ahimsa
- iii) Self sacrifice

For Gandhi Satyagraha is not a weapon of weak but weapon of strong. A person who has conquered fear and is ready to sacrifice can practice Satyagraha.

Origin of concept of technique of Satyagraha

Gandhi developed his technique during his stay in South Africa. Initially Gandhi calls this technique as passive resistance but later as he distinguished between the two.

Comparison between passive resistance and Satyagraha:

Passive resistance is inability to use violence. Passive resistance carries the feeling of harming the enemy. Satyagraha is total renunciation of violence in thoughts as well as deeds. Satyagrahi never aims to inflict injury as evil doer. Satyagraha is directed against evil and not against evil doer. It is not a means to avoid conflict. It is a means to uproot evil. Passive resistance can be practiced even by possessing weapons whereas Satyagrahi has only one weapon i.e. the moral force.

Characteristics of Satyagraha:

Satyagraha can never be a weapon of weak. Gandhi himself said if he has to choose between violence and cowardice he will go for violence. Satyagraha is not simply a political weapon but it is a means to ensure the socio-economic justice.

Techniques of Satyagraha:

It includes fasting, mass strike, non-co-operation and civil disobedience. Gandhi used it for first time against racial policies of South African Government. Gandhi continuously defines the technique the most crystallized form of technique was civil disobedience movement of 1930's.

Conditions of applications of Satyagraha:

Satyagraha should be used as a last resort. It should be used when other peaceful means have failed. Satyagrahi should allow evil doer to rectify his mistakes.

Scope of application:

It can be applied anywhere including family to the level of international politics. He says in the event of foreign invasion people should form human chains. Even the cruelest of person would not be there to crush the human chain. Even if he

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does so it is not necessary that his soldiers will support him. Even if that happens I don't think anyone can repeat it. Thus Satyagraha is a unique way to bring revolution. It is based on concept of love and fraternity.

Critical Evaluation:

Satyagraha is a difficult technique to be adopted. Everyone cannot practice Satyagraha. It requires person with strong will and infinite capacity of sacrifice. Problem lies not with the concept, problems lies in ability of those who will implement the concept. The weapon of Satyagraha has been successfully implemented not only during Indian freedom struggle but in other countries also. The South African revolution and Nelson Mandela is an example of successful use of Satyagraha. Martin Luther King's civil rights movement and Lech Walesa's solidarity movement is influenced by Gandhi. Even in contemporary times like Chipko Movement, Narmada Bachao Andolan and Aung San Sui Kysi in Myanmar. According to Bipin Chandra Satyagraha was very important aspect of Gandhian strategy. It provided basis for incorporating masses in national movement.

Criticism:

Gandhian idea with respect to international politics is based to put into practice.

Gandhian concept of Swaraj:

Swaraj is an Indian version of liberty. The term Swaraj become popular during freedom movement. Gandhi was not first person to talk about Swaraj. Before Gandhi leaders like Dadabhai Naroji, Tilak, Gokhale have already given their ideas on Swaraj. These scholars were talking primarily in terms of political swaraj. It was Arbindo Ghosh and Bipin Chandra Pal whothe first time discarded western nation of swaraj and established that concept of swaraj is based on Vedantic and Ideals. They combined political swaraj with spiritual swaraj. Gandhi's Ideological Foundation was based on their analysis. Gandhian theory of swaraj was based on three components:

- i) Rejection of European concept of negative freedom. Freedom for India will mean complete independence from England and after than guarantee basic civil liberties denied to Indians in practice.

- ii) Civil liberty is necessary for Swaraj.
- iii) Swaraj will not be simply an individualistic nation it will made the idea of individual liberty compatible with the idea of social liberty.

Gandhi defined swaraj as sum total of individual self rule. Gandhi related personal to political. Gandhi believed that idea of swaraj is based on concept of Ahimsa and Satyagraha. Without these it is impossible to achieve swaraj. Gandhi writes that quest of India's freedom begins when everyone takes the responsibility for changing his attitude of intolerance and exclusivity. Outward freedom which we will get will be in direct proportion of in world freedom which we have obtained. Political freedom is a means to obtain freedom from within. Internal freedom will liberate from fear and insecurity hence it will liberate man from desire to dominate or to be dominated. Thus true swaraj means self rule of a person as oneself. This ideal of swaraj emerges from Chandogaya Upnishad and Geeta. According to Geeta liberated man is one who acts without cravings and possessiveness and who finds peace in awareness of infinite spirit. Chandogaya Upnishad defines freedom as self-governing autonomy, unlimited freedom in all worlds.

Thus swaraj became major value and philosophy of India's freedom and struggle. For Gandhi swaraj required social reforms like ending untouchability, ending Hindu-Muslim conflict and Sarvodaya. Sooner we will eliminate evils, faster will be our progress towards swaraj. To postpone social reform till attainment of swaraj is not knowing meaning of swaraj. Without large army of self sacrificing and determined workers there is no such thing as swaraj.

Application of Swaraj:

Swaraj manifested of different level

First at Individual level:

It means moral upliftment of self. It means man is not slave of his desire.

Second level – Cultural level:

It means having faith and respect of one's own culture without disrespecting culture of others.

At economic level: Swaraj means end of poverty, exploitation and dignity of labour.

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At social level: Swaraj means end of untouchability and communal hatred.

At political level: Swaraj means system of governance based on democratic decentralization, spiritualism of politics and ability of man to resist unjust laws of state.

Thus Gandhian swaraj is linked to his concept of Sarvodaya. It is basis of Gandhian vision of state of Ramrajya. In his book "Hind Swaraj" Gandhi defined real swaraj is attainment of situation when poorest of man is able to enjoy all those things which are available to a prince. True swaraj means even poorest man identified his interest with the interest of nation. Thus Gandhian concept is very important from point of view of contemporary theories of legitimacy of state. Poverty is treated as one among the major causes responsible for phenomenon like dissention from state.

Significance of Swaraj:

1. **Individual level** his concept of swaraj curbs many contemporary problems like excessive individualism, consumerism and materialism. It promotes idea of sustainable development.
2. **Socially** it is relevant because it is basis of harmonious society.
3. **Culturally** it is relevant in the light of contemporary problems of cultural imperialism and concepts like clash of civilization.
4. **Politically** Gandhian idea has gained universal acceptance throughout the world there is a growth of grassroots democracy. Strengthening of civil society and rolling back of state.

Gandhian critic of Modernity:

- (i) Meaning of modernity
- (ii) Tradition of criticizing modernity
- (iii) Influences on Gandhi
- (iv) Meaning of true civilization of Gandhi
- (v) Differences between modernization and westernization
- (vi) Gandhi's appreciations of west

- (vii) Features of modernity criticized by Gandhi (materialism, consumerism, utilitarianism, exploitation of environment, fascism, imperialism, industrialism)

Gandhian vision of future society

Evaluation

Modernity is said to have begun in sixteenth century in west. Modernity was a product of social movements like renaissance, reformation, enlightenment and industrial revolution. Attributes of modernity are rationalism, secularism, materialism and individualism. Since modern are began in west at times modernization and westernization are treated as synonymous. However modernization may exit without westernization.

The tradition of criticism of modernity is not unique to Gandhi. It was Rousseau began this tradition when he criticized negative impacts of growth of science on human nature and society. Rousseau gave the slogan "Back to nature". This tradition of criticism of modernity continues till today in the works of post-modern scholars.

Gandhian critique of modernity is to be understood from number of his scattered letters, speeches, articles and overall context of his philosophy.

Gandhian views are influenced by ancient Indian tradition as well as the works of scholars like Edward Carpenter, Leo Tolstoy and John Ruskin. Edward Carpenter has shown the ill effects of modern system of medicine on human health. Leo Tolstoy and Thoreau have explained the exploitative character of modern state John Ruskin wanted to reestablish the dignity of labour. Above works influenced Gandhian idea on modernity.

Gandhi criticized modernity because of certain manifestation of modernity which Gandhi considers as harmful and immoral. He does not criticize modernity just because it originated in west. Following are the features of modernity which Gandhi disliked:

- (i) dichotomy between ends and means
- (ii) autonomy of politics from ethics, religion

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- (iii) excessive individualism which leads to utilitarianism which converts one man into a utility for another man.
- (iv) consumerism because it leads to overexploitation of natural resources and harm environment.
- (v) industrial production leading to mass production instead of production by masses. He associated it with poverty of millions of Indians.
- (vi) excessive nationalism which is manifested in the form of fascism and imperialism.
- (vii) power politics.

Gandhi's views on true Civilization

Man is different from animal. In animals soul is always sleeping hence animals are guided by appetite. Man is not animal. Modernity reduces man to the level of beast. Modernity promotes consumerism and excessive materialism. Fascism and imperialism are worst manifestation of modernity. They promote racialism. This it creates division within humanity. In this book "Hind Swaraj" Gandhi gives following features of true civilization.

True civilization means:

- (i) Minimization of wants
- (ii) Control of beastly power by moral power
- (iii) Eradication of social evils like prostitution, theft, untouchability
- (iv) True civilization teaches people to perform their duties.

Gandhi called modern civilization as satanic.

Gandhi gives blue print of future society based on his ideals of true civilization i.e. Ramrajya. Ramrajya will be based on concept of swaraj, sarvodaya, trusteeship charkha, democratic decentralization and cottage industries.

Critical Evaluation:

Gandhi was criticized as well as admired for his understanding of modernity. His critics calls him as conservative, reactionary, pacifist who resisted radical political movements and who burdened India with paralyzing sense of guilt about economic

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development. He perpetuated unrealistic and confused ideas. For Gandhi's admirers he gave alternative vision. His ideas are relevant in context of increased exploitation of environment, corruption and political violence. Gandhi's criticism of modernity is less confusing and prognostic than criticism of modernity than postmodernist scholars. Focault, Derrida, Lyotard.

According to Bhikhu Parekh Gandhi's critics as well as admirers underestimate the originality of Gandhian thought and depth of his influence not only in India but through out the world. Gandhian originality is a source of confusion but his ideas are extremely important in context of increasing religious fundamentalism, human suffering, environmental degradation and above all alternative theory of social change and alternative vision of society.

Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya means universal upliftment. It means upliftment of all. The term Sarvodaya was coined by Gandhi as a title of his translation of John Ruskin's book "Unto This Last". Gandhi got the idea from John Ruskin and added his insight into it. Sarvodaya is Gandhian vision of socialism. Sarvodaya is an important component of his ideal state. True swaraj is not possible without sarvodaya. The three central pillars of sarvodaya as given by John Ruskin are:

- (i) good of an individual and good of society is complementary i.e. it means good of one is good of all.
- (ii) work of lawyer has same value as a work of barber.
- (iii) life of labour i.e life of tiller of land and craftsman is life worth living

Gandhi tried to implement ideals of sarvodaya in his Ashrams. He hoped that entire India could be persuaded and later as entire world could be persuaded to adopt sarvodaya. Sarvodaya is Gandhian constructive programme. It will work on following principles:

- (i) dignity of labour
- (ii) bread labour
- (iii) equitable distribution of wealth
- (iv) swaraj

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- (v) self sufficiency
- (vi) upliftment of poors, abolition of untouchability
- (vii) upliftment of women
- (viii) economy of charkha
- (ix) trusteeship

Sarvodaya became chief project of Gandhian's after independence. His followers like Vinoba Bhave converted it into social movement in form of Bhoodan Movement, Gramdan, Shramdan. Other followers includes J. P. Narayan, Dada Dharmadhikari, Majumdar.

Trusteeship Theory

Indian thinkers think in terms of harmony and reconciliation. They do not think in terms of and contradictions. Gandhian theory of trusteeship is an example of this approach. Karl Marx talks about class contradiction and annihilation of capitalist. Gandhi talks about harmonization of class interests and annihilation of evil rather than evil doer. Gandhian theory of trusteeship has similarities with views of Aristotle. Aristotle recommends private property and common use. His views are also quite similar to views of Utopian socialist Robert Owen and Charles Fourier. These socialist they aimed at resolving the problems inherent in capitalism by appealing to moral consciousness of capitalists.

The central idea of trusteeship theory is that capitalist should act as trustee and not as exploiter of worker. Capitalist should share the profits of industry with worker.

Gandhian trusteeship can be understood in the context of his distinction between needs and wants. One should keep the money which is necessary for satisfaction of ones needs. Capitalists are not owners of capital he is guardian of capital. Society is owner of capital. So capitalists should treat himself as trustee of social wealth. For Gandhi capital is not bad but improper use of capital is bad. If capital leads to exploitation of another man then it is bad. Trusteeship principle is according to principle of non-violence and Gandhian theory of rights and duties. Trusteeship theory is alternative to both as well as capitalism and communism.

Trusteeship will lead to social welfare with avoidance of concentration of wealth. Sataygraha and nonviolence will be method to implement trusteeship.

Criticism:

According to communist Gandhi was bourgeois who was not interested in uprooting capitalism. Interest of workers and capitalists can't be reconciled. His theory is utopian. Gandhian theory is not entirely utopian there are numerous examples of capitalist contributing for humanitarian activities like Bill Gates, G. D. Birla.

Gandhi's theory of education:

Gandhi calls his concept of education as Nayee Talim. Education is most important thing to bring sarvodaya. It is at the top of constructive programme of Gandhi. It is more important other than communal harmony or abolition of untouchability. It is basic means to bring non-violent, silent revolution. It was Gandhian remedy for sickness of modern civilization. There are five components of Nayee Talims. For Gandhi education is a life long process. Education is receiving not giving. Formal education is just a part of education.

Components of Nayee Talim

(1) Industry in education

It is based on the concept of earn and learn. Since education is a life long process it must accommodate the idea of industry in education. The scheme of education will include education about agriculture, forestry, home science, spinning. It is not simply vocationalization of education but means to implement Gandhian vision of society.

(2) Community living

Community living means living together in communities or Ashrams. It can be equated with system of Gurukul. It will curb excessive individualism. In present times there is decline in team spirit which needs to be corrected. Present evils like communalism, untouchability, corruption can be resolved through this.

(3) Social service

Man should understand debt of society in his making hence man should render social service through tree plantations, sanitation, nursing a sick person, performing relief work during disasters.

(4) Environment

Task of teacher is to create an environment. No one can educate other. A skillful teacher raises the consciousness of students so that they learn themselves. Too much bookish education is not relevant.

(5) Holistic view

Education should integrate ideas and action. Interaction is a soul of education. Without integration education is simply a mechanical exercise.

Conclusion: For Gandhi Naye Talim is not simply an educational methodology it is a creation of new man and new society. It is an integration of art, craft health and environment in one scheme. Education should be in harmony with environment of India. India is primarily made up of villages. It should reflect this characteristic of India. Education for Gandhi aims to achieve equilibrium of body, spirit and mind. It is not dependent on books. It will be learnt from book of life. It will not dependent on money because expenses will come out of process of education. It will make nation independent.

Gandhi's views on Religion

Gandhi's idea on religion is significant in context of increasing fundamentalism. Religious fundamentalist draw boundary around religion. They are not open to outside influences. For Gandhi religion is a personal thing. All religions teach similar things. One should openly accept good ideas from outside. He did not support Ambedkar's idea of conversion. If man is born in a particular religion there is a definite plan of destiny behind it. One should not convert but accept good thoughts. He equated god with truth by following the path of non-violence one can understand god.

Gandhian idea of state

His theory of state is understood in context of three Gandhian principles:

- (i) Principle of non-violence

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- (ii) Concept of swaraj
- (iii) Concept of oceanic circles
 - (a) State represented concentrated and organized violence state does not possess sole. So state can not practice non-violence. State can not exist without minimum institutions of violence. Gandhi's views are influenced by Leo Tolstoy who believes that modern state is exploitative.
 - (b) Concept of state is incompatible with idea of swaraj. Swaraj means rule of self, swaraj comes when social evils are eradicated. Swaraj comes when desire to dominate and to be dominated. Hence there is no need of state.
 - (c) Theory of oceanic circles – propound that power should be distributed evenly through out the society like waves of an ocean. State creates hierarchy or pyramid hence exploitation free society is based on democratic decentralization and does not require state. Thus Gandhi appears to be an anarchist. For Gandhi state is neither necessary nor moral. His Ramrajya is a stateless society. Later on Gandhi modified his views and accepted that state is a necessary evil and he accommodated idea of constitutional state and parliamentary form of government.

Rights and duties

The relationship between rights and duties is introspected by political scholars. We find extreme view in this regard. On one side ... the scholars of possessive individualism. They believe that possessions of man are entirely man's own creation hence they give primary to rights over duties.

On the other hand there are idealist scholars like Plato and Hegel who completely submerged individually in the state. For them rights carry no meaning. There are middle way thinkers like T. H. Green and Laski who believe that rights and duties are complementary. They believe in social origin of rights. Gandhi also belongs to this school. Gandhi is also influenced by philosophy of Geeta. For Gandhi duties are rights in embryonic form. If you focus only on rights you are in mirage. You will never get rights without performance of duties. For Gandhi rights are also important rights are necessary for achievement of self. Action is duty and

fruit of action is right. Self is a part of whole and hence rights and duties are always together. As an individual man has rights a member of society has duties too.

Gandhi's views on Women

Gandhi was responsible for bringing large number of women in national movement. Gandhi's source of inspiration is Indian tradition. For Gandhi it is good to swim in water of tradition but to sink in tradition is suicide. Thus Gandhi's views on women though based on Indian tradition are modified in contemporary context. The two women which inspired Gandhi were Seeta and Draupati. He projected Seeta as a symbol of strength. Chastity and purity of Seeta even defeated Ravana. He treated Draupati as a symbol of fearlessness and courage. Gandhi was concerned with liberation of women and he considered it as one of the fundamental task before congress. Men has treated women as his tool. Women should reject her treatment as sex object. Gandhi wanted that marriage age should be increased. He was against custom of dowry. Gandhi proposed simple ritual free marriages. He was especially concerned for cause of prostitutes and wanted rehabilitation of them. He wanted women to become sisters of mercy by serving poor and unfortunate. He wanted women to adopt sisterhood rather than wifehood. Gandhi was against the methods of contraception. Gandhi wanted that sexual activity should be limited by procreation only. Women should be in a position to resist men. Gandhi felt that women can play an important role in abolition of untouchability because every mother performs sanitary services for her children. The salt satyagraha was high watermark of women participation in national movement. Feminist criticize Gandhi for only giving supportive role to women. According to Gandhi women is more suited to jobs like picketing of liquor and foreign clothes. Gandhi felt that economy of charka and promotion of cottage industries will promote economic empowerment of women.

Gandhi's comparison with Karl Marx

Similarities

- (i) both are against exploitation
- (ii) both talk about ill effects of capitalism
- (iii) both taught people to fight against injustice
- (iv) both believed in exploitative nature of state

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- (v) weathering away of state

Similarities between the two are superficial and differences are fundamental.

Differences

- (i) Marx is materialist, Gandhi is spiritualist
- (ii) Marx talks about class contradictions, Gandhi talks about class co-operation
- (iii) Gandhi wants limitation of wants, Marx believes in satisfaction of wants
- (iv) Marx praised modernity, Gandhi considers modernity as satanic
- (v) Marxist method is violent, Gandhian method is non-violent
- (vi) Gandhi believes that consciousness is fundamental, Marx believe that consciousness depends upon material reality.
- (vii) Gandhi gives high place to religion, Marx considers religion as opium of masses.
- (viii) Gandhi considers education as a means of bringing of revolution whereas Marx supports violent revolution by masses.

Gandhi's comparison with M. N. Roy

Similarities

- (i) Both believe in freedom and autonomy of individual
- (ii) Both believe in purity of ends and means
- (iii) Both want to end power politics
- (iv) Both reject violent revolution
- (v) Both consider education as a means of brining social change
- (vi) Both want to restrict role of state
- (vii) Both talk about decentralization and sovereignty of people .
- (viii) Both talk about fraternity and have cosmopolitan outlook

Differences

- (i) Gandhi is spiritualist. M. N. Roy is materialist.

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- (ii) Gandhian Panchayati Raj is based on concept of oceanic circles. M. N. Roy's radical democracy is pyramidal. It has people's committee at base and federal assembly at top.
- (iii) Gandhi believed in transcendental reality whereas M. N. Roy believed in existential reality.

Relevance of Gandhism and its existence

Existence of Gandhism

Gandhi himself denied existence of Gandhism. For Gandhi there is no ultimate truth hence there is no philosophy like Gandhism. There are large numbers of people who do not consider Gandhi as a political philosopher or a system builder. Gandhi has not written any book on political philosophy. Many of Gandhian idea contradict many established ideas of politics. According to Professor Humayun Kabir, Gandhi was not a political philosopher but he was great psychologist. He knew psychology of masses. He commanded people on the basis of his understanding of mass psychology and not political philosophy.

Gandhi is not a political philosopher like Hegel, Plato in traditional sense of term, yet no one can deny that Gandhi was a political thinker like Mao and Lenin. Existence of Gandhism is proved when large numbers of people consider themselves as Gandhian as well as large number of people who criticize Gandhism. Thus no one can deny existence of Gandhism.

Features of Gandhism as an ideology

- (i) Gandhism is very complex as an ideology there are three dimensions of Gandhian ideology individual, social and ecological and that too are interwoven.
- (ii) Another reason for complexity of Gandhism is originalities of his thoughts which is quite different from established ideas.
- (iii) Another reason for complexity is that Gandhi gives his peculiar interpretation to existing terms like democracy and socialism.

Relevance of Gandhism

- Gandhian politics is relevant in context of growing violence in politics, moral corruption in politics, growth of problems like religious fundamentalism and terrorism.
- Gandhism is relevant in context of increasing environmental degradation. Gandhi wanted minimization of wants and non-violence against environment. Gandhian theory forms an important foundation of concept of sustainable development the book of Schumacher "Small is beautiful".
- The concept of trusteeship theory is not entirely Utopian. This idea is put into practice in the form of social responsibility of corporate sector.
- Gandhi's concept of satyagraha provides the basis for new social movements.
- Today grassroot democracy is treated as characterization of good governance universally.
- Gandhi is significant in international politics because he talks of non-violence, peace and disarmament.
- Gandhi's concept of cosmopolitanism i.e. indivisible humanity is quite relevant in the context of globalization.
- Gandhian views on religion can be a remedy for the problem of communalism.
- Gandhi was against exploitation and social inequality.
- Gandhism is relevant for empowerment of women.
- Gandhi's views on education are down to earth and relevant in Indian context.
- Gandhian concept of citizenship is widely accepted today i.e. neither consent nor fear but co-operation is state.
- Gandhi's programme of rural reconstruction includes promotion of cottage industries. Rural unemployment.