

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS-PHILOSOPHY

SEMESTER -II

PHILOSOPHY OF M.K GANDHI

ELECTIVE-204

BLOCK-2

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.



PHILOSOPHY OF M.K. GANDHI

BLOCK-1

UNIT-1: Biographical sketch

UNIT-2: Philosophical foundation of mahatma Gandhi

UNIT-3: Satya

UNIT-4: Gandhi on Nationalism

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BOCK-2 PHILOSOPHY OF M.K. GANDHI

Introduction to Block

In this block you will study his views on modern civilization, sarvodaya, world peace and human dignity. This unit will also focus on his relations with his contemporaries like Nehru, Ambedkar and Tagore.

Unit 8 speaks about Gandhi's criticism of modern western civilisation is equally critical about the science and technology, colonialism, capitalism, consumerism and market.

Unit 9 deals with Sarvodaya which stands for the emancipation, the uplift and the elevation of all.

Unit 10 deals with dignity of human being. It talks about equality and oneness of human and there is an element of essential goodness present in every man, and therefore, even in politics distrust, hatred, immorality etc. should not have any place.

Unit 11 talks about Gandhi's contemporaries who were also associated with the nationalist movement, with their own distinct perspectives. Notable among them were Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Unit 12 deals with Gandhi's view of human rights which aims at eliminating poverty, unemployment and economic disparity.

Unit 13 deals with Gandhi's view on Sustainable development. He said our consumption should be need-based and not greed based. His saying thoroughly conforms with the manava dharma dimension; he forewarned us to voluntarily reduce our wants so that there is less consumption of resources in individual terms.

Unit 14 deals with Gandhi's idea of trusteeship. According to Gandhi, the doctrine of non-possession means that everyone should limit one's own possession to what is needed by one and spend the rest for the welfare of others.

UNIT 8 CRITIQUE OF CIVILIZATION

STRUCTURE:

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8.1 Introduction

8.2 gandhi's concept of machine

8.2.1 technique of production: man vs Machine

8.2.2 Evil effects of Machinery

8.3 the renaissance and indian intellectuals

8.4 tradition and reform: social reformers

8.5 gandhi's reformist programme

8.6 critical understanding of Indian civilisation

8.6.1 Religion

8.6.2 Untouchability

8.6.3 Women's Oppression

8.7 Modern Institutions

8.8 gandhi's views on industrialisation

8.8.1 Gandhian Model of Industrialisation

8.8.2 Rural Industrialisation

8.8.3 small industries in industrialization process in india

8.8.4 Survival of Small Industries- Challenges of Globalisation

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8.13 Answer Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you would be able to understand

- Gandhi's ideas on Machinery and Industrialisation
- His model of industrialisation and the current structure of industrialisation in India
- The relevance of Gandhi's ideas in the present context.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Industrialisation plays a major role in the economic development of a country. Historically industrialisation has been a major source of economic growth in Western countries. Development in the post-war period in initial phase was defined as a sustained annual increase in GNP rates varying from 5 to 7% or more with such alteration in the structure of production and employment that the share of agriculture declines in both whereas that of manufacturing and

tertiary sectors increases. To bring in such structural transformation, investment in industrial sector has to be increased at a rapid rate through the transfer of resources from agriculture towards industry. Industrialisation is associated with higher levels of income and technology. Colin Clark's thesis states that with greater economic development and rise in national and per capita incomes, there is shift in the occupational pattern from primary to secondary and tertiary sectors. This is clearly evident in the case of Western countries like UK, USA, Germany etc.

It is in this context that the developing countries have laid more emphasis on programmes and policies promoting industrialisation in the economy.

The process of industrialisation is associated with mechanisation and urbanisation in developing countries. The mechanisation process has led to large-scale labour displacement and unemployment in these countries.

Poverty and unemployment in these labour surplus economies have social, economic and moral costs. Gandhi was well aware of these consequences and therefore, he never favoured large-scale industrialisation based on capital intensive machine based technology in these countries. His ideas on machinery, industries and modern civilisation are clearly expressed in Hind Swaraj, Harijan and Young India.

8.2 GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF MACHINE

The process of industrialisation has been promoted by rapid technical progress and use of machines in production process. To mechanise means to substitute mechanical power for the power of man. A machine is equipment that does the work automatically and performs the work efficiently and faster than the man. It does the work of more than one person. The work is uniform in character. The purpose to be served by machines is to modify the environment in such a way as to fortify and sustain the human organism by extending its powers or by manufacturing, outside the body a set of conditions more favourable towards maintaining its equilibrium and ensuring its survival.

As against this, Gandhi's concept of machine involved simple tools and instruments that help to increase production and reduce the drudgery of workers. The tool differs from a machine. The machine lends itself only to automatic action. The tool is manipulated by the person using it. Machine emphasises the specialisation of function whereas the tool indicates flexibility. A

tool such as knife may be used for various purposes but the machine is designed to perform a single set of functions.

Gandhi felt that machinery, to be well used, has to help and ease human effort. His machinery was of most elementary type which he can put in the hands of millions of people. His comment on the invention of sewing machine by Singer clearly indicates this. It is one of the useful things ever invented and there is a romance in the device itself. He (Singer) devised the

sewing machine in order to save his wife from unnecessary labour. He, however, saved not only her labour but also the labour of every one who could purchase a sewing machine. Gandhi favoured the machines that supported and reduced the burden of the labourer. It should be simple and available to all. It should generate more income and employment for the poor. The spinning-wheel, advocated by Gandhi, is a simple tool. It symbolises his ideas about machinery. The advantages of the spinning-wheel as put forward by Gandhi are as follows:

- It provides occupation to those who have leisure.
- It is easily learnt
- It is known to many people.
- It requires practically no outlay of capital.
- It can be easily and cheaply made.
- It fights famine.
- It spells equitable distribution of wealth.
- It solves the problem of unemployment and underemployment.
- It can stop the drain of wealth which goes outside India in the purchase of foreign cloth.
- It supports other village industries.
- People have no repugnance to it.

Spinning-wheel is the way of life. No other village craft other than it had the power to put money in the pockets of the millions of rural people. The advocacy of home-made cloth (khadi) is no more a fad of a romantic eager to revive the past, but a practical attempt to relieve the poverty and uplift the rural areas. It was a strategy of inclusive growth.

8.2.1 Technique Of Production: Man Vs

Machine

Mechanisation is a process of large-scale application of machines at all stages of production. Gandhi felt that mechanisation is good when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when

there are more hands than are required for work, as is the case in India. Thus mechanisation was acceptable to him only if it did not displace useful labour and did not lead to concentration of production and distribution in few hands. His views on machinery are mixed in nature.

He further wrote: “what I object to is the craze for machinery and not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour saving machinery”. Gandhi made his first frontal and massive attack on machinery in Hind Swaraj in 1908. He also used the concept of machinery in Hind Swaraj as symbolic: “Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilisation”. It is this symbol, which he used as a line of demarcation, between the machine-based British India and the machine-less poor India. Gandhi was against machinery and modern technology as in his early writings he described machinery as ‘great sin’. He opined that books could be written to demonstrate its evils. Material advances need to be judged by their moral and spiritual effect on human beings. Machines should be made for man and not vice versa. But in his later writings on machinery, Gandhi has made his stand clear. He classified that what he opposed was the craze for labour saving machinery as men go on saving labour till thousands are thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. He said: “I would favour the most elaborate machinery, if thereby India’s pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided.” His concern was to eliminate poverty and unemployment in the shortest possible period through providing productive employment to human beings. Grinding pauperism leads to nothing else than moral degradation. Every human being has right to live and therefore, the securing of one’s livelihood should be the easiest thing in the world. The growing social violence and anti social activities in India are on account of growing unemployment. Gandhi realised that even if India makes the maximum possible efforts, it will not be able to meet the requirements of all the people through large-scale production due to shortage of capital, or give full employment to rural labour or utilise effectively the idle physical and human resources going waste in the villages. The solution is an appropriate mix of the two.

Gandhi favoured some great inventions of science which had eased human labour, like Electricity, shipbuilding, railways, iron works and the like existing side by side with village handcrafts.

They should not supplant but rather sub-serve the villages and their crafts. He considered them as necessary evils and felt that these should be owned by the state. Further, the centralized ownership of industry in most essential sectors was supported because if the cottage sector has to be provided with even simple tools and machinery, if this has to be done for millions of production units, then, all the tools and machinery has to be produced in factories and these should be essentially in nationalised sector. Gandhi's advocacy of spinning-wheel and other village industries was thus based on his preference for labour-intensive technique of production. This is rational in the context of scarcity of capital and abundance of labour in India. The growth models developed by Lewis, Vakil, Brahmananda and Gunnar Myrdal support the low capital, small industries and simple machinery-based industrialisation in developing countries.

Gandhi thus supported simple technique of production which was an appropriate technology for India. This technology was later strongly advocated by EF Schumacher in his work *Small is Beautiful* (1974) as a technology with human face. Man should occupy the sovereign place he deserves in this scheme of things. Man is always the end and not the means. There is no objection to the adoption of machinery in which human goals are constantly kept in view.

8.2.2 Evil Effects Of Machinery

Gandhi opposed the craze for machinery as it was labour saving. His ideas about machine and industrialisation are shaped by the socio-economic conditions that prevailed in India. He observed the growing pressure on land in India, as the alternative occupations were not available due to destruction of village crafts and industries under the rule of East India Company.

Millions of landless labourers had no gainful employment and the farmers who worked on their own land were underemployed for several months in a

year. 'The problem with us', he wrote, 'is not to find leisure for teeming millions inhabiting our country. The problem is how to utilize their idle hours which are equal to the working days of six months in the year. Dead machinery must not be pitted against the millions of living machines represented by the villagers scattered in the seven thousand villages of India' (Harijan, November 16, 1934). His views on machinery and large-scale industrialisation are not thus based on any blind prejudice but the harsh realities of the millions of poor people living in rural areas of the country. The evil effects of machinery as listed by him are:

- It leads to unemployment and starvation of masses.
- Machinery makes concentration of wealth in the hands of few people.
- It does not lead to philanthropy but 'greed' i.e. profiteering.
- Machinery tends to atrophy the limbs of man.
- It destroys the villager and the village craft and village economy.
- It promotes mass production.
- It makes machine supreme to man.
- It makes people idle.
- It makes reduction of poverty more difficult.
- It widens the urban-rural gap and the gulf between the rich and the poor.
- It leads to imbalanced development.

In Hind Swaraj, he said "machinery is like a snake-hole which may contain from one to a hundred snakes."

Gandhi also opposed the mechanisation of agriculture. Indiscriminate use of mechanical tractors denudes the soil of the covering which the living vegetation provides. Absence of protective covering for the soil and absence of grass roots to bind soil together leads to soil erosion and lessens the water holding capacity of the soil. Once the vegetation covering of the soil is destroyed, the productivity of the soil is drastically affected. Therefore he did not favour the application of modern technology in agriculture that provides food and employment to the people.

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Gandhi is not alone who wrote about the evils of machinery. Other economists like Adam Smith, Ricardo and Marshall also pointed out the evils of the system but they were equally influenced by the development potential of the capitalist system in the form of growing profits and investments made possible by the use of machinery. It was only Marx and Engels who pointed out that it is the system of capitalism at the root through which the machines are begetting the evils. Gandhi not only condemned the machine but also the system of 'greed' (profiteering), which was enabling it to do so.

Gandhi's views on machinery may ultimately be expressed in the following form: "As a moderately intelligent man, I know that men can not live without industry, therefore, I can not be opposed to industrialisation. But I have a great concern about introducing machine industry.

The machine produces much too fast and brings with it a sort of economic system that I can not grasp, I do not want to accept something when I see its evil effects which outweigh whatever good it brings with it. I want the dumb millions of our land to be healthy and happy and I want them to grow spiritually. As yet for this purpose we do not need machine. There are too many idle hands. But as we grow in understanding, if we feel the need for machines, we certainly will have them. Once we have shaped our life on Ahimsa, we shall know how to control the machine"

Gandhi is a well-known critic of modern western civilisation. He saw modern colonialism as an outgrowth of this modern civilisation. Through his writings, he examines the 'civilisation' out of which modernity has emerged. The western modernity mostly identified with 'bodily welfare as the object of life and the resource of entire civilisation are put in the service of the good of 'bodily happiness'. Its pillars are insatiable possessiveness, machinery, mechanisation of every aspect of human life, rejection of virtue of religion, and coercive power. Gandhi's criticism of modern western civilisation is equally critical about

the science and technology, colonialism, capitalism, consumerism and market. The

propaganda of western mode of civilisation is carried with the power, dominance and colonialism and market. Gandhi stands against it from the moral worthiness of human beings.

At the same time, Gandhi is critical about Indian civilisation of contemporary times for adopting modern western civilisation and its deviation from the glorious ancient Indian civilisation. In this he is critical about Indian religious tradition on certain aspects. He considers that a once creative and vibrant civilisation had become degenerated, diseased and feeble, and fallen prey to foreign invasions of which British was the latest. Gandhi reflected deeply on the nature and causes of its degeneration and concluded that, unless radically revitalized and reconstituted on the foundation of a new yugadharma, it was doomed. Gandhi's project of regeneration of Indian civilisation brought him into conflict with the Hindu tradition. Gandhi is critical of Hindu tradition on the issues pertaining to women, untouchability, peasants, and poverty. Gandhi has creatively used the resources of the Hindu tradition and also wielded a unique moral and political authority. Gandhi equates religion with spirituality, spirituality with morality and defined morality in terms of selfpurification and social service. As Mathew Arnold (1879) said, Civilization is the humanisation of man in society. The term denotes a 'developed or advanced state of human society'. Raymond Williams (1973) in his 'Key words' traces the association of civilisation with 'the general spirit of enlightenment, with its emphasis on secular and progressive human self-development', as well as its 'associated sense of modernity'. According to the liberal thinker J. S. Mill, civilisation stands for a 'whole modern social process', including an increase in knowledge and physical comfort, the decline of superstition, the rise of forward moving nations, the growth of freedom, and also 'loss of independence, the creation of artificial wants, monotony, narrow mechanical understanding, inequality and hopeless poverty.' In the

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discourse of anthropology, the concept is associated with evolutionary distinctions contrasting civilisation with savagery and barbarism. Civilisation has an explicit influence in worldmaking in the period when Europeans established world hegemony. European project justified as a project of civilisation. European powers claimed civilisation as the reason for their far-flung conquests. Non-European elite made civilisation their own, reshaping the concept to forge anti-colonial and nationalist struggles. As written in the earlier Unit, the defenders of modern civilisation include some brilliant and even some very good men, who are not likely to write against it but support it.

The modern conception of life is based on the principle of scientific rationality by keeping away from the religious world view. The 17th century conceptions of natural sciences and fundamental philosophy are, through practice, associated with Newtonian physics, Descartes philosophy and Hobbesian liberalism. By 18th century modern view of knowing and knowledge helped to define what came to be known as enlightenment. Scientific reasoning and scientific knowledge would increasingly displace religious thinking and spiritual knowledge. Modernity as defined by 17th and 18th century lineage is epitomised by the view that scientific thinking yields objective knowledge and universal truth. Gandhi is critical of the trajectory of modern western civilisation, which often cuts off from the religious tradition. Gandhi considers the western civilisation which is predominantly based on technology, as the disease of civilisation. According to him, it was the very speed and power of Western society that was at the root of its problem and these were all a sign of its moral decay. The supporters of the west believed in illusion built on confusing power with civilisation and biology with culture. For Gandhi, 'the distinguishing characteristic of modern civilisation is an indefinite multiplicity of wants'; where as ancient civilizations were marked by an 'imperative restriction upon, and a strict regulating of these wants' (Young India, 2 June 1927). Gandhi solemnly states, "If India copies England, it is my

firm conviction that she will be ruined”. Yet Gandhi does not damn England entirely for her faulty government; it is modern civilisation that is to blame. “Civilisation is not the infinite multiplication of human wants but their deliberate limitation to essentials that can be equitably shared by”. Gandhi critically evaluates the idea of civilisation and rejects this kind of western notion of civilisation. He argued that any civilisation has to be flourished on the cultural life of its people. Gandhi’s civilisation is based on its moral worthiness rather than material progress, and practical possibility of moral swaraj. Gandhi argues for the moral possibility of Swaraj while addressing the British colonialism, violence

and modernisation. He projects the view point that “The tendency of the Indian civilization is to elevate the moral being that of western civilisation is to propagate immorality” (Gandhi, 1908). Gandhi popularised the possibility of another civilization-a non-Western, non-technological civilization.

Gandhi’s ideas on civilization have to be understood in the context of the struggle for ‘Swaraj’ of India against the colonial western empire. For him, swaraj means individual discipline, restraint from passion and indulgence and, acceptance of responsibility. He considers modern Western civilisation as corrupt and weak that lacks morality; bodily welfare is the object of British civilisation, where as Indian life is spiritual. England should not be a model or source of inspiration to follow by the rest but be replaced by the pride of tradition and spirit. At the same time, Gandhi is critical about the oppressive tradition, social practices and religious dogmas. He argued for the reformation of tradition and called for universal and humanistic religion.

8.3 THE RENAISSANCE AND INDIAN INTELLECTUALS

Modern way of life claims superiority over the ancient ways. It is believed that all the material progress is possible only through modernity. It considers that the ancient thought of India spiritually consisted in a destruction of

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desires, in the final realisation of a painless self, of a pure consciousness for which all worldly prosperity has to be sacrificed. The dominant thought of west discourages these as silly fancies and propagates the scientific progress for the material good of the humanity. In the early decades, the British contended that India was a great civilisation that had fallen on bad times because of their despotic form of government, which denied its subjects basic liberties. Therefore, the British engaged in the mission of civilising the natives in the line of liberal rationalist views and justified their rule in terms of the increasingly fashionable concept of civilisation. They believed that India lacks scientific and

rationalistic approach to life and needs civilising in the cultural and social practices. Colonialism spawned intense rationalism and undermined tradition both as a mode of discourse and as a form of knowledge. They engaged in the enterprise of initiating their subjects into new ways of life and thought. The British approached Indians in an aggressive and confrontational mood with a conviction of superiority of their civilisation. They were convinced that they have nothing to learn from the natives. Responding to this context, Indian intellectuals are constantly challenged to show what in their civilisation was worth preserving.

At this historical juncture, the age old Indian philosophical traditions and the values associated with civilisation are revisited in modern times by various scholars in the backdrop of Western colonialism. The response may be broadly classified into three categories- Sanskrit Punditic circle, anglicised circle and western educated Indian liberal circle. The anglicised people are only nominally connected themselves with traditional faiths, but the problems of religion and philosophy, which are so much valued by their ancestors, have ceased to have any charm with them. The scholars in the punditic circle are carrying on their work in a stereotyped fashion not for the intrinsic interest of philosophy and religion but merely as a learned occupation or for living. The influence of western education on some Indian people instilled new ideals of nationalism, politics and

patriotism; new goals and new interests of philosophy, life, social relations, social values and religious values are now appearing before us which are submerging as it were all the older, cultural and philosophical tendencies of the country.

The context explains that some of the Indian intellectuals are very strongly intoxicated with western view of life, whereas others are strongly loyal to traditional faiths. There emerged the new liberal intellectuals of western educated Indians, those who moved away from both the positions. They were convinced that we cannot bind our faith to our traditional past nor can we heartily welcome the western outlook of life. They had started introspection of their tradition in a changed atmosphere. So it is believed that the bedrock of the old Indian culture and civilisation which formed the basis of our philosophy is past slipping off our feet. Our real chance of life, therefore, is neither to hold fast to the submerged rock, nor to allow ourselves to be washed away, but to build an edifice

of our own, high and secure enough to withstand the ravages of all inundations. They proposed the greatness of their spiritual tradition against the modern western view. They had interpreted spirituality with new meanings rather than carrying with typical traditional view. For instance, they argue that it would be wrong to restrict the meaning of the word spiritual merely to a sense of God-intoxication or an ethical or religious inspiration. By spiritual therefore as determining the meaning of philosophy, it means the entire harmonious assemblage of the inner life of man, as all that he thinks, feels, values and wishes to create. They wish to keep away from the decayed and dead tradition and its values of civilisation. Indeed, these English educated liberal intellectuals played a major role in shaping the Indian culture, philosophy and history in modern times.

8.4 TRADITION AND REFORM: SOCIAL REFORMERS

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Tradition and reform are the essential features of any human society. No society is

immune to change. At the same time every society finds ways of preserving, transmitting and reforming its own traditions, of retaining its links with the past and getting ready to respond to the future. Many of the 19th century Hindu leaders are able to successfully challenge unacceptable social practices. Social reformers like Rajaram Mohan Roy argued against sati and polytheism, K. C. Sen and Lala Lajpat Rai against child marriage, Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar against kulinism and the ban on widow remarriages and Dayanand Saraswati against image worship. Most of these are appealed to the scriptures, hospitable to their cause, invoked universal principles of morality, the need to change in the changed

socio-cultural context, and warning the consequences of social practices that followed. They invoked glorious past of the nation for a solution of the contemporary problems.

However, traditionalists and reformers have different view point on the Hindu tradition. The Hindu leaders discussed colonial rule in the wider context of the betterment of their society and civilisation. The response has been varied. As Bhikhu Parekh suggested, the response may be broadly classified under the categories of traditionalists, modernists, critical modernists and critical traditionalists. While the traditionalists viewed nothing wrong

with their cultural past and argued for upholding the tradition, others are disturbed by the state of their society and keen to find alternatives. Among them the modernists argued that their salvation lay in radically restructuring it along modern or European lines. The critical modernists pleaded for a creative synthesis of the two civilisations. And the critical traditionalists preferred to mobilise their own indigenous resources, borrowing from Europe whatever was likely to supplement and enrich them. Both traditionalists and modernists are targeted for constant criticism. The critical modernists like Rammohan Roy, K.C.Sen and Gokhale are popular among this section. They agreed with modernists that India needed

to modernise itself, but insisted that despite all its limitations, the central principles of Indian civilisation were sound and worth preserving. Though they never specified these principles, they had in mind such things as the spiritual view of the universe and the doctrine of the unity of man and of life, the emphasis on duties rather than rights, on altruism rather than self-interest, on society rather than the state, on the atmic rather than atomic view of man and on self-sacrifice rather than self-indulgence; the centrality of the family, the regulation of artha and kama by dharma. They pointed out that the Europeans had made a mistake of indiscriminately modernising themselves and rejecting their Greco-Roman and especially Christian heritage. As a result their civilisation lacked moral and religious depth and a sense of meaning and purpose. For India, it had an opportunity to combine the old with the new, to integrate spirituality with modernity, and to undertake a unique civilisational experiment capable of becoming a source of universal inspiration.

Unlike the traditionalists who were content to live by the values of their allegedly superior civilisation and had no interest in turning India into a spiritual laboratory of the world, and unlike the modernists who were content to adopt the superior European civilisation, the critical modernists aspired to synthesise the two and become world teachers. Rajaram Mohan Roy's Brahmsamaj was intended to be a synthesis of the doctrines of the European enlightenment with the philosophic views of Upanishads, for K.C. Sen for reconciliation of ancient faith and modern science and asceticism and civilisation. Gokhale pleaded for a harmonious blend of the European spirit of science and the Hindu science of the spirit. These Hindu leaders had an imagination of the Indian civilisation, that was to provide the foundation upon which was to be constructed the structure of eastern ideas and institutions. Western natural sciences were to be combined or integrated with the Hindu metaphysics, the western state with Hindu society, liberal-democratic ideas with Hindu political philosophy, large-scale industrialisation with Hindu cultural values and western moral values with

the Hindu theory of purusharthas. The traditionalists, the modernists and the critical modernists were convinced that civilizations could be compared and assessed on the basis of some universal criteria. The critical traditionalists including Bankimchandra, Vivekananda, B.C. Pal and Aurobindo rejected this assumption. For them, civilisation was an organic whole and could not be judged in terms of criteria derived from outside it. All such criteria were themselves ultimately derived from another civilisation and thus lacked universality. Further, values and institutions were an integral part of the way of life of a specific community. The critical modernist aimed at preserving what was valuable in Indian civilisation; the critical traditionalists were content to eliminate the evil.

8.5 GANDHI'S REFORMIST PROGRAMME

Gandhi's reformist programme is more comprehensive and radical than that of his predecessors. He argued for the moral regeneration of Hindu society based on new system of ethics, and yugadharma. He defined Hindu tradition in his own way, by borrowing moral insights from other religious traditions such as Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity. He was also influenced by the writers such as Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau. Gandhi's philosophy both continued and broke with the tradition of discourse developed by his predecessors. Unlike them, Gandhi's explanation and critique of colonial rule was essentially cultural. Gandhi insisted that the colonial encounter was not between Indian and European but ancient and modern civilisations. Like his predecessors, Gandhi considered Indian civilisation as spiritual and the European as materialist, but defined the terms differently. Though Gandhi's critique of modern materialist civilisation was similar to that of his predecessors, it did contain novel elements. It had a strong moralistic content. For Gandhi, Indian civilisation was essentially

plural and non-dogmatic. From the very beginning it had realised that the ultimate reality was infinite and inexhaustible and that different individuals grasped different aspects of it. None was wholly wrong and none wholly right. Indian civilisation was not only plural but pluralist, that is, committed to plurality as a desirable value, not just a collection of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups but a unity-in-diversity. In this sense, his conception of Hinduism is more inclusive than sectarian. In Gandhi's view, every civilisation had its own distinctive natural and social basis. Modern civilisation was born and could only survive in the cities, and carried all over the world by the commercial class. Indian civilisation had, by contrast, been cradled and nurtured in the villages, and only the rural masses were its natural custodians. So long as their way of life was intact, its integrity and survival was guaranteed. Since the civilizations that had so far come to India were all rural and thus posed no threat to it, it was easily able to accommodate and enter a dialogue with them. For Gandhi, every tradition is a resource, a source of valuable insights into human condition, and part of a common human heritage. Gandhi considers that tradition has a source of values and provides moral

insights for humanity, rather than blindly negating the tradition. In that sense tradition is the valid source of knowledge since it survives the test of collective social experience. He argues that every tradition contained an internal principle of self-criticism in the form of its constitutive values. He believes that India had a tradition of negotiating through dialogue. Further he believed that dialogue between different traditions is both possible and necessary. This may facilitate for the progress of mankind and it should be open minded rather than imposing one over other. In this sense he opposed the values of the western imposition on non-European traditions. As an Indian, he was proud of being an inheritor of rich diverse religious and cultural traditions. Gandhi made an attempt to reform Hindu tradition based on his conception of yugadharma. He has concern for reinterpretation of central principles of Hinduism in the light of the needs of the modern age. He challenges the orthodox Hindu conception of tradition and sought to

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replace it with an alternative view of his own. As Bhikhu Parekh explains, though Gandhi valued tradition, he was not a traditionalist. He reduced tradition to a resource, located its essence in its general moral values which commanded respect but left room for critical evaluation, and gave every individual the freedom to draw upon the insights of other traditions. Similarly, though he stressed the role of reason, he was not a rationalist. He respected 'cultivated reason', one 'ripened' by a deep acquaintance with wisdom embodied in tradition, especially, but not exclusively, one's own. And though an individual remained free to revise traditional values, he was to do so only after making a 'respectful' study of them and giving them the benefit of doubt (p.23). Gandhi saw no hostility or contrast between reason and tradition. Reason was not a transcendental or natural faculty, but a socially acquired capacity presupposing and constantly shaped and nurtured by tradition. Tradition was not a mechanical accumulation of precedents but a product of countless conscious and semi-conscious experiments by rational men over several generations. The reformer's task was to elucidate the historical rationale of unacceptable practices and to expose their irrationality. He required both sympathetic understanding and critical spirit, both patience and indignation. This was how Gandhi went about reforming the Hindu ways of thought and life.

Gandhi engages in a creative dialogue with tradition. He tries to find out truth in tradition and emphasises it. He attached new meanings to traditional symbols. He believes that religion and scriptures need to be understood in the light of conscience and morality.

Wherever scriptures contradict conscience, religion demands that conscience should be followed. Gandhi's critical dialogue with Hindu tradition and his struggle to reform Hindu tradition occurred within the colonial context. Gandhi tries to uphold the authority of Hindu tradition and protect it from the distortions of colonial rule. At the same time, he was much aware of the uncritical and mindless traditionalism of the orthodox, both unwise and impractical. Gandhi reconstructed the tradition in a creative mode to suit his context.

8.6 CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF INDIAN

CIVILISATION

Gandhi was proud of the great Indian civilisation but was also critical of some of its dogmatic and inhuman practices in modern times. He questioned the immoral practices tagged with the name of religion and tradition and relentlessly fought against such practices. He points out the moral decay of Indian civilisation in contemporary times. He argues that the British have conquered India not because of their strength, or superiority but due to the moral failure of Indians. The modern civilisation of the British is responsible for the sustenance of the British rule. The Indians simply carried with this without any introspection. Gandhi argues that modern civilisation made man a prisoner of his craving for luxury and self-indulgence, release the forces of unbridled competition, and thereby bringing upon society the evils of poverty, disease, war and suffering. The modern civilisation looks at human-being as mere consumers and opens up to the industrial production and it becomes a source of inequality, oppression and violence. The idea of civilisation is central to his philosophy and political struggles. On one hand, Gandhi finds the problems with the very ideal of modern western civilisation and the Indian engagements with it, and on the other he is critical of the Indians for deviating from the very moral foundations of their age old civilisation. As a result one may find novel and pragmatic interpretation of the Indian civilisation as propounded by Gandhi.

8.6.1 Religion

Gandhi's idea of civilisation is spiritual and religious. He comments the modern western civilisation as irreligion. In materialistic society, regardless

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of its religious or humanistic professions, the entire system becomes corrupt. He aimed at spiritualising the political life and political institutions. He insisted that politics cannot be isolated from the deepest things of life. Gandhi was concerned more about religious values than religious beliefs. He believes that religious dogmas are hurdles for religious experience. For him, religion does not mean sectarianism. Sectarian religion is purely personal matter and has no place in politics. Gandhi argues against the compartmentalisation of human life that had been brought about in the name of segregation of politics from religion. Religion means a belief in the ordered moral government of the universe.

Religion is central to Gandhi's thought. He regarded politics as applied religion. His ideas on religion are complex and varied from time to time. He derives all his moral resource from Hinduism. His idea of Hinduism is different from the traditionalist view and is tolerant of other faiths and assimilates the differences into its fold.

'It (Hinduism) was the most tolerant of all religions. Its freedom from dogma gave

the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion it

enabled the followers not merely to respect all the other religions, but admire and

assimilate whatever may be good in the other faiths. Non-violence (ahimsa) is common to all religions, but it has found highest expression and application in Hinduism. Hinduism believes in the oneness not only of merely all human life but in the oneness of all other lives' (Young India, October 21, 1927).

He was proud of Hinduism but it did not prevent him from rejecting and criticising several institutions, ideas and beliefs which Hindus ordinarily regard as part of their religion. His Hinduism is not the one conventionally practiced. He attacks what he considers to be defective like the practice of untouchability. He views contemporary Hinduism as departing from its core principles. 'Gandhi's attitude was liberal and radical rather than conservative

towards religious as well as political social and political institutions. He therefore invoked religion against all authority and not in support of church or state. He combined an absolutist sense of sanctity toward religious values with flexible and critical attitude toward

religious institutions, and he was wholly critical toward existing social ideals, though less toward traditional social institutions' (Iyer, p.44).

He condemns some of the texts of scriptures because they are contrary to universal truths and morals or are in conflict with reason, such as child marriages sanctioned in the smritis. He insists that the defective additions must be rejected as interpolations. On his account, 'the texts of a tradition must be elastic and open to new readings today, just as they have in the past.' The interpretation of accepted texts has undergone evaluation and is capable of indefinite evolution.

Gandhi condemns the discords that take place in the name of religion, for instance,

Hindus against Muslims. This kind of cruelty, he considers as irreligious. They are not part of religion, although they have been practised in its name. However, Gandhi argues that these hardships are far more bearable than those of civilisation. Gandhi writes, 'when its full effect is realized, we will see that religious superstition is harmless compared to that of modern civilisation. I am not pleading for a continuance of religious superstition. We will certainly fight them tooth and nail, but we can never do so by disregarding religion. We can only do by appreciating and conserving later' (Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, p.43).

The higher religion was universal, and transcended particular religions. 'Religion does not mean sectarianism. It means belief in ordered moral government of the universe'. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. Such universal religion was in harmony with his ideas of truth and non-violence. Gandhi's religion was simply an ethical framework for the conduct of daily life. As a religious man, he aimed at perfection or self-realisation.

8.6.2 Untouchability

“Untouchability is not only not a part and parcel of Hinduism, but a plague, which is the burden of every Hindu to combat.” The issue of the caste system is central to Indian society and even a threat to the very idea of civilisation. The practice of untouchability is very much embedded in the Hindu social structure and, has existed for several centuries. There are many interpretations of the caste system, both from its supporters and its opponents. Since the caste system connected to the Hinduism, there are various attempts to reform Hinduism. The practice of untouchability is an important issue for both social reform and nationalist movements. Gandhi not only brought this issue to the larger public but also fought against this inhuman practice in his own style. He dared to fight against the orthodox Hindus and tried to convince them as an internal critic. The sanatanists argued that untouchability was enjoined by the scriptures.

In response to this, Gandhi demanded for evidence. He insisted that a religious text was not a theoretical treatise composed by a philosopher or a pundit given to weighing every word, but the work of a spiritual explorer containing insights too deep and complex to be adequately expressed in a discursive language. Gandhi believes that religious texts propounded eternally valid and, values and principles and were intended to guide all men everywhere. Religious text is both transcended and were conditioned by time. ‘Untouchability as it is practiced today in Hinduism in my opinion, is a sin against God and man and is, therefore like a poison slowly eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. There are innumerable castes in India. They are social institutions and at one time they served a very useful purpose, as perhaps, they are even doing now to a certain extent...there is nothing sinful about them. They retard the material progress of those who are labouring under them. They are no bar to the spiritual progress. The difference, therefore, between caste system and untouchability is not one of degree, but of kind’

Gandhi argued that caste has nothing to do with Hindu religion. He focused on the practice of untouchability rather than caste system. He reduced the problem of untouchability to a matter of self-purification. He even supported varnashramadharma by providing new interpretation. For him, it is the guna that matters than one's caste/varna. Sudra becomes a Brahmin based on guna or his/her worthiness. In varna system, people are unequal only on functional terms. Gandhi thought that in principle, Sudras and Brahmins are of equal status. The critics argue that caste practices are sanctioned by the shastras.

In response to this, he said, 'nothing in the shastras which is manifestly contrary to universal truths and morals can stand.' For him, True principles of religion or morality are universal and unchanging. 'Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth.' Further he argues that, 'The true dharma is unchanging, while tradition may change with time. If we were to follow some of the tenets of manusmriti, there would be moral anarchy. We have quietly discarded them altogether.' For Gandhi the problem of untouchability was the problem of the self, the collective Hindu self. He saw the movement to eradicate untouchability as a sacred ritual of self-purification. 'The movement for the removal of untouchability is one of self-purification' For Gandhi, Swaraj is unattainable without the removal of the sins of untouchability as it is without Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi claimed that the heart of the caste Hindu could be changed by applying moral pressures within the framework of the Hindu tradition. As Bhikhu Parekh rightly pointed out, 'Untouchability was both moral and political problem. Gandhi's campaign was conducted only at the moral and religious level. He concentrated on caste Hindus rather than on untouchables, appealed to their feelings of shame and guilt, and succeeded in achieving his initial objections of

discrediting untouchability and raising the level of Hindu and, to a limited extent, Harijan conscience. Since he did not organize and politicise the untouchables, stress their rights and fight for a radical reconstruction of Critical Understanding of Indian Civilisation the established social and economic order, Gandhi's campaign was unable to go further.

It gave untouchables dignity but not power; moral and to some extent, social but not political and economic equality; self respect but not self-confidence to organize and fight their own battles. It integrated them into the Hindu social order but did little to release them from the cumulative cycle of deprivation'.

Check your Progress I

1. Gandhi's View on Untouchability

8.6.3 Women's Oppression

Women are often victims of religious tradition. It is argued that the practices of patriarchy are internalised in the tradition. No civilised society sanctifies the oppression of women. The issue of women's oppression is central to the agenda of social reformers and the leaders of later struggles. Against the age old tradition, Gandhi brought a large number of women into the forefront of nationalistic struggle and provided courage and source of inspiration for struggles of women emancipation. Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, writes Gandhi, 'none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of women'. Gandhi's views on women are different from the earlier reformers. By commenting on child marriage, widow remarriage, dowry, sati, he exposes and challenges the Hindu orthodoxy while simultaneously reformulating and, thus, emphasising marriage as the only regulator of man-woman relationship in the society. He considers these acts

as against swaraj. Gandhi links up the question of oppression to social and national health.

In Gandhi's view the glaring abuse of Indian womanhood was the custom of childhood marriages. He saw evil as intimately related to that of child widowhood. It is irreligion, not religion. Gandhi saw education as an essential means for enabling women to uphold their natural rights. Gandhi realised that the identification of manliness with violence was likely to lead humanity to destruction. Men needed to emulate women's quiet strength and their resistance of injustice without resorting to violence. For Gandhi, the women who have the strength, courage, patience and a capacity for suffering can become a symbol of non-violence and peace. Women should be self-reliant. Gandhi often invoked the traditional symbols to mark the strength of women. If women were to get justice, scriptures needed to be revised and all religious texts biased against the rights and dignity of women should be expurgated. For this Indian women had to produce from amongst themselves new Sitas, Draupadis and Damyantis 'pure, firm and self-controlled'. Their words will have the same authority as the shastras, and command the same respect as those of their prototype yore. Gandhi argues for the personal dignity and autonomy for women in family and society. Rules of social conduct had to be framed by mutual cooperation and consultation, and not forcibly imposed on women from outside.

8.7 MODERN INSTITUTIONS

Gandhi was not only critical towards traditional institutions and social practices, but also critical of the modern institutions and its professional practices. For instance, railways, lawyers and doctors have impoverished the country. Gandhi could foresee the effects of these modern institutions and explained it in his Hind Swaraj. He finds the grip of modern western civilisation through the institutions of railways, legal system and hospitals.

Gandhi explains that railways are a distributing agency for the evil one. It may be a matter of debate whether railways spread famines, but it is beyond

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dispute that they propagate evil. Railways increased the frequency of famines, because, owing to facility of means of locomotion, people sell out their grains, and it is sent to the dearest markets. People become careless, and so the pressure of famine increases. They accentuate the evil nature of man. Bad men fulfil their evil designs with greater rapidity. The holy places of India have become unholy.

Gandhi was critical of the legal system which had become the handmaid of colonial rule. The lawyers tightened the English grip. Gandhi argues thus, 'do you think that it would be possible for English to carry on their government without law courts? It is wrong to consider that courts are established for the benefits of the people. Those who want to perpetuate their power, do so through the courts. If people were to settle their own quarrels, a third party would not be able to exercise any authority over them. Without lawyers, courts could not have been established or conducted, and without the latter the English could not rule.'

Gandhi considers hospitals as institutions for propagating sin. Men take less care of their bodies, immorality increases. The moral basis of modern medicine is that it is taking a purely bodily view of health, ignores need for the health of the soul, which is necessary for the maintenance of even physical health. Men pretend to be civilised, call religious prohibitions a superstition and wantonly indulge in what they like. The fact remains that the doctors induce us to indulge, and the result is that we become deprived of selfcontrol.

In these circumstances, we are unfit to serve the country. To study European medicine is to deepen our slavery. Gandhi was critical of modern knowledge systems of the west and its practices and argues for the indigenous knowledge systems and its practices. Gandhi considers modern civilisation as a greater threat to Indians than colonialism. Colonialism itself is a product of modern civilisation. Gandhi was critical of modern civilisation from the religious and ethical point of view as it neither takes note of morality nor religion. Through his writings, he made an attempt to redefine Hinduism and the concept of dharma. In the past dharma was tied to a hierarchical system

of duties and obligations and to preservation of status. Gandhi was critical of Indian civilisation for its deviance from the spirit of age old tradition. His criticism of Indian civilisation on the issues of women, untouchability, and religious orthodoxy are in tune with the yugadhama. In Hind Swaraj, he made a conscious attempt to actualise the real potential of Indian civilisation. He believed that Indian society has not fully actualised its age old civilization in practice. Only an innovated Indian civilisation can help India to attain swaraj.

8.8 GANDHI'S VIEWS ON INDUSTRIALISATION

Gandhi's views on industrialisation and machinery should be read in the context of his attitude towards modern civilisation which was criticised severely in his Hind Swaraj. The Western

industrialisation promotes mass production and is sustained by high levels of consumption

arising out of growing wants. Gandhi believed that the chief aim of socio-economic organization should not be multiplicity of wants and accumulation of wealth but a minimum standard of living must be assured to all human beings. The progress of materialism does not promote happiness and instead gives rise to conflict and social discontent. He was not against the industrialisation but what he opposed was machine-based industrialisation. Gandhi strongly disliked the profit motive which is the base of modern industrialisation. The new economic order that Gandhi envisaged is not judged by the value of production and the quantity of material comforts and luxuries but by high standards of moral and ethical values that govern the life of a nation.

8.8.1 Gandhian Model Of Industrialisation

Gandhi's model of industrialisation was village industries based on limited capital, local raw material, short gestation period and easy marketing. He favoured the khadi and village industries model. The industries should be small in size, simple in organisation, capital saving, non-violent and non-exploitative. They use locally available resources. The industries are eco-friendly and human-friendly with an advantage of short gestation period. It has decentralised the structure

and adequate income and employment generating capacity. He wanted production by masses in their homes.

Gandhi saw the difficulties and dangers of indiscriminate industrialisation in the under-developed countries which may result in the concentration of wealth or creation of industrialised urban areas leading to regional imbalances. It will promote exploitative relationship between the city and the village. Modernisation, industrialisation and mass production was not useful in solving the problems of mass poverty and unemployment. He considered hand-spinning and other village industries that provide employment opportunities to the people.

Gandhi favoured the use of machines as long as it helped in the eradication of poverty and unemployment. He did not mind using electricity or even atomic energy for the spinning wheel.

He also accepted the importance of shipbuilding. He did not deny the importance of largescale industries in essential spheres like basic and capital goods. But they should be complementary to small industries and should be owned by the state.

Gandhi was aware of the fact that the nature is being destroyed by unlimited industrialization and massive urbanisation which are thought necessary for development. He felt that any attempt to introduce mass production, is endemic and self-defeating. It increases the problems of unequal distribution and it also creates the problem of urbanisation. Gandhi visualised a self-sufficient village economy wherein villages produce all necessities of life.

Cities buy the necessities and supply the machine tools and equipments. They should produce machines needed for village industries. This was his view of village industrialisation, forging a complementary rural-urban relationship.

The Gandhian model of small industry-oriented industrialisation was based on the self-employed small producer producing for his basic requirements and not for the pursuit of wealth for its own sake. These small producers are a social category fundamentally different from the medieval surfs as well as the modern proletariat of the capitalist class. Now these small selfemployed producers working and living within the constraints of community life in the village are also not the individual-based capitalists. Gandhi was aware of the difficulties and dangers of alienating millions of small producers from the means of production. He therefore, argued

that the participation of his vast force in economic development calls for a new approach and exploration outside the bounds of Western or Soviet models.

8.8.2 Rural Industrialisation

Rural industrialisation is a process of establishment of small and cottage industries in rural areas. These industries help in the utilisation of local resources including the idle labour. It uses labour-intensive technology and caters to the local needs and local markets. The industries can be started with small amount of capital and use single technology. These industries have strong

forward and backward linkages and they support each other.

The basic features of rural industrialisation are:

- Small and cottage industries located in rural and semi-urban areas.
- Easy and convenient to start and manage.
- Low capital investment.
- Labour intensive technology and low skill requirement.
- Simple production structure and organisation.
- Flexibility and easy adaptability to local condition.

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- Adequate forward and backward linkages to promote rural development.
- Near to local culture and environment.
- Promotion of agro-processing and food processing activities.
- Environment and consumer-friendly approach.
- Variety of products suited to local tastes.
- Decentralised ownership conducive to inclusive growth.

Rural industrialisation is thus a programme to boost the industrial activity in rural areas. This programme helps to promote integrated development. It promotes diversifications of the rural economy through development of non-farm sector. It has high employment potential. In view of the meagreness of capital resources, there is no possibility for creating employment through the factory industries. For example, consider the household or cottage industries. They require very less capital. About six or seven hundred rupees would get an artisan family started with

any given investment, employment possibilities would be ten or fifteen or even twenty times

greater in comparison with corresponding factory industries (P.C. Mahalanobis).

The model based on khadi and village industries and rural industrialisation is 'Swadeshi' in character. Since most of the production is localised in villages and caters to local needs, there is little exchange market and profit. Gandhi thought that any payment to factory owner in excess of the remuneration for the managerial skill was an indication of the exploitation of worker. The strategy in this direction involves the following components:

- Avoiding the consumption of any commodity, not producible by labour intensive methods.
- There must be a plan to build up labour-intensive, mass-employment industries to supply adequate level of consumption goods.
- There must be a simultaneous attempt to build up capital/ intermediate goods industries but only to the extent of the requirement of the mass employment industries.

□ As the economy approaches self-reliance, trade may be gradually opened in the form of exports of mass employment goods, surpluses and purchases of goods not produced within the economy. Full employment was a key factor in Gandhi's approach to development. Manpower, which is the wealth of a nation, should not go waste. Thus the Gandhian model of industrialization was mainly guided by the considerations of removal of mass poverty and unemployment.

8.8.3 Small Industries In Industrialisation

PROCESS IN INDIA

The independent India, under the leadership of Nehru, did not adopt the Gandhian model of village industries and economic development. The Second Five Year Plan adopted Mahalanobis model of large-scale industrialisation, covering basic and capital goods large-scale industries based on capital-intensive technology. This model was borrowed from Soviet Russia where it was found successful in promoting rapid economic development. Nehru believed that industrialisation, along the Western lines, alone would make the nation really independent and militarily strong. When the entire country passed through the long and arduous process of industrialisation, the villages, he thought, would be automatically replaced by urbanised dwellings with mechanised agriculture and therefore, the exploitation of villages by towns will not arise at all. He adopted the strategy of large-scale industrialisation to promote rapid development in India. Thus the Second Five Year Plan laid down the path for rapid large-scale industrialisation.

This strategy of industrialisation has not only been the root cause of unemployment today in the economy but also for lopsided and imbalanced growth of the economy. The rural-urban gap is on the increase continuously and the village economy is suffering from the insecurity of income as well as employment. During the Second Five Year Plan in India, C N Vakil and

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Brahmananda advocated the wage goods model based on small industries producing mainly

the consumer goods. But the model was not accepted. This model was close to the Gandhian model of rural industrialisation and decentralised production. This could have solved the problems of poverty and unemployment in the Indian economy and would have enabled to promote sustainable development.

In the industrial policy resolution of 1948 and 1956, the small-scale sector was given special role for creating employment with low capital investment.

The thrust on small industries is also observed in the Industrial Policy of 1977. The studies on small industries have brought out that the failure of small-scale industries in India is mainly on account of lack of adequate working capital, low technical skill and managerial ability and lack of marketing contacts. Therefore, the focus of the policy approach is to fill up these gaps. Small industries are provided with

credit at concessional rates of interest. The National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) helps them in marketing, through obtaining a greater share in government purchases; there is provision of grading and ISO 9000 certificate of small industries product; the corporation also helps in the provision of adequate raw materials, imported components for production and selected imported equipment to small enterprises. The industrial estates provide, on rental

basis, a good accommodation and other basic common facilities to the small entrepreneurs. The small-scale sector was also promoted to produce the consumer goods. The Government followed the policy of reservation of items for production in the small-scale sector. In 1972, the list of reserved items was 177 which further increased to 837 in 1983. But since post 1990 new economic policy, the list of items has been declining continuously.

8.8.4 Survival Of Small Industries- Challenges Of Globalisation

The small industries are in crisis today in India as they suffer from severe competition and are becoming sick at a rapid rate. They are facing numerous problems like lack of technological methods, inadequate and irregular supply of raw materials, lack of organised market channels, imperfect knowledge of market conditions, lack of quality consciousness and high costs. Consumerism and the craze for foreign goods are increasing rapidly.

The economic reforms have an adverse effect on the small-scale sector. Cheaper and better quality imported products are posing a serious threat to small industries, like chemicals, silk, auto components, toys, sports goods etc. The entry of multinationals in small-scale sector products, including retail trade, is a serious threat to these industries.

8.9 LETS SUM UP

Gandhi's concept of industrialisation was rural industrialisation consisting of small and cottage industries and not machine-based modern industrialisation. The industry should use simple technology and labour, generate employment for the masses and ensure every Indian an access to minimum level of living. It should promote self-sufficiency in rural economy and help to avoid conflict between the labour and capital. This method effectively balances the production and distribution. The present trend of industrialisation in India has generated wealth at the cost of unemployment and poverty. The trend is less likely to be reversed by the forces of globalisation.

Of late, machinery in the form of computer hardware and software skills have become the drivers of the economic progress and with increased levels of literacy and skills the employment opportunities have witnessed an increase. But the growth is highly unstable as it is driven by the global demand. Gandhi's concern about the type of economic development and

industrialisation is relevant even today. In a labour abundant economy, technology and industry should support production for masses. The way out is either we have to reduce our population drastically or search for big global markets. Both the alternatives are equally difficult. Therefore, a proper balance between the man vs. machine i.e. the rural small-scale sector and the urban large-scale sector in favour of the former is essential to find solutions in the present situation.

8.10 KEY WORDS

Varna: Belonging to a particular group identified on basis of skill

Ashrama: Stages of life namely, Student, House holder, Semi retires and solitary

Hind Swaraj : A book Witten by M K Gandhi

8.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Critically analyse the Indian intellectuals' response to western colonialism.

1. Explain Gandhi's concept of machine. Comment on the debate of Man vs Machine.
2. Bring out the evils of the Western model of industrialisation.
3. Discuss the Gandhian approach to Machinery and Industrialisation. Do you agree with it? Substantiate.

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8.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1 Answer to Check your Progress -1

- Gandhi argued that caste has nothing to do with Hindu religion.
- He focused on the practice of untouchability rather than caste system.
- He even supported varnashramadharma by providing new interpretation.
- For him, it is the guna that matters than one’s caste/varna. Sudra

becomes a Brahmin based on guna or his/her worthiness.

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- In varna system, people are unequal only on functional terms.
- Gandhi thought that in principle, Sudras and Brahmins are of equal status.

UNIT 9 SARVODAYA

STRUCTURE:

9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.2 the dominant paradigm of development

9.3 Promises of Development

9.3.1 discontents with dominant paradigm
and revisions

9.4 The Critique of Romanticism

9.5 Marxian Reformulation

9.6 deficiencies of the dominant paradigm

Of development

9.6.1 paradoxes of the modern paradigm of
Development

9.7 gandhian alternative

9.8 sarvodaya

9.8.1 sarvodaya: meaning and genesis

9.8.2 antyodaya or uplift of the last

9.8.3 philosophical foundations of sarvodaya

9.8.4 socialism and sarvodaya

9.8.5 self-realisation through service

9.8.6 the economics of sarvodaya

9.9 philosophical anarchism

9.10 The Repudiation of the Concept of Majoritarianism

9.11 Let Us Sum Up

9.12 Keywords

9.13 Questions for review

9.14 Suggested Readings

9.15 Answer to Check your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you would be able to understand

- The idea of man underpinning modern development
- Specifications of the modern paradigm of development
- Characteristics and consequences of the modern paradigm of development and its paradoxes.
 - The meaning and genesis of Sarvodaya

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Every age embraces a key word; its repetitive use and redefinition mark the distinctive channels of faith and thought. It has symbolic value; it exerts greater influence upon the nature and direction of men's thinking. This word epitomizes the faith of the times. More than a linguistic vehicle of expressing thought, such words symbolize the conviction of men about who they are and what the world they lived in means. They are both the outcome of thought and the elicitors of thought. Men are fascinated by their referents and properties (Nisbet, 1977).

Such a key word has, since the Second World War, been "development". It has pervaded the contemporary sociopolitical scene in almost all societies. The use of the word "development" by laymen, experts, administrators and policy makers demonstrates its centrality in our thinking and doing. The widespread use of this word "development" refers to three situations. First, it

refers to the discontent about patterns of development in the past. It refers to pervasive poverty and its malignant consequences for human personality and dignity. It also bemoans material deprivation as the primary factor leading to the loss of freedom, self-confidence and self-reliance. Second, the word “development” articulates the belief that the present is malleable and the future determinable. It also affirms that mankind is capable of amending its own follies thereby successfully erasing the pernicious effects of mal-development to clear the way for a bright future. Lastly, it points, even if ambiguously, to certain referents and properties of the concept of development. When translated into reality, it is hoped, it would induce and sustain ‘proper’ development that will ensure human well-being. Proper development refers, primarily to three different aspects of man’s existence in contemporary times. First, it is asserted that man’s well-being can be assured only when his material needs, such as wealth, power and prestige, are fully satisfied. Hence, man’s development into a moral being would be assured. Lord Keynes underlines this when he identifies economic development as the foundation of development of all kinds. Thus, the term “development” turns out to be a normative concept indicating the passage of civilisation from one level to other higher levels. Second, such a development is supposed to assure not only individual happiness but also collective well-being and harmonious social relations. And, lastly, development is also seen as a process in which technological advances would free man from strenuous labour, grant leisure that would allow man to cultivate culture and introduce progressive refinements in thought-ways and work-ways. Thus, the modern paradigm of development holds out the promise of unparalleled richness of life, both in material and cultural senses, and also promises individual felicity and collective well-being. The benign outcome that is expected to flow from development posits happy individuals and harmonious collectivities. It promises well-being by obliterating lower standards of living reinforced by agricultural economy. It also engenders the belief in his power to change himself; he also believes in his power to change the world around him. Thus, development reflects the idea that man

can refashion the conditions of his living. However, the satisfaction of ever-proliferating material needs leads unavoidably to the transformation/manipulation of nature to create goods and services.

Interestingly, the search for bodily comfort has been given preference in the name of man's freedom, dignity and self-determination and also assures leisure, which sustains civilisational progress. The denouement of the modern idea of development has thrown up a plethora of paradoxes. These pertain not only to the failure of the modern paradigm of development to deliver on its prodigious promises, but also to the pernicious conditions created by the idea

of development that threaten freedom, dignity of man and above all his very existence because they have pushed mankind to the brink of an ecological disaster.

9.2 THE DOMINANT PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT

The idea of development is unintelligible without a reference to 'who man is'? After all, the first question that we need to answer is: Development for what? Obviously development is for something- a changed state, a phenomenon which can be measured on a temporal dimension along with the substantive changes that it brings about in whatever it touches. Obviously again, our reference here is to both individual person and the socioeconomic milieu he lives in. As such, development, whether of a person or his socioeconomic environment, implies some implicit or explicit notion of 'who man is' (Heschel, 1965, p80). It is necessary to unveil the idea of man that underlines the world he resides in. It is the substantive idea of man that shapes the world and its characteristics.

Broadly speaking, two different perspectives about who man is compete for ascendancy and control. One of these perspectives considers man, as he ought to be. It underlines the need for man to overcome and rise above his base nature and make the pursuit of a higher life purpose, for example, self-realisation, the cardinal principle of his life. It is this principle that must

regulate his life activities. To be guided by a higher life purpose is not, in anyway, to neglect or turn one's back to the fulfillment of ordinary life needs. For, the pursuit of a higher life purpose without attending to the fulfillment of ordinary life needs is not possible. The fulfillment of ordinary life needs constitutes the other, very important aspect of man's existence. Traditionally, the view of man as he "ought to be" was regnant. However, with the arrival of the modern era in the seventeenth century, this view was eschewed in favour of what Giambattista Vico called, "man as he is." This view saw man as simply a mind-body complex, an amalgam of reason and passion. Obviously then, the spiritual aspect of man's existence is suppressed, even excluded. As Thomas Hobbes underlines, the rejection of any ultimate aim or *summum bonum* in life, the rejection of the ultimate aim meant jettisoning the traditional worldview, particularly the idea about man as more than a natural being. As Taylor (1981, p.112) notes: Traditional worldview considered good life to consist primarily in some higher activity distinct from the fulfillment of ordinary needs involved with production and reproduction of life. Meeting these ordinary needs was, of course, infra-structural to a distinct activity that gave life its higher significance....Lives which lacked the favoured activity, and were entirely absorbed in meeting life needs were truncated and deprived.

With the rejection of higher life purpose, the acquisition of wealth, power and prestige emerged as the focal point of man's activities. A huge industrial system came into existence with a view to fulfilling his endlessly proliferating needs. As a result, economic development came to occupy the highest point on the scale of the values, that not only assures the realisation of man's self-defined purposes and, through it, his bodily well-being but also his moral development.

Thus what was simply infrastructural in the traditional view of man became central in modern times. This made possible for *kama* (desire) and *artha* (resources necessary for satisfying desires) to escape the suzerainty of *dharma* (righteousness) and allowed needs to become limitless and gain

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auto-legitimacy. Man's life becomes, as John Cooper points out, "openended" signifying that man must maximize, as a whole, the amount of certain goods but without specifying at all what this maximum must be (Cooper, 1975, p.83). Here the traditional view of man differs from the modern view insofar as it prescribes limits on the ever-proliferating desires and underlines the principle of limitation of wants as something necessary to install order in man's interior.

The dominant paradigm of development is inspired by a partial image of man; it makes him, in essence, a "broken totality" in Iris Murdoch's view. This paradigm has provided the Third World with a readymade model of what Ernest Gellner calls "social creation". Man participates in social creation by trying to realise his self-defined purposes. And this purpose largely, even exclusively, as Hobbes insists, consists in satisfying one desire after another ceaselessly.

Man emerges as a free subject and becomes, in essence, someone who "follows an internal purpose and who owes no a priori allegiance to a preexisting order but only to structures that one has created by one's consent." What is striking about men, as Taylor puts it, "is their ability to conceive different possibilities, to calculate how to get them. The striking superiority of man is in strategic power. The various capacities definitive of a person are understood in terms of his power to plan". (Taylor, 1985, p.55).

Since man is a striving being, his felicity depends on the degree to which he can satisfy his desires and acquire more and more power for doing so. Therefore his rationality simply becomes instrumental rationality, a vehicle for calculating the optimal means for realising a particular end. Rationality that was meant earlier to control and regulate man's unruly passion turns, on this account, as the calculation of cost and benefit to realise a particular end. As such, rationality becomes subservient to passions, cognition surrenders to will.

The fulfillment of the ever-proliferating desires is claimed not only to be the means of man's felicity but also supposed to promote two other things

whose contribution to the development of a person's character is of immense value. In the first place, it is only through the satisfaction of desires that hidden and slumbering potentialities of man are actualised. For Kant, the desire for honour, power or wealth is natural. It stimulates man to strive after rank among his fellowmen whom he can neither bear to interfere with himself, nor yet let alone. Discord is the necessary outcome of this as it awakens in him all his latent powers and "the first real steps are taken from the rudeness of barbarianism to the culture of civilisation."

Thanks be then to nature for this unsociableness, for this envious jealousy and vanity, for this insatiable desire for possession, or even of power! Without them all the excellent capacities implanted in mankind would slumber eternally undeveloped. Man wishes concord but nature knows better what is good for his species, and she will have discord (Kant, 1972, pp.159-160).

In the second place, the claim that discord, fathered by man's desire to possess, leads to the full flowering of culture and promotes progress is not the only one. It is also claimed that in the process of satisfaction of desires radical changes occur in man's nature. For Spinoza, it is the pathway for the development of "kindness" or sympathy. It is also claimed that man is *tabula rasa*, a clean state; it is filled with qualities and attributes in the process of his interaction with the external world. In this process, the external world undergoes changes, moving from one level of development to another higher level. As the external world changes, so do man's motivations and beliefs; that is, his essential nature also changes along with his changing beliefs. This leads to a radical change in man himself. As such, "in a new age, man's individual and social life could undergo almost unlimited change; a radically new order of social relationships could be established, and in that new order there would be fundamental transformation in human nature."

9.3 PROMISES OF DEVELOPMENT

The modern paradigm of development does two things concurrently. First, it draws our attention to the fact that man's past has been flawed in three important respects. It is flawed because of its speculative philosophy, which relying on what Claude Helvetius calls "magic of words" gave more importance to the world above. As a consequence, the world of here and now was undervalued. This tended to ignore the material aspect of man's existence. Poverty, therefore, was not only tolerated, but was also praised and promoted. Consequently, extremely

low standards of living, deprivation and even hunger made the lives of a large number of people all over the world extremely miserable. The past has also been flawed because speculative philosophy promoted superstition, ignorance and a multiplicity of doctrines. Doctrinal differences led to frequent conflicts. The past was marked by deprivation, ignorance and conflict.

Secondly, the modern paradigm of development underlines mankind's promising future and offers the path to achieve it. Repudiating speculative philosophy, Rene Descartes underlines the need to rely on practical philosophy. This will, he argues, render men, "the masters and possessors of nature" (Descartes, 1958, pp.130-31). Practical philosophy projects two important perspectives. The first relates to the creation of a purified universal language encompassing simple, unambiguous and straightforward ideas. Such a language leads, it is claimed, to the unification of all sciences (both physical and moral), on the one hand, and to the reduction if not the elimination of contestable doctrines on the other. Such a language makes knowledge available to all as well as eliminates differences and, therefore, conflicts.

The second aspect concerns the mastery over nature; this would pave the way for manipulating/ transforming nature with the help of technology

enabling man to produce ever more goods and services to satisfy his myriad needs.

The modern paradigm of development releases man from his erstwhile subjugation to the unknown and the unknowable divine entity. His newly earned freedom permits him to indulge his passions and desires. Man must constantly endeavour to create wealth to ensure his felicity. This means that cupidity must be given a free play because it is only by pursuing it that individual happiness and collective well-being can be ensured. The modern paradigm of development, thus promises that man can gain the ultimate knowledge of the universe by developing scientific ability and also promises that by using technology, nature can be pushed to yield its hidden wealth and thereby fulfill everyone's desires. In short, it promises to establish heaven on this earth. It is ironical that the route to the promised terrestrial paradise must pass through the thorny and insalubrious landscape of the enchantment of the body. This paradise proves elusive and ever slips out of man's grasp, and the promised paradise is not only hollow but also never comes to pass. In this pursuit, man has to bear immense misery and suffering. This is the cruellest paradox of the modern paradigm of development.

9.3.1 Discontents With Dominant Paradigm

And Revisions

According to the dominant paradigm of development, the key to personal development and civilisational progress lies in the search for felicity, involving the fulfillment of ordinary life needs. Underlying this conception of development are two postulates. First, the need to produce and create ever more goods and services must be given the highest priority, if the satisfaction of proliferating needs and wants is to be assured. Second, the fruits of development must not be limited to only a few in society; they must be available to all so that they too can enjoy the good life of modern conception. This good life assures everyone a life of affluence, considered to be the means of ensuring salubrious human development, expected to

guarantee to man his dignity, safeguard, promote his freedom and give him the necessary leisure and the wherewithal of creating culture. It is also assumed that man's moral and intellectual levels will continuously be raised. With this peace and order will mark human existence.

Central to this prospective is the strategic importance of rationality, and also the primacy of the individual and his liberty. Rationality does not, however, refer to a true vision of things. It is not an active principle of the soul that allows us to rise above particularities or contingencies of our experience and 'participate' in the structure of the cosmos. Instead, reason is conceived of as the handmaiden of appetites; it signifies instrumental, prudential, and calculative reasoning.

It serves not the soul but the body. Its primary role is to suggest costs and benefits of different means of realising a given end. It is then expected that the individual would choose the most advantageous means of realising his purpose.

The dominant paradigm assumes the primacy of the individual who, driven by the need to satisfy his material needs, advocates acceleration of economic growth as the necessary condition of development. This model of development is incompatible with the spirit of communitarianism, creating a market society where internecine competition rules. The spirit of competition characterises market society where self-interest takes precedence over every other consideration.

And obligations are determined by the needs of mutual interest. Even common interest is treated as an aggregate of self-interests of different individuals or groups. In a market society, everything is subservient to 'maximisation of profits'. Human beings are reduced to selfseeking animals with no permanent bonds of loyalty or commitment to any great ideal.

9.4 THE CRITIQUE OF ROMANTICISM

The dominant paradigm of development has provoked a lot of criticism and most of these refer not to the fact that it makes the fulfillment of ordinary

life needs the gateway to man's well being. Romanticism, for example, is opposed to it for its rationalist perspective, which reinforces the subjectivist bias. The rationalist bias pits reason against emotion and man against society and nature. To overcome this separation, Romanticism considers man as a biological organism whose life experience should express unity, wholeness, and purposiveness. As a

biological organism, man grows and changes according to the pattern encoded in the person, an inborn inner essence that initially exists in *potential*, known in Greek philosophy as intelligible essence, which, as it were, yearns for its realisation through a natural process of self-unfolding.

The process of self-unfolding can get and usually gets distorted and warped, if the environment in which it occurs does not harmoniously echo the person's inner pulsations. On this view, discovering the unique essence constitutes in itself the mode of self-expression.

The vision that Romanticism projects on man and his world has yet to be absorbed and assimilated in public institutions. It constitutes an integral part of modern identity of man and shapes his private aspirations. It advocates a life according to nature. This involves a fusion of the biological and the moral instead of their hierarchical ordering or setting in a relation of rational control. If this fusion were to be fully realised in private life and institutional structures,

it would accentuate the opposition between man's subjectivity and the external world.

9.5 MARXIAN REFORMULATION

If Romanticism attacks the dominant paradigm of development for its predilection for rationality, Marxism does so for its propensity for the primacy of the individual. It cannot be denied that the fulfillment of human needs is *sine qua non* for human development. However, the environment in which these needs are to be fulfilled receives different treatment by different schools of thinkers. Karl Marx makes the fulfillment of man's needs a

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necessary condition for the actualisation of man's dormant capacities in a characteristically human society. Making a distinction between biological and human needs, he argues that, unlike animals, man has, besides biological needs, which he shares with animals, also non-biological needs (cultural, spiritual, etc.). These needs arise out of activities aimed at satisfying material needs.

To satisfy needs, man uses tools that give rise to production system. Constant proliferation of needs induces a corresponding expansion of man's power along with the application of technology to meet them. However, there develops, in the process, a disjunction between the forces of production, the resources that man can command through his augmented powers and the relations of production the forms of social organisation, which govern the exercise of these powers and the control of resources. The disjunction is the genesis of dehumanisation of needs and man's alienation.

In the capitalist society, where this disjunction becomes very acute, use-value is transformed into exchange value. Labour becomes a commodity to be sold and bought; workers get alienated from their own labour. Marx uses the term "alienation" in three different senses. First, the workers' product becomes alien to him because his employer appropriates it. Second, as a consequence of this, labour becomes a commodity and capital becomes both a product of labour and a power over labour. And lastly, the entire thing must be considered as an effect of what man has done, an effect, which they never intended, do not understand and cannot control.

Marx believed that alienation in all these forms would cease with the end of capitalism. It will usher in communism signifying the socialisation of all productive forces; it is only through this that production relations could be freed of exploitation, appropriation and the resultant alienation in all the three forms. With the coming of communism, man will become himself and begin to

satisfy all human needs. However, capitalism will not end of its own volition; it is to be violently thrown out with the help of revolution. Thus,

violence, for Marx is therapeutic since it cures man's alienation; this is tantamount to arguing that the path to heaven passes through violence.

9.6 DEFICIENCIES OF THE DOMINANT PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT

The basic feature of the dominant paradigm of development and some of its variants underline the fact that acquisitiveness or avarice, as Adam Smith points out, is unquestionably the most effective means of keeping man's destructive passions under leash. But, avarice inevitably leads to the proliferation of material needs. This, however, remains the cornerstone of development as it is practised today. As a natural result of this, technologically induced and sustained economic growth must lead to a system of a large-scale production system making the advent of industrial civilisation unavoidable. As Adam Smith noted, augmentation of fortune constituted a regular order of fact; even while it is the most vulgar, it is the most obvious means by which, Smith insisted, the greater part of men propose to better their condition. A passion that was condemned as one of the most deadly sins was elevated to the status of the regulator of man's destiny. It was also supposed to be most durable basis of social order.

The pursuit of self-interest thus stands at the centre of the dominant paradigm of development and its variants. The pattern of development that takes its inspiration from the primacy of the pursuit of self-interest neither creates riches for all nor does it promote development of man. It has certainly created riches, but only for a few; it has also succeeded in checking despotism, but has also installed state despotism that is popularly elected, as Alexis Tocqueville notes.

What is perhaps more disturbing is that it has distorted man's development, reflecting a phenomenon of mal-development.

Given the centrality of economic development as the basis of all round development, it becomes necessary for man to focus his energies on the mobilisation and utilisation of resources for satisfying his proliferating

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needs. This leads to the externalisation of man; it means that man becomes simply the reflexive creature of external, largely material, objects which attract or repel him, his relations to those objects, of course, being, to a great extent, determined by his class and economic position. The externalisation of man signifies the suppression of the indwelling divine being. This paves the way for man to become what *Chhandogya Upanished* characterizes as *kamachar* (life engaged in satisfying desires) or, as Plato calls “the slave of many mad masters”. Man’s slavery to his passions renders him a “broken totality” signifying a split in the interior of man. This further leads to splits between man and society and between man and nature.

These splits are the natural result of the ascendancy of instrumental rationality that treats both society and nature as objects. Instrumental view of the external world drains out all significance from society and nature. Given the nature of man as nothing more than a receptacle of interests, he must disengage himself from the external world and seek to mould it to his own will to serve his purpose. That is why freedom is defined as the absence of constraints on human action. But to define freedom in such terms is to give a free play to power drive that transforms social relations into “war of one against all.” It depicts a situation in which everybody must seek to have a privileged access to and control over scarce societal resources. Competition is forced upon individuals because everyone has to fend for himself as his well-being depends on the extent to which he can mobilise the necessary resources in a situation where everyone else is engaged in a similar pursuit. In this competition, a divergence occurs between the good of one individual and the good of all individuals. This is so for basically two reasons. First, there operates a tendency in the economic system signifying that the very process of satisfaction of wants creates wealth, to be sure; however, material growth, as Fred Hirsch points out, creates new wants. The efforts to satisfy these wants create “divergence between what is possible for one individual and what is possible for all individuals. Increased material resources enlarge the demand for positional (that is, status-related) goods, a demand that can be satisfied for some only by frustrating demands by others”.

Second, the pursuit of self-interest is both natural and rational. However, acute competition for controlling resources by individuals and corporations is likely to collide with the realization of collective good. In promoting his own interest, the individual fails to confront in his own action “the distinction between what is available as a result of getting ahead of others and what is available from a general advance shared by all.” Failing to do so, “the individual who wants to see better has to stand on tiptoe. In the game of beggar your neighbour, that is what each individual must try to do, even though not all can” (Fred Hirsch, 1977, p.10). These strategies underline the motivation of individuals, signifying the need to outdoing others for comparative advantage. As a result, social cooperation, morality and social harmony become the casualty of human cupidity. The competition of each against all does not imply that all can succeed; some get ahead and a large number of people are left behind. In this unequal race, only the rich and powerful can win. Thus inequality is not only aggravated, but also deepened and perpetuated. Unable to secure equality by their own strength and efforts, people have to depend on the state for attaining and enjoying equality. This allows the state to become omnipotent by entering into various aspects of people’s life, regulating social relations, and severely limiting people’s freedom of choice.

What the dominant paradigm of development does is to encourage what Gandhi calls the “act of establishing the maximum inequality in our own favour”. This mentality accentuates the affliction of inequality, facilitates exploitation and institutionalises domination. It also makes social conflict endemic. It leads to ecological degradation brought about by the relentless use of sophisticated technology that science has contrived. We seem to have reached a state where the follies of man cannot be easily repaired. As Jonas observes, “we live in an era of enormous and largely irreversible consequences of human action, in an era of what I call the total and global impact of almost any of the courses we embark upon under the conditions of technological might;

and we must anticipate that these courses, once set in motion will run self propelled to their extremes” (Jonas, 1969, pp.78-79).

The variants of the dominant paradigm of development are least helpful in promoting human development. The reluctance to give up the idea of self-interest and the objective of a materially prosperous life renders them theoretically unsound and pragmatically unhelpful in neutralizing factors that impede human development. When things go wrong, they propose not to heal the psyche of man, but to change man’s exterior, that is, the society he belongs to. This is

tantamount to dealing with symptoms without focusing on the root cause that produces these symptoms. As Gandhi observes, the standard of the kind of life that man must lead is in the interior of man, not outside. He reiterates that it is not possession but possessiveness that is the root cause of man’s problems. It is in this context that John Dewey’s saying that the Cartesian dictum “I think, therefore, I am” is not as appropriate as the dictum “I own, therefore, I am.” And yet, what I own does not either make me happy or even comfortable.

Moreover, it has not added to human well-being; rather, there operates the phenomenon of increasing totals and decreasing margins.

9.6.1 Paradoxes Of The Modern Paradigm Of

Development

The dominant paradigm has led us from crisis to crisis, from bankruptcy to revolt and from revolution to conflagration. Today because of the pursuit of this development the impact of globalisation on contemporary society has become all-encompassing. Human beings are seen as rational, self-interested persons, who economise- make cost-benefit analysis before reaching a decision. Growth and development are understood in terms of consumerism and material

success. New Right philosophies and neo-liberal tendencies have given impetus to consumerism and have globally affected public policies. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening. Controversies such as Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have been witnessed in recent years. Terrorism and extremism have become festering wounds. Instead of peaceful means of conflict

resolution, wars continue to be seen as a means of dispute-settlement. Dangers of environment degradation have caused panic, thus putting the very survival of human race in jeopardy. In their greed, world leaders find even the modest targets of Kyoto protocol unacceptable. Leaving aside the upheavals that this paradigm of development inflicts, what are the advantages by which it tempts us? It claims that the use of machines for production helps man to save time and labour, to produce abundance to multiply exchanges between people and to bring them into closer contact and ensures leisure for all. If it is true that it saves time then it is

surprising that where machine is the master one sees only people who are pressed for time. The assertion that it saves labour too is not supported by experience insofar as wherever it reigns, people are busy, harnessed to unrewarding, fragmentary, boring, repetitive tasks. Very few have a peaceful family life. These jobs wear a human being out. It can be asked: Is this saving of labour worth all the trouble? Development claims to produce abundance, but then how is it that wherever it reigns, there also reigns in some well-hidden slum the strangest, the

most atrocious misery? More importantly, if modern paradigm of development is instrumental in producing abundance, why then can it not produce contentment? Overproduction and unemployment have been its logical accompaniments. If it is true that it has brought people into closer touch, why have people become more intolerant?

The most paradoxical consequence is that man's freedom has been put in jeopardy by the market. In the pursuit of the "cargo cult" man has been robbed of his freedom of choice, does not procure what he wants. Rather the

producers of goods and services determine what he acquires. As such, his freedom is given content by forces outside of him (Taylor, 1979, p.106).

We should also note two further consequences. First, the trans-market society has placed a premium on ever-escalating growth and has raised aspirations and expectations. However, as aspirations keep proliferating, their very endlessness ensures that they must eventually encounter frustration on remaining unfulfilled. This necessarily heightens social tension and puts a strain on societal relations. Second, as the pace of industrial civilisation becomes fast, minority alienation also amplifies. The erosion of traditional identity and its supportive structures have stimulated radical movements with millennium hopes of laying the foundation of a new future.

However, these new beginnings fail to make any dent in obtaining harsh reality. As the promissory note of a better future proves untenable, frustrations multiply; unrest escalates; and social accord breaks down. With increasing unrest, differential characteristics of minorities and ethnic groups become politicised and the system becomes crisis prone. It is paradoxical that while traditional referents of identity have lost their sheen, they provide the basis for political unrest and conflict. As a consequence, discord not harmony becomes the prominent attribute of modern society.

9.7 GANDHIAN ALTERNATIVE

The preceding discussion underlines that as long as acquisitiveness and proliferation of needs remain the corner stone of human development, the economic system geared to fulfill human needs will have to depend on industrialisation. Once this choice is made, man's externalization will eclipse his inner-being and the resulting alienation of man will create several fundamental

problems. Since life will remain mechanically organised, man will be unable to develop his capacities to become human. Thus atrophy of man will be

complete. It is against this background that the Gandhian alternative assumes significance.

Gandhi's primary concern is to remove this difficulty that man faces by denying the development of his capacities to become human. This requires the reversal of the process of man's externalisation. Gandhi observes that in the West, they always think of raising the standard of life for improving human condition, however how can an outsider raise the standard when the standard is within all of us? This inner standard is the indwelling divine. As such, true development of man lies in his effort to get closer to God. For Gandhi, the attunement of the soul to the divine ground of being is the firm foundation of development.

To seek to come closer to God is to install an overseer in one's interior who takes a critical view at what man thinks and does. By installing this overseer man links his finite existence to the absolute, which happens to be the source of truth, meaning and value. This linkage between the finite existence of man and the absolute makes the requisite change in the inward spirit possible. This change in the inward spirit occurs in the lived world. Two conditions must

be fulfilled to promote this change. Firstly, the conduct of different life activities- social, economic, political etc., must reflect a commitment to and be permeated by the requirements of the quest for change in inward spirit. To be sure, this quest proceeds in the lived world; it must take note of the empirical reality that confronts man. There must, on the one hand, be harmony between man's inner life and his external life activities and, on the other, there must also exist a harmonious coexistence between the members of society.

Gandhi equates economics with ethics. Economic life and relations must be guided by moral values, as economics must serve the cause of justice. This is possible by promoting *Sarvodaya*.

The key to this is the principle that "we should "cease to think of getting what we can and we shall decline to receive what all cannot get." As Gandhi underlines, "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs but not for

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every man's greed." To live according to this principle is to emphatically put a stop to satisfying material needs beyond a limit. Gandhi recognises that "a certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help (CWMG, VOL.XXXV, p. 174). To cross this limit is to allow it to degenerate into physical and intellectual voluptuousness". Gandhi insists on minimising one's wants. One must resolutely refuse to have what millions cannot. However, all must enjoy the necessities of life. It is only on this basis that economics will be able to shed what Gandhi calls its "demonic" character. Also the internal and external aspects of man's life

can be well harmonised and human happiness can be combined with mental and moral growth.

The troika of physical, mental and moral growth constitutes true human development for Gandhi. With the synchronisation of all the three aspects, human development can be assured.

This development becomes instrumental in establishing a proper balance and harmony between man's internal and external existence, between man and society and between man and nature. According to Gandhi, it is through the refinement of individuality that a healthy social set-up is born. By the refinement of individuality, he meant changing life into a pursuit of truth, through the twin paths of "*aparigraha*" and "*ahimsa*". He says: "Man's happiness really lies in

contentment. He who is discontented, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. All the sages have declared from the rooftops that man can be his own worst enemy as well as his best friend. And what is true for individual is true for society" Self-contentment and the consequent simple-living can curtail the wants of human beings. Multiplication of material wants is the root cause of exploitation. Therefore, an individual has to grow above the material plane of knowledge and experience and reach a higher level of spiritual plane. Gandhi believes that spirituality should be reflected in the day-to-day affairs of

an individual. This spiritual dimension compels one to see a relationship between man and nature. This sense of harmony along with self-contentment minimises the attitude of exploitation of nature and fellow beings. Minimisation of exploitation and maximisation of happiness is the essence of Gandhian philosophy of development. This can be realised only when the principles

of “*aparigraha*” and “*ahimsa*” are practised by the individuals in a society. Gandhi insisted on ‘production by masses’ over ‘mass production’ by machines (Young India, 13-10-1921, p.325). It was also necessary to prevent the concentration of wealth. According to him, the present use of machinery tends to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few in total disregard of the teeming millions whose bread is snatched by it out of their mouths. Gandhi’s principle of non-violence was not confined to dealing with human beings. He wanted to extend it to dealing with nature. In effect, he deprecated the actions that degrade the earth, impoverish nature by overexploitation of its resources and create inequality among human beings. He pronounced a code of ethics for the society and the individual. Ethics, with truth ensconced in the centre, guided all spheres of man’s life. His concept of ‘bread labour’ insists that individuals do physical labour thereby raising the dignity of labour. To eliminate dominance and exploitation, a system of self-governance of small communities was for him, the logical step (CWMG, vol.LXIII, p.241). He emphasised devolution of political and administrative power.

He argued for Swadeshi, where the communities will conduct their business by consensus, depend on the use of local resources for the satisfaction of their needs, but coordinate with the neighbouring communities for mutual help. This, according to him, is true development.

9.8 SARVODAYA

Notes

People in the West generally hold that the duty of man is to promote happiness of the majority of mankind and happiness is supposed to mean only physical happiness and economic prosperity. If the laws of morality are broken in the pursuit of happiness, it does not matter very much. Again, as the object sought to be attained is happiness of the minority, they do not think that there is any harm if this is secured by sacrificing the interest of others. The consequences of this line of **thinking** are all too plain. This exclusive search for the physical and economic well-being in disregard of morality is contrary to divine law, as some wise men in the West have shown. One of them was John Ruskin who contended in "Unto this Last" that man can be happy only if he obeyed the moral law (Ruskin, 1940, p. 12). Gandhi was so much fascinated by "Unto this Last" that he paraphrased it and later translated this paraphrase into Gujarati and named it "Sarvodaya". The Mahatma recorded in his autobiography three teachings of this booklet (1) "that the good of individual is contained in the good of all; (2) that a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work and, (3) that a life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living. The first of these I knew, he further stressed, "The second I had dimly realized. The third has never occurred to me". "Unto this Last" made it as clear as day light for me that the second and third were contained in the first. I arose to the dawn ready to reduce these principles to practice" (Gandhi, 1927, p. 273).

This is how the word "sarvodaya" came to be used. But now it is a generic name given to the nonviolent order which the Mahatma aimed at. This philosophy was propounded by him, and later Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan tried to translate it into action.

Gandhi did not originally coin sarvodaya. Even before him, the idea of sarvodaya was found in religious books-Vedas, Upanishads, The Ramayan, The Gita, The Quran and many others. It was also preached by Indian and Western saints as well as philosophers. But Gandhi gave to these age-old principles and ideals an extended meaning and application.

9.8.1 Sarvodaya: Meaning And Genesis

The word 'Sarvodaya' is of Sanskrit in origin which is comprised of 'Sarva' meaning all and 'Udaya' meaning rising. The etymological meaning of Sarvodaya is the rising of all. This 'all' includes all living beings. In other words, sarvodaya means welfare of all. It is not something which one man or set of men can gain or enjoy to the exclusion of others. It implies the participation of all kinds of people irrespective of class, caste, creed and religion. It also stands for the total blossoming of all the faculties - physical, mental and spiritual of the human being. It is an activity in which all may partake and it amounts to a full realisation of the human faculties of the human soul.

According to Vinoba Bhave, the term Sarvodaya commands a two-fold meaning. Firstly, sarvodaya means making all happy by removing suffering and poverty with the help of scientific knowledge. Secondly, establishing a world state full with divinity, kindness and equality, Sarvodaya aims not at the rise of the few or the many, or for that matter the rise of the greatest number; it is not utilitarianism, which stands for the greatest good of the greatest number. It contains the germ of minority and majority. Contrary to utilitarianism, Sarvodaya stands for the good of one and all, of the high and the low, of the strong and the weak, the intelligent as well as the dull. As against the laissez faire theory, that is the survival of the fittest, sarvodaya believes in the survival and development of all. To Vinoba, "The idea of sarvodaya, as preached by the Gita is to merge oneself in the good of all" (Harijan, 13.02.1949).

Apart from connoting the welfare of all, sarvodaya commands two more meanings: firstly, the universal welfare and secondly, the integrated development of all. Sarvodaya rejects all those theories, which stand for the joy of a few. It advocates the welfare of all, irrespective of class, caste, colour, race, region or religion. The philosophy of sarvodaya makes the attempt of reorienting human mind for reconstructing human society. All

must progress together without collision of interest. Interpreting the purport of Sarvodaya,

Dada Dharmadhikari said: "Sarvodaya is a term with a wider connotation since it conceives of assimilation of all and not only of many or most" (Dharmaadhikari, 1960, p.18). Sarvodaya is a philosophy, which provides checks against the imperfections of human mind and soul.

9.8.2 Antyodaya Or Uplift Of The Last

Vinoba, writing in the Harijan, expressed the view that 'proper rendering of Unto This Last would be Antyodaya (Uplift of the Last) rather than Sarvodaya'. But he added that because Gandhi had preached that in working towards Sarvodaya it was necessary to begin with the last and lowest. This is one of the key ideas of Sarvodaya, though it has to be admitted that much remains to be done about its socio-economic methodology. It is well-known how current theories and practices of growth, whether in the West or the East, bypass this question and assume that the benefits of development would in due time percolate down, to use Vinoba's expressive term, to the last and lowest (Harijan, 10.04.1949). In contrast to this view, Antyodaya preached that the development should begin from the lowest and would in new course cover one and all.

9.8.3 Philosophical Foundations Of Sarvodaya

The fundamental notion in the sarvodaya philosophy is the primacy and ultimateness of the Spirit. Gandhi's dominant concern was with the realisation of God as all-pervasive Truth. His political, economic and social endeavours and programmes were oriented towards progressive enlargement of the moral consciousness through the service of the *daridranarayana* and the consequent, intimate and intuitive realisation of the primordial divine spirit. The belief in the all-governing majesty of the Spirit imparts to man the compassionate ethical incentive to share in the pain and anguish of all creatures because

all are the manifestations of the same supreme truth. Gandhi had sincere, unquestioning and deep faith in the divine being. He wanted to realise God through selfless, dedicated, social and political service.

The movement of sarvodaya is an attempt at the reinforcement of these abiding and significant values. One of the most distressing phenomena of modern times is the worship of worldly success. Success has come to be measured in terms of achievement, bank balance and efficiency. It is computed in numbers and expressed through mathematical figures, long charts, diagrams, histograms, polygons and cubes of statistics. But in the craze for success, power and strength, there is a silent repudiation of the perennial significance of the human spirit. But Gandhi would have refused to barter the human soul for external success. The latter is temporary and ephemeral. It may have only superficial glamour. But the continuing vitality of civilisations and cultures is built by the human spirit

which is oriented to the realisation of a noble and decent existence for all. Our political, social and economic life has been seized with a malady. The malady of our times-perhaps of all times, is the mad quest for power. Sovereignty is preferred to co-operative activity and suffering. Service is being given up in quest of personal aggrandisement. Humanity is, thus, undergoing almost a phase of moral collapse and ethical nihilism. In an era of the mad rush for power, the significance of sarvodaya lies in stressing the permanent value of self-abnegation. It wants to replace party strifes, jealousies and competition by the sacred law of co-operation by the sacred law of co-operative mutuality and dominant . altruism. Party struggles have corrupted and perverted political life. In its stress on the replacement of majority voting by unanimity in the village panchayats, sarvodaya is giving expression to moral principles of cardinal importance because it wants to enshrine the primacy of goodness and character in place of the sll of manipulation and self-assertion. sarvodaya; appeals to the mind and heart in terms of values and goals. The decadence and corruption which infect organised institutional mechanisms can be removed only by the reassertion of moral and spiritual values and their ever-growing

incorporation in social, political and economic life. That is perhaps the only way to the salvation of India and the world.

9.8.4 Socialism And Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya stands for the emancipation, the uplift and the elevation of all. It traces its theoretical roots in the Vedic and Vedantic teaching that from a higher standpoint all living beings are participants in our portions (amsa) of a super-material reality. Hence the good of all living beings which necessarily implies the good of all humanity has to be positively fostered. It repudiates, therefore, the limited gospel of the greatest good of the greatest number. It aims to serve the good of all and not merely of the numerical majority. It is, certainly, not opposed to the concept of social and economic equality. All beings are reflections or manifestations of a supreme spiritual ultimate; hence, all have to be provided

the opportunity for their greatest development and perfection. In socialism, the stress is on material and vital perfection attained through the devising of a socio-economic structure which eliminates wasteful competition and private appropriation. In the theory of sarvodaya also, there is no negation of political and economic satisfactions and requirements. It will not be correct to characterise sarvodaya as negativistic in its approach. It does not negate the importance of material commodities. It would refuse, however, to regard them as the dominant goal of all human endeavours. Like Aristotle, sarvodaya would like to use the external goods for the satisfaction of the human spirit. It would regard them as means and not as ends in themselves. But there is in sarvodaya, an all-dominating moral and spiritual approach. Economic amenities have to be oriented to serve the needs of the human spirit and it is wrong to cramp the free movement of the spirit by suffocating it with the all-governing dominance of the sinews of production. Sarvodaya, however, is not merely a theory of ethical justice. It is emphatic in its quest also for distributive social and economic justice. In its acceptance of the

concept that all forms of wealth belong to society, sarvodaya has shown its radical and even revolutionary character.

9.8.5 Self-Realisation Through Service

Gandhi's Sarvodaya concept, a social ethic for the welfare of all, is a unique reaction against the barriers of a Hindu social system, in which functional cooperation and ritual separation coincide. The ritual purity of the upper castes depends upon specific relations with lower castes, who thereby become impure. Gandhi tried to break this circle of depending origination of purity and untouchability and was proud to be his own sweeper. Cleaning a toilet, removing one's own "night soil" was for him not a symbolic gesture to 'raise the image of "Harijans", but an essential part of his own struggle for self-realisation.

"Service unto this last" and true self-realisation were interdependent.

Gandhi never made a secret of the fact that this quest for self-realisation was the driving force behind all his activities. He declared openly, "I am a humble seeker after Truth. I am impatient to realize myself, to attain Moksha in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. For me, the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. So, my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the Land of Eternal Freedom and Peace" (Young India, 3.4.1 924).

Even more revealing is the answer that Gandhi gave to a Polish engineer who came to see him on a rainy day in August 1936. He asked why Gandhi had retreated to a humble hut in a Gujarati village and whether his aim was simply humanitarian, just to serve the villagers as best as he could. Gandhi's answer put in a nutshell his "this-worldly ascetism" as the true driving force of his life.

"I am here to serve no one else but myself", Gandhi replied, "to find my own selfrealization through the service of these village folk. Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, political, social and religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the ,endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. And this cannot be done exqept through one's country. I am a part and parcel of the whole,and I cannot find Him +part from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, resourceless and inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I copld persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity

For a realistic interpretation of the Gandhian Sarvodaya concept and its present relevance as an attempt to build a non-violent social order, we must bear in mind its specific sociocultural and socio-individual background.

9.8.6 The Economics Of Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya's ethics of love, conversion and heightened goodwill are derived from its metaphysical idealism. But to the Vedic and Vedantic conceptions of the supreme existence of a spiritual ultimate m which the universe and mankind derive their being and value, sarvodaya adds almost a communistic approach to wealth.From the metaphysical arguments for theism, Vinoba Bhave has deduced several economic implications. If God is the supreme Existent and men are only temporary sojourners on this earth, then everything belongs to God. Thus Vinoba put forward a divine theory of land ownership. God is the supreme owner and hence, individuals subjected to ultimate death should not claim personal ownership over land. Vinoba further said that all the great saints in this covntry have taught that land

should not be kept under personal or private ownership. Modern sarvodaya also extends the connotation of the rather individualistic. Although, sarvodaya has its roots in the Gandhian thought which is primarily individualistic, in the context of the grave social and economic crises of the present day world, it has advanced towards the concept of a radically equalitarian social and economic structure. It does not seem correct to interpret the famous verse of the Ishopanishad- tena tyaktena bhunjithah, as teaching the ownership of all wealth by society. This verse accepts the individualist concept of property had simultaneously inculcates a spirit of non-attachment. It may be

pointed out that the social ownership of wealth is a concept foreign to ancient Hindu political thought.

Sarvodaya pleads for, (a) the repudiation of the proprietary possession of the

non-producers, (b) the establishment of the proprietary possession or malkiyat of the producers, and (c) the neutralisation or the negation of ownership. It hopes to establish a society of producers or laborers. Bhoodan and Sampattidan are regarded as steps towards the realisation of that kind of society.

Some of the basic techniques of sarvodaya are Bhoodan, Sampattidan and Gramdan.

One great economic advantage that has been claimed for Bhoodan is that it effectuates the redistribution of land without the payment of any compensations. The land-holders are asked to keep only that portion which is essential for their requirements and surrender the rest to the community. The protagonists of Bhoodan believe in the social origin of all wealth and hence they interpret this surrender by the land-holders as an act of giving to the community what really belongs to it. If Bhoodan and Gramdan are techniques of agrarian revolution based on moral force, Sampattidan is a significant path in the transformation of capitalism into the sarvodaya society. For the realisation of Sampattidan,

man is, at first, to utilise, one-sixth of his wealth for the sake of society. Jayaprakash Narayan says:

'The next step is that of 'Full Trusteeship'. Under 'Trusteeship' commercial and industrial enterprises would belong to the society and there would be no employer and employee.

The management and labour would have joint responsibility to run them not for themselves but for the good of the society as a whole' (Narayan, 1956, p.18).

Check your Progress

1. Proper rendering of 'Unto this Last' would be Antyodaya (uplift of the last) rather than sarvodaya'. Comment.

9.9 PHILOSOPHICAL ANARCHISM

Sarvodaya accepts the sacrosanct character of the human spirit. It is, hence, emphatic on the inculcation of the value of freedom, equality, justice and fraternity. It, therefore, is opposed to the state machine. The state is not the terrestrial reflection of the merciful divine being but is a soulless mechanical instrument to effectuate the will of those who have the manipulating skill, dash, cunning and capacity to control the governmental structure.

In tracing the evolution of the state, Vinoba Bhave says:

"In the early stage it was unrestrained violence that held the faith. Gradually man learnt to curb and limit his violence and the institution called the state came into existence. The formation of the state did limit violence up to a degree. The advent of the apparatus of government created a new kind of law' and order. Even Vedas had said that coercive power of the state was personification of Dharma. But gradually the state grew stronger, became

more and more powerful till it became an all-powerful state with the power of destroying the whole world with its military might based on nuclear weapons" (Vinoba,

1956, p.7). In most cases, the state does operate with the methods of intimidation, coercion, persecution and organised violence. Hence Gandhi was thoroughly opposed to the state.

He pleaded for Swarajya- the inner rule of man over himself. He wanted that the

Swarajya should be based on the moral sovereignty of the people. But while Gandhi believed in the spiritualisation of politics, Vinoba stands almost for the nullification of politics.

Sarvodaya aims to replace thoroughly the manipulative politics of power by the participant politics of co-operation. It emphasizes mutualistic activities spontaneously engaged in by the people. According to Vinoba Bhave, there are ten criteria of ideal polity:

- (i) International Fraternity.
- (ii) The conscious, spontaneous (as far as possible) and hearty co-operation of all the inhabitants of the country.
- (iii) The identity of the good of the capable minority and the general majority.
- (iv) The orientation towards the universal and equal development of all.
- (v) The widest dispersion of political sovereignty.
- (vi) The least amount of government.
- (vii) The easiest availability of justice .
- (viii) The least possible expenditure.
- (ix) The lowest degree of external protection.
- (x) The universal, neutral or objective spread of knowledge. Fundamental theme of sarvodaya is the realisation of the happiness and elevation of all. At the political level, this has two significant implications. They are, first, the repudiation of the theory of class struggle, and second, the safeguarding of the interests and rights of the minority. The concept of class struggle is based on the acceptance of the existence of divergent and even antithetical interests in the social structure. Sarvodaya, on the other hand,

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starts with the notion of the community as a reality almost sui generis and it holds that the aim of social and political efforts is not to serve the disproportionate interests of the dominant classes but to maximise the good of the entire community. Sarvodayism attacks the repugnant and perverse consequences of egoism and the lust for power and wealth. Hence, it stresses the necessity of disinterested service. Service, dedication, and the realisation of common good are its techniques and formula and it is opposed to the Marxist theory of class struggle which favours utilisation of violence. Once it is accepted that violence has to be renounced as a basis of organised social existence, there is no place for the advocacy of the disruptionist theory of the struggle of mutually opposed classes. Sarvodaya, hence, pleads for the replacement of the concept of class struggle by the more rational and organic theory of social good and harmony. This social harmony is to be realised not by mere verbal profession. It is to be experienced in daily conduct.

There has to be deliberate extension of good feelings. The aim is not the forcible

expropriation of the wealth of the rich but the conscious and spontaneous practice of 'sharing' the goods one has ready at hand. In this way, there can be an overpowering accentuation of the ideal of sharing and almost a mass moral revolution oriented to the effectuation of a peaceful social reconstruction can be brought about. The aim of this

revolution is not to seize power but to bring about a change in one's outlook and

hierarchy of values. The propensity to accumulate has to give place to the propensity to share.

But the repudiation of the concept of class-struggle and the acceptance of the ideal of social harmony do not mean the perpetuation of the present status quo with landlords and big farmers on one side and small farmers and agricultural labourers on the other, and the exploitation of the latter by the former. In his earlier days of political leadership, Gandhi was in favour of retaining the Zamindars but, later on, his views underwent a radical transformation and he talked endlessly about a social structure rid of all

class stratification. Sarvodaya contemplates not the retention of the system of exploitation and coercion but it wants to bring about a regime of absolute social equality and the maximum of economic equality. On the plane of social idealism, sarvodaya and communism both accept social equality. But the vital difference is found in the profound attachment of sarvodaya to the ethics and techniques of non-violence. Sarvodaya contemplates a regime of equality and justice to be brought about by the dynamic transforming power of love and non-violence.

9.10 THE REPUDIATION OF THE CONCEPT OF MAJORITARIANISM

The second implication from the sarvodayist conception of the organic reality of the community is the repudiation of the element of superior virtue supposed to be contained in the judgement of a majority of heads. If the community is an organic structure and if all the individual members of it are bearers of moral and cultural values, then there is no place for jeopardizing lives and interests of even the lowest and the humblest. From the superficial standpoint of having got oneself registered in the list of the component members of a specific group or having paid the requisite fees for membership of a particular party, one may be in a majority or a minority. But if truth is the supreme canon and if the opinion, wish and aspiration of every one member is precious, then, in that case, one has to work on the basis of consensus and not of majority. There has to be discussion and debate and through the dialectics of argument and counter-argument some fundamental areas of mutual goodwill emerge. This and not the numerical counting of heads is the genuine method of social action. Hence, according to sarvodaya, the concept of majoritarianism has to be replaced by the concept of consensus. Sarvodaya is not satisfied with the various safeguards of proportional representation that have been devised to

protect the interests of the minority. It adheres, rather, to the Gandhian concept that the superficial numerical criteria of many and few have to be replaced by a fundamental adherence to the good of the community. Sometimes it is said that different types of parties and associations grow in response to the diversity of social interests. But sarvodaya implies that this mechanical conception of plurality of social interests has to be replaced by the moral conception of the homogeneity of the fundamental interests of the society. Thus sarvodaya aims to replace the concept of majoritarianism by the concept of fundamental consensus.

9.11 LETS SUM UP

This Unit highlights the discontent aspects of the modern paradigm of development. It is paradoxical that man, instead of turning inwards to attain ultimate happiness through spirituality is taking recourse to the material wealth and multiplication of wants as the ultimate source of happiness. Gandhi opposed this materialism. He was in favour of an economic system in which every person earned his bread by 'bread labour'. Gandhi elevated economics from a mere material plane to a spiritual plane and directly related the science of economics to the science of life, which, he felt, would lead to the right kind of development. The philosophy of Antyodaya to Sarvodaya, based on the insights and experiences of Gandhi, is a reassertion of the valuation and moral approach to the problems of mankind, which has been a part of ancient Indian culture for ages. Vinoba Bhave rightly said, "Sarvodaya stands for not only making all happy by eliminating suffering from all but also for the bringing of a world state based on equality." For Gandhi, sarvodaya stands for the merger of one in all with self-sacrifice and a selfless service. His sarvodaya ideal, apart from standing for the meaning of the welfare of all, implies the meaning of the universal welfare and integrated development of all. As a universal ideal, it aims at not only fulfilling the minimum

material needs but also developing the ethico-spiritual aspects of all people. The great contribution of sarvodaya in the present century lies in the reassertion of the Gandhian moral approach to the problems of mankind.

9.12 KEY WORDS

Sarvodaya: sarvodaya stands for the merger of one in all with self-sacrifice and a selfless service.

Antyodaya: Uplift of the Last

9.13 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. The modern paradigm of development promises a better life for all. Critically examine this statement.
2. 'The modern paradigm of development must be given up in favour of Gandhi's idea of development'. Analyse.
3. In what way does the dominant paradigm of development differ from the Gandhian idea of development?
4. What, in your view, are the paradoxes of development? Can they be corrected or overcome without adopting Gandhi's worldview?
5. Discuss the meaning and genesis of Sarvodaya.

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9.15 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress

Vinoba, writing in the Harijan, expressed the view that 'proper rendering of Unto This Last would be Antyodaya (Uplift of the Last) rather than Sarvodaya". But he added that because Gandhi had preached that in working towards Sarvodaya it was necessary to begin with the last and lowest. This is one of the key ideas of Sarvodaya, though it has to be admitted that much remains to be done about its socio-economic methodology. It is well-known how current theories and practices of growth, whether in the West or the

East, bypass this question and assume that the benefits of development would in due time percolate down, to use Vinoba's expressive term, to the last and lowest (Harijan,10.04.1949). In contrast to this view, Antyodaya preached that the development should begin from the lowest and would in new course cover one and all.

UNIT 10 GANDHI AND DIGNITY OF HUMAN BEINGS

STRUCTURE:

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Religion and Morality

10.3 What is Religion

10.4 Morality

10.5 Social and Political Ideas

10.6 Let Us Sum Up

10.7 Keywords

10.8 Questions for review

10.9 Suggested Readings

10.10 Answer to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn the basic features of Human Life
- know the key features of Morality
- understand the basis of human progress

10.1 INTRODUCTION

In every ethical thought that seeks to reflect upon the nature and standard of morality, the problem regarding 'Means and End' becomes a very significant problem. In fact, traditional ethical thought has tried to relate

these two concepts to the concepts of 'Right' and 'Good'. The word good' even etymologically has a reference to 'end' and the word 'right' means 'according to law'. Being in accordance with law has a necessary reference to the ways of operation and behaviour, and therefore, to means. That is why sometimes it is suggested that if 'right' and 'good' have a necessary relation with each other, there is a relation between means and ends also as they are conceived in the light of the concepts of 'right' and 'good'. Some thinkers have gone to the extent of suggesting that in case the means is right, the end has to be good.

Gandhi also conceives 'end' and 'means' in somewhat similar manner, with the difference that he takes these concepts much more seriously. In fact; these two concepts have become central in his thought, in so far as the relationship that is conceived to exist in between the two concepts has very important implications for Gandhi's notions of Truth and Non-violence.

Gandhi's assertion that End and Means are intimately related with each other is a common-sense assertion. But, he goes beyond common-sense when he says that 'means' and 'end' are convertible terms in his philosophy of life. This assertion is not to be taken too literally because it merely throws light on the essentially inseparable character of the two. The end is the 'goal', and the means is the 'way' of the realisation of the goal. Means cannot be separated from the end just as the way cannot be separated from the goal. Explaining the relation between the two Gandhi says, "The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is the same inviolable- connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree." One implication of this description is that means somehow contains in it, (of course in an implicit manner) the possibility of the end, just as the seed contains in it the energy that is expressed in the form of the tree. This raises the question regarding the justification of end and means in terms of each other. Does the end justify the means? Are we permitted to attain good ends by whatever means we can? Should means also be essentially good if a good end is to be realised? Is purity of means an essential aspect of the way of the realisation of a good end? These are

precisely the questions which engage Gandhi's attention in his philosophy of means and end.

In arriving at his views on the matter, Gandhi, as usual, is determined by his basic metaphysical conviction regarding the essential spirituality and unity of everything. Spiritual unity is the ideal of life, the goal or the end of every activity. A spiritual end cannot be attained by any non-spiritual means. That means that a good end cannot justify any and every means. If a good end is to be attained, it is also essential that the means adopted for the realisation of the end is also good.

That is why Gandhi gives very great importance to means. He says, "They say means are after all means. I would say means are after all everything.' As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the end. Realisation of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proportion that admits of no exception." He illustrates this further by showing that adoption of a particular means makes very great difference in the nature of a work. Even when the end is the same and only the means are different, the character of the work will differ in accordance with the nature of the means. "If I want to deprive you of your watch, I shall certainly have to fight for it, if I want to buy your watch, I shall have to pay you for it, and according to the means I employ, the watch is stolen property, my own property, or a donation. Thus, we see three different results from three different mean." This shows that Gandhi is almost convinced that ends do not justify the means and that purity of means is an essential condition of realising good ends. A wrong means will adversely affect the character of a work.

There is a logic behind this. If we examine the nature of a work or a project, we find that the end of the work is always beyond our control. End is the ideal and therefore, is not yet within our reach or grasp. What we have at our disposal and control is the means. We can change or adjust or manoeuvre only means and never the end. Goodness-or badness of an act depends upon my doing it, and in doing anything we are concerned only

with the means. Therefore, it follows that the means has to be the right one. Clarifying his stand on the point Gandhi says, “Though you have emphasised the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, but having once determined it, I have never attached importance to its repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilise the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know if we can take care of them attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.

Gandhi's philosophy of End and Means has a direct relation with his doctrine of Truth and Ahimsa. Truth is the ideal of life, it is the goal towards which we must strive. But what would be the nature of this striving? What would be the way to approach Truth? That, according to Gandhi, is Ahimsa. Therefore, for Gandhi, Truth is the end and Ahimsa is the means. We cannot attain Truth by any other way. On some such considerations Gandhi, even while recommending that swaraj was the end of the Indian People,” always insisted on the adoption of non-violent ways for the realisation of swaraj. He clearly said, let there be no manner of doubt that swaraj established by non-violent means be different in kind from the swaraj that can be established by armed rebellion.” “Violent means will give violent swaraj. That would be a menace to the world and India itself.” Thus, Gandhi's uncompromising and straight recommendation is that if the end of Truth is to be attained, the means has to be pure, has to be the means of Ahimsa.

10.2 RELIGION AND MORALITY

In a philosophical account of the thoughts and beliefs of a particular thinker religion and morality ought to be dealt with separately because, philosophically speaking, the two concepts are basically different. Moral values are essentially this-worldly; they are concerned with life as it is lived.

Religious values have a reference to the 'beyond'. It is quite possible for the two to coexist, but conceptually they are different. In Gandhi's thought, however, they almost overlap. Gandhi believes that true religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. He would unhesitatingly reject any religion doctrine that conflicts with morality: He would be prepared to accept even unreasonable religious sentiment if it is not immoral. He says, "As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion over-riding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God in his side.

But then, for philosophical understanding the two can be treated separately.

10.3 WHAT IS RELIGION

1. The basic conviction of Gandhi is that there is one reality that of God, which is nothing else but Truth. His religious ideas are also derived from that conviction. If truth is God, sincere pursuit of Truth is religion. Religion is ordinarily defined as devotion to some higher power or principle. Gandhi is not against such a description of religion, he only qualifies it further by saying that that higher principle being Truth, devotion to Truth (or God) is religion. He tries to give an outline of what he means by religion in the following lines. He says, "Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion... but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and whichever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself."

An explanation of the passage quoted above brings to light the salient feature of Gandhi's views on the nature of religion. Firstly, religion is the expression of the permanent nature of man. The animal and brutish aspect of man's nature is not its permanent aspect; the permanent aspect is the aspect of Divinity-the element of essential goodness present in every man. Secondly, religion has the character of purifying and elevating one's nature. Gandhi believes that true religious spirit has the capacity of changing one's nature because it is the expression of the good elements present in man. Thirdly, religion has the power of arousing in man a sense of spiritual restlessness-a kind of a thirst-which enables the individual to cultivate and develop a sense to the right and the good, and makes him a truly moral man. Fourthly, religious aspiration is based on a desire and a cognitive urge to know the beyond. It has somehow the feeling that the ultimate religious ideal is nothing but the realisation of God. Fifthly and finally, religion involves a conscious and sincere love and striving for Truth. Without this all other characters of religion would be ineffective. Therefore, Gandhi says that there is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness.

ii. The Way of Religion

For Gandhi, religion is not just a theoretical concept that seeks to satisfy intellectual curiosity and urges, it is, for him the way of life, a practical necessity. In fact, he feels that a religion which takes no account of practical affairs and does not help to solve them is no religion. He believes that true religion has to be practical. Therefore, he says that religion should pervade every aspect of our life-even political life. Religion is the belief that there is an ordered moral government of the universe; and as such, this belief must have practical bearings for all aspects of life. What would be the way of the realisation of the religious ideal? for Gandhi there is no difference between religious ideal and metaphysical or moral ideal, the religious way is also the way of Truth -Satyagraha. The ideal is the 'realisation of God'. One is right on the way if he is following the path of Truth- and Non-violence. Even so, Gandhi does make a mention of such exclusively religious

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practices as prayer, surrender to God's will by subordinating one's body and mind to the call of Truth, self-sacrifice, renunciation, love and tolerance etc.

Prayer, in particular, appears to have a very great importance and value for him. Specially in hours of crisis Gandhi used to retire in silent meditation and prayer, and invariably after such an experience he used to come out with renewed vigour, strength and conviction. Prayer, according to Gandhi is not asking, it is a longing of the soul. Prayer is the only way of bringing about peace, harmony and order in our life. He says, "Prayer is the very soul and essence of religion, and therefore, prayer must be the very core of the life of man, for no man can live without religion." But, at this point a question may arise which Gandhi has been able to anticipate. "But why pray at all? Does not God, if there be one, know what has happened? Does He stand in need of prayer to enable Him to do His duty? No, God needs no reminder. He is within everyone. Nothing happens without His permission. Our prayer is a heart search. It is a reminder to ourselves that we are helpless without His support. No effort is complete without prayer-without a definite recognition that the best human endeavour is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind. Prayer is a call to humility. It is a call to self-purification to inward search." Prayer, thus, makes us purer and brings us nearer to God. Through prayer we are able to gain strength and prepare ourselves to share the sufferings of others.

Religion demands the awakening of the spiritual aspects of man, for that it is essential to subdue and to put a check on the bodily and the sensuous aspects of man. This requires a ruthless curtailing of all our selfish motives-an attempt to reduce ourselves to zero. This is a kind of self-sacrifice and renunciation. But this renunciation is not escape. Gandhi does not believe in flying away from the world. True renunciation means renouncing of the selfish and the personal for the good of others. Gandhi recommends that the religious man must practise renunciation by living in the midst of men.

That would mean that he will have to cultivate and develop a cold, indifferent and detached attitude towards worldly gains and losses. Gandhi,

following his philosophy of means and end, recommends that a certain way of practising this kind of renunciation is to do one's duty and work without caring for-or without even thinking of-the fruits or consequences of his actions. Gandhi, in fact, is following the path of 'Niskama Karma' as shown by the Gita. Gandhi calls the Gita his guru and tries to follow the Karma-marga as preached in the Gita. Renunciation, therefore, means selfless action for the good of humanity. In fact, the religious recommendation is that the fruits of one's effort are to be left to God, they are his concern not ours.

iii. Attitude towards living Religions

Religion, according to Gandhi, is more or less, a way of life, and as such is the personal concern of the individual who has to choose his way of life. But, if an individual has the freedom to take to the religious way of his own liking, he must also have a tolerance and a respect for the points of view that others might have chosen for themselves. Therefore, he recommends that the attitude towards different religions must be one of tolerance and respect. In his own case it is much more than that. Although sometimes an impression is created that he has a special liking for Hinduism, his attitude towards other religions is one of reverence. He was born in a Hindu family and so the way and the atmosphere in which he grew and developed implanted in his mind the elements and tenets of Hinduism. Naturally, the Gita and the Ramayana become his two invariable companions.

But he made a study of many great religious scriptures-of the Bible and the Quran-and he came under the influence of a number of saints and religious teachers. All these led him to believe that different religions are the different ways of apprehending the Truth.

Gandhi believes that every religion contains good precepts and noble teachings, he also finds that some of the interpretations and commentaries have degraded religion and distorted it. He also finds that almost every religion has given rise to some fanatic and unreasonable practices. Therefore, his conviction is that religions are good as well as bad, basically good-good in conceiving its ideal, but bad in giving rise to hatred,

crusades and fanaticism. The experience of communal riots in India strengthened his belief. Therefore, he suggests that religions historical religions must not be allowed to cross the limits of reason of sober reason', as he calls it. He is convinced that this element of rationality will be able to bring about, what can be called, 'a fellowship of all religions or, the kingdom of God a Christian expression which he also approvingly uses on various occasions.

His attitude towards all historical religions can be summed up in his own words. Describing his attitude on the matter as early as in 1921, he says, after long study and experience, I have come to the conclusion that (1) all religions are true, (2) all religions have some error in them, (3) all religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism, inasmuch as all human beings should be as dear to one as one's own close relatives. My own veneration for other faiths is the same as that for my own faith, therefore no thought of conversion is possible. The aim of fellowship should be to help a Hindu to become a better Hindu, a Muslim to become a better Muslim, and a Christian a better Christian. Our prayer for others must be NOT "God, give him the light thou last given me," BUT "Give him all the light and truth he needs for his development". Pray merely that your friends may become better men, whatever their form of religion."

This shows that in spite of the fact that he does not attach much importance to historical religious institutions, he has profound respect and reverence for all religions. How he hopes to combine rationality with religion can be well illustrated by the manner in which he remembers Christ the Saviour. He says, "God did not bear the cross only 1,900 years ago, but He bears it today, and He dies and is resurrected from day to day. It would be poor comfort to the world if it had to depend upon a historical God who died 2,000 years ago. Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you."

iv. Attitude towards Hinduism

In trying to determine Gandhi's attitude towards Institutional religions, it is essential to make a mention of his attitude towards Hinduism

in particular. He himself describes his attitude in this way, 'I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the Gita or the Ramayana of Tulasidasa, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know.' On account of such an attitude towards Hinduism Gandhi is at times, accused of being partisan to Hinduism. But Gandhi tries to make it clear that his love for Hinduism is not a 'bias' for Hinduism.

He says that every individual is born in a cultural environment, the traditions of which become important and significant for him. Birth may be an accident, but the traditions and heritage that birth brings with it are very significant. It is unnecessary and perhaps futile too to try to negate or ignore them. What is required is the proper development of the traditions. Gandhi feels that his initial education and the manner of his upbringing along with the religious traditions of his birth created such conditions that Hinduism suited him best. He feels that everybody is free to cling to the religion of his choice, and Gandhi's choice was for Hinduism.

Gandhi has definite views with regard to some of the important Hindu doctrines, some of which he openly condemns, some he likes and approves and some others influence and determine his own thought. For example, condemning UNTOUCHABILITY he says that Hinduism has sinned in giving sanction to untouchability. He goes on to say that the Hindu practice of untouchability degraded us to the extent that we have become pariahs. Again, speaking against animal sacrifice he says that such acts cannot be approved in spite of the fact that animal sacrifice finds a place in the Vedas, because they are against the fundamental principles of Truth and Non-Violence.

In spite of these references, it can safely be said that his religious ideas are influenced by Hinduism. In fact, even the attitude of tolerance that

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he recommends for other faiths is derived from Hinduism, specially from the Gita wherein the value of other ways and paths has also been recognised.

His idea of God itself is derived from some kind of Vaisnava Theism. The Hindu ideas of Incarnation, Idol Worship, importance of heredity etc. have all found explicit mention in the writings of Gandhi, with the difference that they have all been coloured in the light of the personal convictions and experiences of Gandhi. One particular Hindu idea that has been approvingly mentioned times without number is the idea of Varna along with the Varnasrama Dharma. Gandhi regards Varnasrama as a healthy division of work based on birth. The present idea of caste, according to him, is a perversion of the original system. Varna, according to Gandhi, does not admit the superiority or the inferiority of any varna over any other, it is purely a question of duty. It simply means that one has to perform the duties that his forefathers had been performing. In fact the original recommendation was based on the consideration that man is born with some specific missions, obligations and duties. He must do his share of work for the preservation and growth of his species. One is not born for the purpose of amassing wealth, because there would be no limit to it and consequently man will forget the basic mission which he has to fulfil in life—namely, that of awakening his spiritual elements. Gandhi finds this system to be advantageous in many ways. It is advantageous economically, because it involves a division of labour. It ensures hereditary skill, and as such limits undesirable competition. It has all the advantages of trade-unions and above all it reduces the possibility of individual poverty or pauperism to the minimum. Socially speaking also this system succeeds in promoting social cohesion, if of course it is not abused. Even politically and religiously this system had worked well, because every community used to manage its internal affairs through its varna system. But somehow, the System disintegrated and gave rise to many castes. Gandhi feels that the present caste-system with the existing innumerable divisions and with the artificial divisions imposed upon it, is the very antithesis of varnasrama. In fact, Gandhi tries to incorporate Varnasrama in his socio political scheme.

10.4 MORALITY

i. Religion and Morality

It has been said earlier that morality represents the core the essence of religion. According to Gandhi, true religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. Religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil. Just as water causes the seed to sprout and grow so religion causes moral sense to grow and develop.

There is a very logical reason for this. For Gandhi the religious ideal is the realisation of Truth or God. God is the essential unity of everything. Now, if this unity is to be realised, one must go beyond oneself-beyond one's selfish consideration and love others. This act of self-transcendence is nothing but morality. God can be discovered by trying to find Him in His creation, and that would be possible only by loving all and by serving all. This is morality. Therefore, D. M. Datta observes, "The path to the realisation of the True self or God, therefore, lies through the love of others and the performance of duties towards others as love demands. Morality thus becomes the essence of religion."

ii. What is Morality?

Ethical philosophers have analysed the concept of morality and have been able to see that the question of morality can be raised only with respect to such actions which have the quality of being called either good or bad. Instinctive actions or reflex actions which are more or less automatic, fall beyond the scope of morality. That is why it is said that only voluntary actions can be called moral. Voluntary actions are voluntary, that is to say, they are the results of the free decision of the doer. Therefore, they can be either good or bad.

One would be amazed to find that Gandhi's description of moral actions is quite close to the academic description of it. He clearly says that no action which is not voluntary can be called moral. So long as we act like machines, there cannot arise any question of morality. If we call an action

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moral, it means that it has been done consciously and as a matter of duty. Any action that is dictated by fear or by coercion of any kind ceases to be moral. It also follows that all good deeds that are prompted by hope of happiness in the next world cease to be moral.

In another sense, Gandhi's description of 'morality' is not so close to its academic description. Academically even actions that can be described as bad are moral because they are voluntary, but according to Gandhi, moral actions would include only good actions. In ethical philosophies of the academic type the opposite of 'moral' is 'non-moral', but in Gandhi and philosophy the opposite of 'moral' is 'unmoral'. Whatever is good and virtuous is moral, a sense to the good and the bad is the moral sense, and trying to live in accordance with the dictates of this moral sense is Morality.

But, if the good consists in doing good to others, it would involve sacrificing one's personal motives for the good of others. That means that Self-transcendence or Love constitutes the essence of morality. Love, according to Gandhi, is Divine; it makes performance of duty not only a convenience, but also a duty. But, Love at times, tends to be blind. This may lead to dogmatism and even to barbarism and fanaticism. Therefore, Gandhi says that morality does not consist in loving blindly, it is loving with the full consciousness and knowledge of love. Love in ignorance tends to become sensuous and narrow, knowledge will break its bonds and barriers. A good action requires and is based on a knowledge of its factors, conditions, motives etc. Knowledge, therefore, is an essential aspect of morality.

Morality thus is obeying the voice of the conscience with the full knowledge of the conditions that make this call imperative or obligatory. In fact, morality, according to Gandhi, is nothing but satyagraha. The requirements of morality are nothing but the requirements that a true Satyagrahi has to meet.

iii. The Cardinal Virtues

The virtues approved and recommended by Gandhi are nothing different from the requirements laid down for a true satyagrahi. Only he can be truly moral who has voluntarily chosen for himself the way of

Satyagraha. Therefore, Satyagraha is the highest morality. Even so, Gandhi has given special emphasis on some of the virtues of life -which, according to him, are essential for a pious and moral life. These virtues have nothing new about them, but the emphasis that has been put on them is both novel and morally expedient.

Traditional Indian philosophy has also emphasised the need of some cardinal virtues which everyone should try to practise. In fact, all the systems of Indian philosophy except Carvaka believe that the world is being governed by a moral law, and that the nature of the world is moral. They believe that every kind of action-good or bad-produces some tendencies and effects which the doer has to face or suffer. This is the belief in “Law of Karma” which, in terms of morality, changes into the maxim. ‘As you sow, so you will reap’. This being so, it is very essential that only such actions are performed which generate good tendencies. Herein comes the need of developing certain basic virtues, which would enable an individual to be on the right path. Indian Ethics talk about five such virtues: they are Non-violence (Ahimsa), Truthfulness (Satya) Non-stealing (Asteya), Non-acceptance or Non-possession (Aparigraha), and Chastity (Brahmacarya). Gandhi admits all these, and adds some more. The only difference is that Gandhi interprets these virtues in his own way-in the light of his own experiences. His one consideration is that these virtues must be interpreted in an upto date manner so that they may be consistent with the needs of the time and the conditions of existence prevalent at the time.

Before elaborating these, one general remark with regard to the practice of these virtues has to be made. Gandhi asserts that these virtues are to be practised not only outwardly, but in thought, speech and action. The aim of ethical activities is attainment of purity, and complete purity can be attained only when a person is virtuous not only in deeds but also in thought and speech.

(a) Ahimsa according to Gandhi is the most important virtue. Its nature has already been made clear. The moral aspect of Ahimsa is nothing but tolerance and love. It also lays down the maxim that all persons are

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equal. Therefore, for the realisation of God, love for every being is a necessary condition. Gandhi regards Ahimsa as the highest virtue (ahimsa paramo dharmah, and, among other things, the reasons for his preference are the following :- (a) No virtue can be practised unless all beings are allowed to live. We cannot do any duty to any follow being unless he lives, (b) all the other virtues presuppose love. All virtues require some amount of self-sacrifice and this is not possible without love.

(b) Satya - (Truthfulness) - Truth is conceived as God, and therefore, Gandhi says that regard for Truth or truthfulness is a virtue. How can we know Truth? And, without knowing Truth how can we have regard for Truth? Gandhi is aware of the difficulty. He admits, more or less, like the ancient Indian Philosopher, that Truth is in fact self-revealing, but that we have become blind on account of our ignorance. Ignorance, according to Gandhi, not natural or necessary to the self. We, somehow cloud our capacity for knowledge. Gandhi says that moral degradation or perversion of one kind or another causes ignorance. He explicitly mentions the six deadly enemies which cause prejudice, malice and ill-will to arise, on account of which the person is unable to see or feel the Truth. These deadly enemies are Just, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and falsehood. Therefore, in order to practise Satya one must constantly endeavour to free oneself from these evils one must cultivate moral purity and courage and must not allow these enemies to cloud his vision.

Gandhi is also aware that in the present-day world falsehood appears to be more paying and beneficial. By speaking lies people do get success. Gandhi is aware of it, but very logically he demonstrates the superiority of Truth over falsehood. He says that even when falsehood appears to be succeeding it does so only by passing under the garb of Truth. Only that falsehood succeeds which, for the time being, appears as the Truth. Only when falsehood is presented as the 'Truth', that it works and gains success. That shows that it is truthfulness and not falsehood that has the intrinsic power of goodness.

There is one condition regarding the speaking of the Truth which Gandhi accepts because of its pragmatic value. Even in accepting this Gandhi is trying to be faithful to the ancient Indian teaching. The condition is that the truth should be spoken in a pleasant way. If the truth is expressed in a blunt, rough and unpleasant manner, it may be socially injurious as it might give rise to anger and quarrels. In fact, in the ancient Indian philosophy there is a maxim which says, 'speak the truth, speak the pleasant; but do not speak the unpleasant truth', Gandhi seems to be influenced by the element of practicality contained in this maxim. Therefore, he says that truthfulness has to be practised, that it is an art which has to be developed by rigorous and constant discipline and practice.

(c) Asteya (Non-stealing)-There are two senses of the word Asteya, it popularly means the observance of the rule of not taking away the belonging or the property of anybody unless it is given by that person. But, there is a stricter and a more rigorous meaning of the word asteya it forbids the keeping or holding in possession of such things that are not needed. Gandhi uses the word Asteya in both these senses. In fact, in conceiving the nature of this virtue he is influenced by Jainism which believes that stealing is also a kind of himsa. Property is, in fact, outer life, because bodily existence depends upon property. Therefore, to rob one of his property is to take away his outer life. Non-stealing is a virtue also because stealing is not compatible with the highest virtue of 'love'. Therefore Gandhi recommends that a truly moral individual has to take a solemn vow to cultivate the virtue of non-stealing.

(d) Aparigraha (Non-acceptance)-Whereas non-stealing is negative in its import, non-acceptance has a positive significance. This, for Gandhi, means contentment-being contented with the necessities of life and not to pine for more. Aparigraha is non-possessiveness Gandhi feels that the tendency to possess things is at once the cause of all evils. Therefore one must cultivate the discipline of living with what one has: Gandhi, of course, is aware that it is not possible to practise this virtue in the absolute way, because absolute non-possessiveness is impossible in life; even the body is a

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possession the things needed for the preservation of the body are also 'possessions', and therefore, so long as we are alive we cannot completely do away with possessions. Even so, aparigraha has to be practised to the best of one's capacity because this does away with the cause of rift in social life and provides a solid foundation for a universal love to flourish.

(e) Brahmacharya (Celibacy)-The word Brahmacharya etymologically means living in the Brahman. Popularly it means abstinence from sexual relations or at least physical control over the organ of generation. In fact, the ways of the ancient Indian life were such that a student for the first twenty-five years of life was required to devote his energy to study and learning. He was called a Brahmachari, because he was required to gain knowledge about reality, God and the world. A Brahmachari, thus, was forbidden to indulge in sexual relations. On account of this the word 'Brahmachari' came to have the association (of celibacy) that popularly goes with it.

Gandhi uses the word Brahmacharya both in its popular sense, and in its traditional sense. He emphasises the importance of sexual control, but adds that Brahmacharya is more than that. It is putting a check and restraint over all the senses and the mind. Senses often delude us and misguide us. Immorality is basically born out of a desire to satisfy the demands of the senses. Therefore, we must cultivate a discipline by which we, instead of being led astray by the senses, may be able to keep the senses under control. In fact, even sexual control cannot be practised unless senses are put in check. For example, Gandhi feels that our food-habits have to be changed. The palate is responsible for our taking delicious and rich food, which, in its turn, causes sexual urge to arise. Therefore, Gandhi experimented with different kinds of food, just in order to evolve a food pattern, which, without reducing the health-value of food, would not allow amorous and undesirable urges to arise. The name 'Brahmacharya' is given to a discipline of this kind.

These five virtues are the five virtues recommended and approved by ancient Indian Ethics. Over and above these, Gandhi recommends a few more from his own side.

(f) Abhaya (Fearlessness)- We have seen that fearlessness is conceived as an essential condition for the practice of Ahimsa. It is a difficult discipline because it requires not only a conquering of ordinary fear, but also a freedom from such fears as the fear of starvation, humiliation, physical violence and even death. Gandhi repeatedly asserts that cowards can never be moral. Fearlessness, therefore, is the virtue of having moral courage even in face of adversity and danger.

(g) Faith in God- Gandhi believes that none of these virtues can be practised unless one has a faith in the ultimate goodness of God. Unless one sincerely believes that the ultimate nature of the universe is moral, he will not feel the need of cultivating any virtue. The practice of 'love' also presupposes this faith. The faith in God, therefore, is not only a religious faith it is a postulate of morality' a condition for a moral and virtuous life.

Check your Progress

1. Religion and morality

10.5 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEAS

Gandhi called himself a Practical Idealist. He is an idealist on account of his theoretical views on account of the fact that he believes in an 'ideal' that is through and through spiritual. But, he is a practical philosopher because he always tries to put his ideas into practice. Naturally therefore, he comes to develop some views regarding society, state and similar other institutions. He tries to show in a concrete manner that his religious and moral views are not merely fanciful flights of the speculative faculties of a thinker that they could be put to use and practised. He tries to show that society and state can

very well be shaped in accordance with his philosophical and religious views.

Before any attempt is made to outline the social and political views of Mahatma Gandhi, one thing has to be borne in mind. Gandhi reflects on the problems relating to society and state not with the intention of a theorist. He is not interested in finding out the basis of social organisation, or in evolving a theory of the state. His ideal is a practical one that of introducing certain reforms in social and political set up. Therefore, his analysis of social and political problems are normative, they always suggest an ought, they invariably refer to an ideal to the same basic ideal of Truth and Non-violence around which the entire thought-system of Gandhi is built. Gandhi, for example, would not discuss in detail the process that might have led to class-formation, but he would discuss and highlight the process and the way through which such a system could become a healthier system.

i. Society

The first question with which every social philosophy begins is the question regarding the formation of society. Gandhi does not feel the need of entering into the problem regarding the origin of society, he would be prepared to accept any rational conjecture about class-formation. For example, Gandhi would not be opposed even to the Hobbesian view, which believes that society was a result of some kind of contract entered upon by individuals who saw that it was not possible for them to have everything for selves and that some kind of understanding with others was essential for a healthier and more peaceful life.

Gandhi derives a moral from this and similar other accounts of the origin of society-a moral which at once becomes the ethical basis of society. The origin of society lies in man's realisation that complete selfishness has no place in life. Only when man thought of putting some restraints on his brutish and selfish ways that society came into existence. Thus, the very origin of society lies in the man's conscious effort to transcend his egoistic ways -to rise above his selfish motives. Moreover, this also seems to be fairly plausible that the initial contract might have been entered upon only to

avoid strife and quarrel. That means that the very reason that led to the formation of society was to avoid violence. Thus, Gandhi has been able to find out the very basis of society, it consists in Non-violence and self-sacrifice. Even today, whenever we decide to have small groups or societies to serve certain common ends, these factors remain at the root. We have to sacrifice, at least to some extent, some of our personal considerations and we have to decide that we shall avoid inner strife and violence as far as possible.

From this, it naturally follows that in a society there cannot remain any opposition between 'individual good' and 'social good.' If the very origin of society lies in self-sacrifice, then there is a harmony between our personal considerations and the good of the society. This can be accounted for in a very simple manner. When man was in the completely brutish stage his ways of existence were not different from those of animals. But, when he decided to form groups and tribes his ways became different. His profession also, by that time, had changed from hunting to animal-rearing and agriculture; Even in society he had to care for his food and shelter, and for that he had to work in co-operation with others.

Gandhi feels that it is work that distinguishes man from other animals. This work relates every man with every other member of his society and serves the end of satisfying not only his personal needs but also the needs of others.

Work, thus becomes the basis of social organization. Even the modern sociologists admit that Labour -which is nothing different from work is the basis of social organization. But, they have developed their theories in terms of 'struggle', whereas Gandhi, although starting from the same point of work or labour, develops his theory in terms of love and cooperation.

iii. The Natural Classes or the Varnas

From this it follows that a healthy social life must be based on sincere feeling of co-operation and division of work. Gandhi believes that there should be an inner arrangement inside a society for enabling every

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member to do his share of work for the betterment of the society. He believes that the ancient classification of Hindu society into four Varnas had been made in that spirit. He says, "I believe that every man is born in the world with certain definite limitations which he cannot overcome. From a careful observation of those limitations the law of varnaa was deduced. It established certain spheres of action for certain people with certain tendencies. This avoided all unworthy competition. Whilst recognising limitations, the law of varna admitted of no distinctions of high and low. On the one hand it granted to each the fruits of his labour and on the other it prevented him from pressing upon his neighbour. This great law has degraded and fallen into disrepute. But my conviction is that an ideal social order will only be evolved when the implications of this law are fully understood and given effect to." This passage makes it quite clear that Gandhi does not approve of the present-day Hindu caste-system. In fact, it is a perverse or degraded form of the original varna in so far as it has distorted the very spirit of Varna. Varna does not mean that somebody is born high and some low, varna does not give superiority to anybody simply by birth. Varna is class not caste. The original varna distinctions were based not on the distinctions of high and low, but on the capacities, skill and power inherent in an individual, and also on the principle of division of work. According to it, an individual was a brahmin not because he was born a brahmin, but because he was brought up in an atmosphere that enabled him to perform the duties of a brahmin. Similarly, Ksatriys or Vaisyas or Sudras were known by their respective names on account of the specific duties that they used to perform. It was quite possible for a Sudra to change his vaena by successfully performing the duties of a different varna. Moreover, only because one Varna performs a kind of duty, which, from a superficial point of view, appears to be a better kind of duty than the duties of another varna the former does not become superior to the latter. All kinds of work are important and equally essential for the society, and therefore, all kinds of work are equal.

Gandhi makes this point very clear by saying that varna prescribes duties and obligations only, it does not confer any privileges on any varna or individual. The performance of hereditary functions does not give and 'birth-right' to an individual, it merely means that the kind of duty that he has to perform in the society has already been settled. The factor of heredity is also significant, because it avoids the possibility of rift and strife ensuing from making fresh distribution of work everyday. In fact, Gandhi asserts that if a brahmin born of brahmin parents fails to reveal the attributes of a brahmin, he ceases to be a brahmin.

That is why Gandhi invariably relates the doctrine of varna to that of Varnasrama Dharma. The notion of Dharma is emphasised very much. Dharma stands for duties and Gandhi says that every varna has specific and definite duties or Dharmas attached to it. To the fourfold divisions of class (Brahmin, Katriya, Vaisya and Sudra) are added the fourfold divisions of the life of an individual the four Asramas (Brahmacarya, Grhastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa). Gandhi believes that if these divisions are understood properly and their implications are fully realised, then a strong and moral society can be built on their basis.

iii. Bread Labour

Now, it is sufficiently clear that Gandhi wants every man to be treated as equal. Consequently, he comes to think of certain ways for preventing and eradicating social inequality; the doctrine of Bread Labour is one of them. This idea was suggested to Gandhi through various sources. The writings of Tolstoy and Ruskin along with the suggestions made in the Bible and the Gita suggested this idea to Gandhi. The Bible says, Earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow and the Gita says that he who eats without labouring for it eats stolen bread. Gandhi "feels that this idea can be useful also in bringing a feeling of equality among the members of a society.

By 'Bread Labour' Gandhi means that in order to live man must work. It is essential for every man to realise the dignity of labour and to think that at least for earning his own bread one must do some manual work. It is true that every individual cannot do all kinds of manual work.

Moreover, if every individual is required to do every kind of work, then the doctrine of varna would fall down. Gandhi is aware of this, therefore, he does not say that everybody should go to the field. Any man can choose for himself that work that he can do, he can spin or weave or do carpentry or any other thing. There is at least one thing that everyone can do, he can be his own scavenger. In fact, by doing manual work one would be able to keep his body also fit.

One may say that mental work is also work or labour. Why should, then, it be insisted that a person doing mental work must also do manual labour. Gandhi says that such an attitude causes social distinctions to arise because people doing mental work consider themselves superior to persons who do merely physical work. But, if the person engaged in mental work also does the work of sweeping and cleaning and does some other things also like spinning or gardening, the distinctions would vanish because the work of cleaning or sweeping would not then be considered inferior.

There is one condition attached to Bread Labour; in fact, this condition is a universal condition as it is the supreme condition of morality itself. Everyone must take to Bread Labour voluntarily. There is no question of any compulsion. Compulsion gives rise to discontent and revolt. Social life has to be a life based on love and willing co-operation, and so, the doctrine of Bread Labour can be socially beneficial only when individuals take to it voluntarily.

iv. Equality of Wages

Another recommendation that Gandhi makes in order to prevent social inequality is the one regarding quality of wages.

This doctrine provides the basis of the economic structure of society. It is only on account of differences in wages that inequality of all kinds results. People getting higher wages consider themselves superior, professions carrying better emoluments are considered to be better kinds of profession. But, Gandhi thinks that all kinds of work are equally sacred, they are all equally necessary for society. The basis for the division and distribution of work should be the aptitudes and capacities of the individual

and not wages. Therefore, he recommends that every worker should get the same wages. The lawyer or the doctor or the teacher should get the same emoluments that should be given to a sweeper or a scavenger. As soon as this is given shape men will start choosing their professions not in terms of wages, but in terms of their aptitudes and capacities. This would increase social efficiency. Gandhi is aware that the equality of wages is a difficult ideal to realise, but he is confident that any step in this direction is a step in the right direction.

v. Labour, Capital and the Doctrine of Trusteeship

The doctrine of Labour and equality of wages takes us on to consider the relationship between labour and capital. Gandhi holds that labour is superior to capital, and as such is able to give to the person doing labour a kind of dignity. In this respect his views resemble those of Marx. But, unlike Marxism he would not recommend an overthrow of the capitalists by force. He is DOL in favour of inciting labour against capital. Unlike Marxism he does not believe that class-struggle is the key and the basic principle of social development. He believes that society has to be based on love and mutual trust and not on struggle. As a devout believer in the ways of Ahimsa, he would not permit any violent struggle or fight even against the capitalists. Society, in spite of everything, must be based on moral considerations. Class-struggle will breed distrust and hatred and once these forces are let loose they will go out of control and this will have a disastrous effect on society.

For this Gandhi introduces the doctrine of the Trusteeship of the rich. Gandhi believes that even the rich people-the so called capitalists-are after all human beings, and as such they also have in them an element of essential goodness that every man necessarily possesses. If that element is aroused and if the capitalists are also won over by love, they would be persuaded to believe that the wealth in their possession should be utilised for the good of the poor. The rich people should be made to realise that the capital in their hands is the fruit of the labour of the poor men. This realisation would make them see that the good of the society lies in using capital and riches for the

good of others and not for one's personal comforts. Then, the capitalists would function only as trustees for the poor. They would then keep all surplus wealth in trust and this would guarantee both economic solidity and economic equality.

Thus, it is apparent that Gandhi's doctrine of Trusteeship is based on a sense of morality and love. This doctrine is nothing but a sincere working out of the doctrine' of Non-possession. The rich also must be made to realise, through a loving process, the merit of Non-possession. A critic of Gandhi might say that this doctrine is based on the assumption of honesty on the part of the rich. But, this is no criticism of Gandhi because Gandhi's entire beliefs are based on the presupposition that every man inwardly is good. He has tried to demonstrate this in various ways and he does not want to exclude the capitalists from that. Even they are good people, only their good sense has to be aroused.

vi. The Economic Basis of Society

Now, we are in a position to give an outline of the economic basis of society. Gandhi is aware that complete economic equality is an unattainable ideal. The factor of individual difference is very important, men do differ in their capacities and talents. Therefore, even if equal opportunities are given to individuals, and even if wages are given at the rate of equal wages for equal work, the output will differ from individual to individual, and some would earn more and some less. If rigidly economic equality is enforced, then, it will be completely artificial, it will take away from men initiative for work and change them into nothing but machines.

Therefore, the economic basis of society must be a moral one: society must be based on love and trust. This would naturally prevent economic exploitation. A good individual, whose inner moral sense has been aroused, would love to share his thing with others, would see the merit of contentment. Thus, even for economic reform Gandhi recommends cultivation of a strong moral sense and a love for others.

vii. Against too much of Industrialisation

Gandhi feels that the growth of a moral society is prevented by an over-emphasis on industrialisation. Gandhi has been able to perceive that such an attitude has given rise to many kinds of ills and evils both at the social level and at the political level. It is on account of an excess of industrialisation that such international evils like exploitation of the undeveloped countries, colonial expansion, war among nations etc. make their appearance. Smaller countries are exploited for procuring raw-materials and stronger countries get involved in repeated wars just in order to maintain industrial superiority. Then, even on the national level too much of industrialisation leads to many kinds of unrest and disruptions. It is on account of industrialisation that a permanent rift between capital and labour is created. Moreover, by substituting machines for human labour industrialisation creates problems of unemployment also.

But, the strongest reason why Gandhi is against too much of industrialisation is the fact that it poisons the very spirit of man. It makes life mechanical and artificial and seeks to reduce even man to the status of a machine. It lets loose a process of dehumanisation. The result is that man loses the zest for life. He seeks an escape by indulging in purely sensuous pursuits like drinking, gambling and the like. Consequently, he loses his moral sense, and, in fact, his soul itself. Gandhi reflects with horror on the possible consequences of such a process and therefore recommends a life that would make human existence meaningful and would give to man real happiness and peace.

viii. Men and Women in Society

A survey of Gandhi's social ideas makes it clear that Gandhi aims at the establishment of a society in which peace and happiness will reign supreme. He feels that this would be possible only when men and women realise their status and duties in society. It is a fact that women today are trying to compete with men in every walk of life by imitating the ways of men. Gandhi is also aware that men are not prepared to give up their sense of mastery over women. This appears to Gandhi as unfortunate. He feels that in an ideal society duties and functions are distributed not only among the

different varnas, but also among men and women. Both men and women have the same soul, and therefore are equal. The work assigned to one is not inferior to the work assigned to the other. Man, by nature is physically strong, and therefore he puts in hard labour to support and protect the family. Women, by nature, are loving, and therefore, they are equipped by nature to play the role of a mother and the caretaker of the home. Both these duties are equally important and necessary; this must be realised by both men and women.

Therefore, Gandhi recommends that the goal of marriage must be the same as the goal of life itself. Marriage must also be a means for realising a spiritual life. “The ideal that marriage aims at is that of spiritual union through the physical. The human love that it incarnates is intended to serve as a stepping stone to divine or universal love.” That is why he says that the object of sexual relation must be nothing else but preservation of race, that is, getting a child. Therefore, married life must be a training in spiritual love, the husband and wife must cultivate a sense of companionship and a pattern for co-operative living.

10.6 LETS SUM UP

Gandhi's political views, in a sense, differ from other political theories in so far as he makes even politics subordinate to ethics and religion. Usually politics is considered to be the game of the clever. Even deception dishonesty, telling lies etc. are considered to be political achievements if they are resorted to skilfully. Gandhi tries to introduce morality in politics, and that he does by presupposing that even political activity is an aspect of the spiritual pattern that guides the world. He works out his political ideas strictly in accordance with his religious and metaphysical beliefs. All men are essentially one and there is an element of essential goodness present in every man, and therefore, even in politics distrust, hatred, immorality etc. should not have any place. Satyagraha remained Gandhi's political weapon also. Even in politics he made

experiments and successfully worked on the conviction that hate and violence could be conquered by love and suffering.

10.7 KEY WORDS

Brahmacarya : It is putting a check and restraint over all the senses and the mind apart from Sexual restraint.

10.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Religion and morality are basis for human dignity. Explain

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10.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1 Answer to Check your Progress

1. Gandhi believes that true religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. He would unhesitatingly reject any religion doctrine that conflicts with morality: He would be prepared to accept even unreasonable religious sentiment if it is not immoral. He says, "As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion over-riding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God in his side.

But then, for philosophical understanding the two can be treated separately.

UNIT 11 TAGORE, NEHRU AND AMBEDKAR

STRUCTURE

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- 11.1 INTRODUCTION
- 11.2 RABINDRANATH TAGORE
 - 11.2.1 Tagore's Political Philosophy
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11.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you would be able to understand

- The political philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore
- Political ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru
- The political and social ideas of Dr. .B.R.Ambedkar and
- Gandhi's close association with these renowned men

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi led the Satyagraha movement in India to attain Swaraj. He mobilized the masses to participate in the nationalist movement. Gandhi's principles of Truth, Nonviolence and morality appealed to the masses and a unique bond was established between them. In the course of his Satyagraha, Gandhi had to deal with the contemporaries who were also associated with the nationalist movement, with their own distinct perspectives. Notable among them were Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. B.R.

Ambedkar. Gandhi had both agreements and disagreements with them on certain issues but he maintained his close association and friendship with them. They were his contemporaries and close companions in the larger framework of national freedom struggle.

11.2 RABINDRANATH TAGORE

'Rabindranath Tagore', popularly known as 'Gurudev', was a renowned poet of international repute, who received Nobel Prize for his literary contribution in 1913. A versatile genius, his interest was not confined to poetry and literary activities. He made notable contributions to religious and

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educational thought, to moral regeneration and economic reconstruction. His contribution in the field of political philosophy and socio-political reforms is of immense importance for which he is acclaimed as one of the architects of modern India.

Tagore had very close friendship with Gandhi. Gandhi called him 'Gurudev' while Tagore referred to Gandhi as 'Mahatma' as early as February 1915, when Gandhi had just arrived from South Africa. They had an intellectual debate over certain issues, and their friendship lasted till Tagore's death in 1941.

Rabindranath Tagore was born at a time when the currents of nationalist, religious and literary movements were prominent. He was influenced by Raja Rammohan Roy and Bankimchandra Chatterjee, known for their immense contribution to the nationalist movement in Bengal. The spirit of patriotism in Tagore was evident even in his early years. In 1875 he attended the Hindu Mela, a patriotic gathering held annually at Calcutta and recited a Bengali poem, 'Hindu mela Uphar', composed by himself. Again in 1887 he recited another poem, attacking Lord Lytton's repressive policy and maladministration. Thereafter through his works, he expressed his patriotic feeling. Tagore played a prominent role in the Swadeshi movement that swept through Bengal with the background of Partition of Bengal in 1905. He presided over the annual session of Bengal Provincial Congress held at Pabna (now in Bangladesh) and elucidated his plan of making the society an effective agency of creative activity and chalked out a programme for national reconstruction with the village people as the nuclei. Tagore was concerned by the split that took place in the Surat session of the Congress between Extremists and Moderates. In his presidential speech at Pabna, he emphasised the need for resolving the conflict without transcending the limits of discipline. However, Tagore could not reconcile his conscience with the differences prevalent in the Congress. Being a Universalistic, his mind was not confined to a particular political doctrine. He was especially pained by the revolutionary path chosen by few youths, which he considered as a futile attempt, an inconsistent gesture in the great Indian tradition.

Though he left active politics, his patriotism made him a close observer of the nationalist movement. He expressed his anguish towards the British government through literary works and letters.

His fiery writings inspired many people to plunge into national movement. Tagore strongly condemned Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 13th April 1919 and anguished by the incident, a month later, he returned the title of 'Sir' conferred on him by the British government.

In his letter to viceroy, Tagore said, "The rulers who have handy the efficient machinery to crush the human life and use it against innocent, unarmed and vulnerable people cannot stand on the justification that it was a need of political compulsion".

Tagore's entire life was devoted to literary writing and was influenced by his love for man and humanity; like Gandhi, he wrote extensively on the issues of history, religion, education, society, polity, village life, civilisation, culture etc. Among these are essays such as the *Bharatbarsh Dharm*, *Swadeshi Samaj*, *Atma Parichay*, *Kalaniketan*, and *Swaraj Sadhana*. He established *Shantiniketan* with the objective of building educational institution outside State-sponsored system and taking students closer to the nature and practical life.

11.2.1 Tagore's Political Philosophy

Tagore propounded the philosophy of practical humanism. He was concerned with man, not as the citizen of a particular state. For him humanity stood above everything. He was aware of the arrogant and irrational power of the British rulers who insulted and injured humanism; as a humanist, he resolved to fight this evil and had firm conviction in the principle of morality, goodness and love and championed individual freedom. He believed that the essence of freedom is illumination of the soul by a process of self-realisation.

Therefore for peace, prosperity and progress of man and society the people should be awakened first. According to Tagore man has two entities 'self' and 'the universe' which should be harmonised. Tagore preached

Universalism. He believed that cooperation and reciprocity of different cultures and civilisations is the need of present age. The synthesis of different cultures may enlighten the world.

11.2.2 Nationalism

Although Tagore praised western civilisation, he criticised the concept of nationalism which emerged in the West. Tagore was aware that Nationalism has released man from the shackles of feudalism. It has provided an opportunity for the people living in a distinct country to have an independent existence. Nationalism has inculcated desire in the subject

people to free themselves from the shackles of foreign rule. However in the practice Nationalism has evils which the poet has criticised. Tagore said that Nationalism has bred disharmony between nation states. It has led to international discord, bitterness and strife. It has inculcated spirit of exclusiveness and intolerance. Above all, love for one's own country has led to hatred for the others. Self-interest and Self-aggrandisement are the features of Nationalism. Greed, material prosperity and the consequent mutual jealousy led the nation to the powerfulness by creating fear of each other. This instinct of selfishness

and lust for power are greatest dangers to mankind. When a Nation considers itself

greater than people, it attacks the very vital of humanity. The West, under the impact of nationhood, has lost the consciousness; the living bond of society is broken and is replaced by mechanical organisation.

In his book *Nationalism*, Tagore advocated that unlike the West, India sought unity in diversity. Tagore opined that India is a country of divergent races, religions and languages.

She has accommodated foreign religions and cultures. This assimilative potentiality of Indian civilisation and social system is immensely unique. The basis of Indian civilization is society and the spiritual ideal of man, which is eternal. Commenting on nationalism in Japan, Tagore said that Japan took the concept of nation from the west but she has kept intact the

spirit of the East. She has her own soul, which must assert itself over all her requirements.

To Tagore, nationalism can serve greater good to humanity if it believes in national self-respect.

Nationalism should be based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity

instead of suspicion, fear, distrust and national egoism. To him, humanity is greater than nationalism and it can prosper and progress by happy synthesis of the spiritual unity of East and the scientific and technological advancement of the West.

11.2.3 Swaraj

Tagore's view of civilisation was based on reason and goodness in which the individual will not be oppressed. He therefore urged for Swaraj or Home rule. However he had a conviction that the awakening of India was a part of the awakening of the world.

According to Tagore, Swaraj cannot be attained by blind obedience to an outside power but only by the realisation of self in the light of intellect. He attributed India's decline and fall to the fact that India had surrendered her right to reason and judge the blind forces of Shastric injunctions and social conventions. Tagore further said, "Those who have failed to attain Swaraj within themselves must lose it in outside world too." Political independence is not the real Swaraj. Swaraj means moral and spiritual transformation of the individual in society. Swaraj, to him, was an internal attribute of man which could not be attained by any external means. It is through political consciousness and the consciousness of the

self that Swaraj can be attained in the real sense of the term. Political agitation may end foreign rule but it would not be permanent. Swaraj is futile if the people are not educated or taught to be self-reliant. Thus Tagore's concept of Swaraj is essentially related to self-realisation and creativity. In his own words "The village of which the people come together to earn for themselves their food, their health, their education, to gain for

themselves the joy of so doing, shall have lighted the lamp on the way to Swaraj. It will not be difficult therefrom to light others, one after another and thus illuminate more and more of the path along which Swaraj will advance by the organic processes of its own living growth". Tagore associated the welfare of the people with Swaraj. For him the welfare of the people is a synthesis comprised of many interrelated elements: health, work, reason, wisdom and joy. As he said, "If even the people of one village of India, by the exercise of their own power, make their village their very own, then and there will begin the work of realising our country as our own:"

11.2.4 Swadeshi Samaj

When Tagore urged for Swaraj he had a complete image of Swaraj in his mind which tried to preserve the continuity of Indian traditions. Tagore pointed out that the western civilisation revolves around the State; State is the keystone of the political arch. However, in India, society has been the main spring of constructive activity through ages. In his essay 'Swadeshi Samaj' published in 1904, Tagore has elaborately discussed this idea which reveals his emphasis on society. Swadeshi Samaj is a manifesto of Tagore's belief that India's problems are essentially social and must be resolved through society. The fundamental purpose of his scheme was to make society supreme and to promote social co-operation. To Tagore, society is the life force of India's civilisation. But it was crushed

under the aegis of the British rule and the society which had hitherto been supreme made secondary. This emphasis on supremacy of the state, he says, led to all calamities in India.

State interference of any kind is likely to dwarf individual's inner faculties, weaken the sense of responsibility, destroy the power of self-help and kill initiative. The state's function should be restricted to the extent of hindering of hindrances.

11.2.5 Tagore And Gandhi

Tagore's achievement in literary and creative spheres equals Gandhi's achievement in political sphere. Both of them exhibited the urge to put India in world literary and political thought. They were contemporaries in their works and deeds. The friendship and affection between the two continued inspite of their differences.

Tagore first came to know Gandhi for his work in South Africa through C. F. Andrews, who closely associated with Gandhi in South Africa. Andrews, a prolific correspondent, regularly kept Tagore informed of Gandhi's activities in South Africa. The real interaction between Tagore and Gandhi began in 1914, upon Gandhi's return to India. Gandhi chose Tagore's Shantiniketan to send the members of Phoenix Ashram till his arrival. Gandhi recalled later, "It was here that the members of my South African family found warm hospitality in 1914, pending my arrival from England, and I too found shelter here for nearly a month".

Gandhi visited Shantiniketan on 10th March 1915. To this day it is observed as 'Gandhi punyaha Din' at Shantiniketan every year. It is during February 1915 that Tagore referred Gandhi as *Mahatma* and their association began with the exchange of letters and articles.

They expressed each other's confidence and support on some basic issues. In 1920

Gandhi even invited Tagore to visit his ashram. However after 1920 Tagore began to express doubts about some aspects of the political movement led by Gandhi, especially his non-cooperation movement.

Both Tagore and Gandhi were basically humanists. The ideal of Indian independence was the bond between them. They sought to utilise the inner capacities of the people in creative ideals. Gandhi's 'Village Swaraj' and Tagore's 'Swadeshi Samaj' had a common meeting ground and both believed that India's domination by foreign rule was self-made and could be challenged by the soul-force. Both of them rejected material civilisation of the West. On many occasions Gandhi sought Tagore's advice and

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intellectual support before launching a major course of action. For instance, he wrote to Tagore before the resumption of civil disobedience in January 1932, before his famous fast on the issue of

depressed castes and separate electorate and again at the time of his entry at the

Guruvayyur temple. Tagore and Gandhi were completely in agreement on the issue of communalism. Gandhi was the gospel of communal harmony and Tagore fiercely criticized communalism through his writings. In 1937 Tagore requested Gandhi to be a Life Trustee of the Vishwa Bharati. In 1934 Gandhi had become 'Advisor' to the Village Industries Association in Shantiniketan at Tagore's request. Gandhi had, on several occasions, mobilised funds for Vishwa Bharati.

There were differences between these luminaries, the foremost being the issue of non cooperation movement which Gandhi launched. Tagore believed that the idea of non cooperation is political asceticism. It may develop into frightfulness in the human nature, losing faith in the basic reality of life. Secondly, Tagore raised the issue of Charkha, in his essay, 'Cult of Charkha' (1925). Gandhi propounded his Constructive Programme for rural development and economic regeneration through propagation of Charkha. Tagore expressed apprehensions about not only its economic efficacy, but also the use of moral language in place of the economic. He criticised the undue emphasis and blind faith in that distracted attention from other more important factors in the task of allround reconstruction. He asked, "Is charkha alone capable to bring us Swaraj or remove our poverty? How long would it possible to hide ourselves away from commerce with the outside world?" Tagore insisted that more than Charkha, it is the internal union of hearts that attains Swaraj. Tagore's doubts were genuine but Gandhi had his own philosophy

regarding the Charkha. For him it was the symbol of Swadeshi and nationalism. Moreover Gandhi had not recommended charkha alone, but a chain of activities for the rural reconstruction. Gandhi and Tagore differed

on the efficacy of fasting. Tagore found it painful to contemplate the suffering while Gandhi brought it upon himself by fasting.

11.3 JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Few statesmen in the twentieth century have attained the stature of Jawaharlal Nehru. He is a symbol of Asia's political awakening and is recognised as an indomitable fighter for freedom and international peace. Indian by birth yet western by education, modern in outlook yet influenced by the heritage of India, staunch patriot yet a man with international vision. Nehru was the symbol of a new society - liberal, humanist and equalitarian. Nehru's public life spanned over a period of 45 years- 30 were devoted to the struggle for independence, and for 18 years he held the dual position of national leader/Prime minister and world statesman. Nehru began his political activities by participating enthusiastically in Home Rule League established by Tilak and Annie Besant. Nehru joined civil disobedience movement launched by Gandhi and had come under the influence of Gandhi. He faced six months imprisonment during civil disobedience movement. In the early years of 1920 Jawaharlal stood for the ideal of complete independence for India instead of dominion status. Gandhi had reservations about the hasty decision of Purna Swaraj; hence never adopted it as Congress resolution. However, when Nehru became the President of the Indian National Congress at Lahore, the historic independence (Purna Swaraj) resolution was passed on the midnight of December 31, 1929. In the 1930s, Nehru was imprisoned on various occasions for around 6-10 years. He became the President of the Congress again in 1936, 1937 and 1946. During Quit India movement, he was imprisoned for nearly three years. After release, he became the leading spokesman of India in several negotiations with the British. In 1946 he formed the Interim Government of India. On 15th August 1947 he became the first Prime minister of Independent India. Until his death in 1964 he

earned reputation for India in the international politics and laid a strong foundation of modern India.

Jawaharlal Nehru was a keen student of History and his 'Glimpses of World History' and 'The Discovery of India' are the testimonies of it. These texts have made notable contributions in the realm of learning and Indian History.

11.3.1 Political Ideas Of Nehru

Nehru was not a political philosopher in the academic sense but he was certainly a man of ideas. His ideas reflected in his writings, speeches and policies which he introduced as the head of the state. It was ideological foresight of Nehru that laid the foundations of a strong, democratic, secular and socialist India.

Nehru was a great nationalist. He supported liberal nationalism and rejected the aggressive expansionist nationalism based on religious or racial superiority. To Nehru, Nationalism as it existed in India was both a composite and a living force. Supporting the nationalist movement against the arrogant British rule, Nehru said that India's desire to control her own affairs needs no justification. The British rule of 180 years is just a small phase in the long history of India. Nationalism gives strength and unity to the State. He was a firm believer in the right to self-determination. Nehru believed that in spite of numerous diversities, there is a unity running throughout Indian History. India has an assimilative quality which has created a composite Indian culture. He had a firm conviction that nationalism is not only a psychological feeling but also a rational understanding of nation's rich heritage. He opined that the attempt of European Historians to subvert Indian history, would not allow Indians to have a proper understanding of the prosperous Indian traditions. He therefore tried to Discover India's luminous history and culture.

Nehru's dream was of a strong India, not in the sense of military preparedness but strong by actions, cultures and ideas; strong to serve humanity by peaceful means. There was gradual change in Nehru's Nationalism towards Internationalism. In 1929 he had declared that India

wants freedom from British domination but does not want to de-link herself from the rest of the world. After Independence India would make all efforts of International co-operation and establish World Federation. However, World Federation can be established only by independent, sovereign States. After Independence Nehru made efforts in this direction and propounded peaceful means to resolve international conflicts. It was under his leadership that the principle of Non-alignment became the foundation of India's Foreign Policy. In accordance with Internationalism he suggested five principles (Panchasheel) of international relations. viz.1) Non-aggression, 2) Mutual Respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, 3) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs 4) equality and mutual co-operation 5) peaceful co-existence.

11.3.2 Democracy

Nehru's strong commitment to Democracy was deeply rooted in humanism. He criticized authoritarianism, Nazism and Fascism. He was a passionate and genuine defender of freedom. His idea of democracy was closer to Western democracy, with due emphasis on elections, adult franchise, representation, political parties and democratic institutions like Parliament. As a political successor of Gandhi, he emphasised nobility of means.

Nehru had firm conviction that Democracy cannot succeed if there is economic disparity.

He associated Democracy with socialism, equitable and just distribution of wealth and means of production. He believed that Democracy and capitalism are contradictory to each other. Democracy implies political power in the hands of all the people, whereas in capitalism the real power goes in the hands of few. In Nehru's ideal of Indian democracy, people were at the centre stage. He defined democracy as an ideology that provides equality and justice to the people. He emphasised the need to create feeling of participation among people, for better relations with government. Nehru favoured Parliamentary democracy for its lasting impact and also for its principles of continuity and change.

11.3.3 Socialism

As a student in London (1910-12), Nehru became attracted to the ideas of Fabian

Socialism. Nehru's participation in the Brussels Congress of oppressed nationalities (1926- 27) and later his visit to Soviet Union (1927) convinced him that the only key to the solution of problems of India and the world lay in Socialism. In line with the Fabian tradition, he realised the importance of State and accepted it as a perpetual necessity for realising an egalitarian society. He believed Socialism as an economic theory of state ownership and control of the basic means of production and distribution. It was the economic technique for the liberation of masses from feudal autocracy. Nehru's fascination for Socialism and economic development emanates from his deep concern for the suffering of Indian masses and a strong will to better their lives. However Socialism for Nehru was

not just an economic doctrine but a philosophy of life which involved profound changes in habits, instincts, values and motivation. He looked upon socialism as an extension of democracy and Liberty. Democracy has no meaning without equality and equality cannot be established so long as the instruments of production are not owned by the state. He had firm conviction that socialism can be established not by revolution or violence but through democratic, peaceful means without uprooting the Indian tradition.

In 1936 Lucknow Congress, he not only reiterated his belief in Socialism but even

expressed the desire that the Congress should become a Socialist organisation. After independence Nehru's approach to Socialism took a concrete shape. The Directive Principles in the Indian Constitution was a clear reflection of Socialism. The Avadi Session (1955) of the Congress adopted Socialist pattern of Society as the national goal. In accordance with it, the 1956 Industrial Policy was drafted. Socio-Economic Planning is the indispensable aspect of Nehru's Socialism. He was inspired by the Russian

experiment of planning, during his visit. He believed that the problem of Indian mass poverty and national economic stagnation could not be solved except through planning on socialistic basis. For Nehru, Planning was the process through which production would be increased and greater distributive justice achieved. It was essentially linked up with industrialisation

and not ready to pay the price of human suffering for planning, as it did in Soviet Union. The credit for introducing and initialing democratic planning in India goes to Nehru.

11.3.4 Secularism

Nehru was a thorough secularist and no religious creed satisfied his scientific quest for truth and reality. As a humanist thinker, Nehru respected the great founders of religion but he unhesitatingly condemned the role of organised religion in society. He was aware of its dangers and misuse. Nehru had realised the relevance of secular State in order to preserve and protect the composite cultural tradition of Indian Society. It was also essential for the maintenance of social stability and religious harmony among diverse groups. To maintain national unity and orderly progress in a pluralistic society, Nehru considered Secularism as a vital necessity.

It implied that state should not have any religion; neither should it have affinity with any religion but it should protect the rights and freedom of all religious communities. He also believed that material progress should be based on ethical and moral principles and continued his faith in Gandhian principle of spiritualisation of politics.

11.3.5 Nehru And Gandhi

In 1916 Lucknow Congress, Nehru met Gandhi and came under his spell. Their

partnership of exceptional energy and integrity survived numerous strains and stresses subjected by upheavals of politics and life. Nehru developed great admiration towards Gandhi for his work in South Africa. It was the

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cause of Indian Freedom that brought Gandhi and Nehru together and kept their association intact for many a year. Nehru was impressed by Gandhi's tremendous earnestness and devotion to work and the latter became a fatherly figure to Nehru. He also admired the harmonious poise and emotional interaction that characterised the personality of Gandhi. In a telegram sent to Gandhi in May 1933, when he was about to embark on his twenty-one days fast, Nehru wrote, "I feel lost in strange country where you are the only familiar landmark and I try to grope my way in dark but I stumble. Whatever happens, my love and thoughts will be with you." Nehru, however, disapproved Gandhi's fasts of self-purification. His rational mind always questioned it. On numerous occasions, Nehru was assailed by doubts about Gandhi's policies: In 1934, on the withdrawal of Civil disobedience movement, in 1937 on the formation of Congress ministries in provinces. There were few instances of clashes between Nehru and Gandhi as well. For instance, at Madras Congress Session of 1927 Nehru moved the resolution of complete independence. Gandhi was absent from the proceedings on this occasion. But when he learnt that Nehru's resolution had been approved, he exclaimed, "The Congress stultifies itself by repeating year after year resolutions of this character when it knows that it is not capable of carrying them into effect". What disturbed Gandhi at Madras session was the tone of Nehru's speeches, his surge to radicalism and his apparent abandonment of non-violence. In a letter of 4th January 1928 Gandhi wrote to Nehru, in which he said, "... Most of the resolutions you framed and got carried could have been delayed for one year. Your plunging into the "republican army" was a hasty step. (Nehru had presided over a Republican Congress at the Madras Session)" A few weeks later Gandhi wrote again, stressing the differences which had come into open. "I see quite clearly that you must carry on open warfare against me and my views. For if I am wrong... it is your duty... to rise in revolt against me. The differences between you and me appear to be so vast and so radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us. But this dissolution of comradeship – if dissolution must come - in no way affects our personal

intimacy". These differences never clashed to the breaking point. Nehru tried to make compromise partly because of powerful emotional bond and partly because of his conviction that Gandhi's leadership was inseparable during the freedom struggle. On many occasions Gandhi supported Nehru. In 1929 and in 1946, at the time of elections to the post of Congress president, Gandhi supported Nehru against senior leaders like Vallabhbhai Patel

and Acharya Kripalani. This time the choice assumed greater importance because of the impending formation of an Interim Government. One month after the election the Viceroy invited Nehru, as Congress President to form an interim Government. Nehru and Gandhi were in agreement regarding issues like commitment to the freedom and unity of India, pluralist society, Hindu-Muslim Unity, composite culture of India, secularism and peaceful and non-violent methods of settling disputes within and between nations. After independence,

however, Nehru did not subscribe to 'Village Swaraj', which was so dear to Gandhi.

11. 4 DR.BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a social revolutionary, a profound scholar, a charismatic leader of the downtrodden masses. He denounced caste system and fought relentlessly to establish a society based on the democratic ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. He firmly believed that democratic society in India would be possible only when the hierarchical structure of Varna system is dismantled. A giant among intellectuals in legal acumen and Parliamentary skill, Ambedkar was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution.

Born in an untouchable community, Ambedkar bore the brunt of caste discrimination and often faced humiliation for belonging to lower caste. Ambedkar was educated in India and Sayajirao Gaikwad, the Maharaja of Baroda provided scholarship to him for higher studies. Ambedkar did his

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M.A. from Columbia University and went to London School of Economics. After a brief stint in India, he left for London again; in June 1921, he was awarded M.Sc. in Political Economy by the London School of Economics for his thesis 'Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance in British India'. In 1922, he received the degree of Doctor of Science and Law.

Ambedkar's work in public life developed in three directions: first, awakening and

organising untouchables; second, securing political representation for the untouchables; and third, encouraging the depressed classes to take education. In March 1924, Ambedkar founded Bahishkrit Hitkarni Sabha for the upliftment of untouchables. Ambedkar started fortnightly Marathi newspaper '*Bahishkrit Bharat*' in 1927, through which he started educating the depressed classes, making them aware of their political rights and relentlessly

campaigned against untouchability. Ambedkar did not join the Congress movement and concentrated on social reform for he believed that Congress protects the interests of the upper castes. In December 1927 Ambedkar launched his first Mahad Satyagraha, to establish civic rights of the untouchables to draw water from a Public tank called 'Chawdar tank' at Mahad. On 25th December 1927, Ambedkar and other untouchables publicly burnt *Manusmriti*, as they considered it as a symbol of the slavery of the untouchables. In 1930 Ambedkar led another historic Satyagraha for the rights of untouchables' entry to the Kalaram temple at Nasik. This Satyagraha was launched just 9 days before (3rd March 1930) the Dandi March led by Gandhi. These Satyagrahis were peaceful and disciplined and large number of people from depressed classes participated in it.

Ambedkar knew that unless the depressed classes do not get share in the political power, their subjugation would not end. Therefore, while giving evidence before the Southborough committee, appointed by British government in 1918 Ambedkar demanded separate electorate to the untouchables. A similar demand was also put forth before the Simon

Commission. The British government nominated him as representative of depressed classes to the three Round Table Conferences to be held in London. These conferences were organised to frame new Act or a Constitution for India in accordance with demands of the people of India. In the First and Second Round Table Conferences, Ambedkar reiterated his demand of separate electorate for the depressed classes and was successful.

The Macdonald Award, known as Communal award, granted the depressed classes

separate electorate. Gandhi vehemently criticised the principle of separate electorate and began to fast unto death against the award. Dr. Ambedkar had no option but to sign Poona Pact with Gandhi that scrapped the separate electorates. Disturbed by Gandhi's attitude towards untouchables, Ambedkar wrote a book entitled "Annihilation of Caste" and made a historic announcement at Yeola that the untouchables would leave the Hindu fold and accept another religion.

After 1935 the political scene in India had considerably changed. Provincial autonomy was inaugurated under the Government of India Act 1935. Ambedkar was convinced that Congress would neither take any initiative in the social reconstruction nor would it safeguard the interests of the Depressed Classes. Preceding the 1937 elections to the Provincial assemblies, he felt the need for having Political Organisation of the Labourers and the Depressed and in October 1936 he founded Independent Labour Party. The Party won 15 out of 17 seats in the Bombay Provincial Assembly elections (Dr. Ambedkar too got elected). In 1942 the British government nominated Dr. Ambedkar as member of Governor General's Executive, as the in-charge of the Labour department. In 1946

Ambedkar founded the People's Education Society which started a number of Colleges for the students of depressed classes. In the same year elections to the Constituent Assembly were held and Ambedkar got elected. In August 1947 he was elected as the chairman of the Constitution drafting committee. After independence Jawaharlal Nehru included Ambedkar as Law Minister. However, he resigned from the post when he saw opposition to the Hindu

code bill which he had proposed. He also established Bharatiya Buddha Maha Sabha in 1955. On 14th October 1956 he, along with his followers embraced Buddhism at a historic ceremony in Nagpur.

11.4.1 Social And Political Ideas

Prior to Ambedkar's voicing the concerns, the Dalits had hardly any role in the sociopolitical life of India. The Social reform movement had also not focused on the caste issue. Jotiba Phule was perhaps the first person to detest caste hierarchy and inequality.

Ambedkar believed that eradication of caste system should be central in the social reforms, for political reforms are futile without social reforms and equality.

11.4.2 Criticism On Caste System

Ambedkar's life was shaped and influenced by bitter and discriminatory personal experiences for being a dalit. He therefore wanted to enquire into the origin and development of caste system and the practice of untouchability. His rational enquiry of the Hindu religion led him to the conclusion that Varna and caste system is the basis of Vedic culture. According to Ambedkar, Chaturvarna, as a basis of social organisation, is not only based on division of labour but also a division of labourers. Chaturvarna presupposes classification of people into four definite categories, the shudras being at the bottom of the ladder. They were denied all rights and privileges including that of securing education. He further argued that the early period of Aryan society recognised only three Varnas. Ambedkar explained the process of division of society into castes and sub-castes. He said that the subdivision of the society was quite natural but the unique feature was that they lost open-door character and became self-enclosed units. Prohibition of inter-marriage or endogamy further accentuated the caste divisions. Ambedkar felt that caste system wrought injustice on the lower castes by denying them basic human rights and preventing them from rising to the cultural level of higher

castes. Thus untouchables remained uncivilised and backward. Also the caste consciousness prevented the feeling of fraternity in the Indian Society. Dr. Ambedkar foresaw that only a casteless society that has inner strength can defend itself and also attain the goal of Swaraj.

Ambedkar had realised that the caste-based agricultural economy is the root cause of the suffering of the downtrodden and urged the villagers to leave the village and move to cities, to 'Educate, organise and resist' and to assert their rights.

Ambedkar detested the inherent inequalities in the society that provided no scope for individual development and for disabling the individual to choose his occupation; he also lamented on the lack of integrity, fraternity and equality. He thoroughly disliked Hinduism on these grounds and embraced Buddhism for it provided a rationalistic view, democratic principle, morality, the message of love and compassion. It enabled the disciples to modify or even abandon any of Buddha's teachings, according to a given circumstance. Thus Ambedkar's 'Dhamma' was manifestation of creative reinterpretation of Buddhism.

11.4.3 Nationalism

Ambedkar viewed nationalism as an emotional feeling that has great strength and

impossible to root it out. He reiterated that Indians would develop nationalism only when there is integration and respect for basic human rights. In a discriminatory society, the spirit of oneness cannot come into existence. Ambedkar believed not only in political

integrity and independence but also in social integrity. Ambedkar's nationalism was not aggressive nationalism, for he knew that it can become irrational and can give birth to intolerance. It was rational and secular. He believed that nationalism based on religion is fundamentally against democracy. Moreover India is a multi-religious country; the nationalist movement was led by both communities to establish a secular democratic state

and not a theocratic state.

11.4.4 Democracy

Ambedkar believed that without social reforms, political reforms are meaningless because the state ultimately is a social institution. Social traditions and customs influence the State apparatus. Therefore political reforms alone cannot bring about social revolution. Instead progressive views and ideas evolved from social reform can reflect in the governance of the State.

Dr. Ambedkar refers to Democracy as a system which brings about fundamental changes in the social and economic life of the people without resorting to disputes and bloodshed. He desired to remove contradictions created by economic and social inequalities. He wanted to establish the principle of one man, one vote and one value, not only in political life of India but also in social and economic life. Thus he wanted political democracy to be accompanied by social democracy. He was convinced that political democracy cannot last without social democracy.

Dr. Ambedkar was a great admirer of Parliamentary system of government. According to him, three important factors are inherent in the parliamentary system of Government. First, hereditary rule has no sanction in parliamentary democracy. Second, no single individual can presume the authority or superiority and cannot carry out administration singlehandedly. The law must be made by the representatives of the people. Third, the elected representatives, the legislators and ministers must have the confidence of the people.

Ambedkar pointed out the essential conditions for the successful working of democracy.

1) There must be no glaring inequality in the society. Such a division in the society has within itself the germs of revolution, impossible for Parliamentary system to cure them.

2) There must be statutory provisions to mitigate the suffering of the oppressed classes and to protect their interests.

3) Existence of an effective opposition is an important factor in the working of a successful democracy. The party in power must be subject to scrutiny and vigilance.

A strong opposition party can check the misuse of power by the ruling party.

4) There must be equality in law and administration. Ambedkar opposed 'Spoils System' as it existed in USA. He believed that there was a need of a permanent

civil service, recruited on the basis of merit for implementing the policy of the government.

5) There should not be tyranny of the majority over the minority. In democracy the majority is at the helm of governmental affairs. Enough care should be taken to ensure the safety and security of the minorities and effectively redress their grievances.

6) There must be a steady growth of Constitutional conventions and people must be educated in the observance of these conventions.

7) Dr. Ambedkar appreciated Harold Laski for his insistence on the moral order as a requirement of democracy. He believed that without moral order, democracy cannot sustain. Conscience of people is a test of democracy. For Ambedkar, democracy was not only a form of government, but also a way of life through which social justice can be established.

11.4.5 Socialism

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's concept of Parliamentary Democracy is reconciled with his concept of socialism. In democracy individual rights are indispensable and they can be protected by socialism. Individual rights are dependent upon the economic structure of the society. He was aware that if left to the market forces, depressed classes would become more vulnerable and would not be able to sustain in the capitalist system. He therefore advocated State Socialism, in which State should control basic industries, so that economic exploitation could be avoided. He recommended economic

planning and collective farming and demanded nationalisation of insurance. Ambedkar's State socialism reflected in the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Indian Constitution. He used the Constitutional tool for implementing State Socialism since he knew that Constitution is beyond the reach of Parliamentary majority to amend or abrogate it.

11. 5 AMBEDKAR AND GANDHI

On 8th August 1930, Ambedkar presided over the All India Depressed Classes

Congress at Nagpur. In his presidential speech Ambedkar expressed his disapproval of the Civil Disobedience movement launched by Gandhi. However, Gandhi's Satyagraha had influenced Ambedkar considerably as reflected in the Mahad Satyagraha. Gandhi was a towering figure in Indian politics and Ambedkar had great respect for him for he effectively voiced the concerns of the downtrodden and espoused the removal of untouchability. Ambedkar had made efforts to cooperate with Gandhi in the Untouchability removal programme as early as 1924. However Gandhi and Ambedkar had differences on certain issues such as untouchability and representation of the depressed classes. Gandhi had faith in Varna System and believed that to eradicate the practice of untouchability, it is not essential to end the Varna system. Ambedkar criticised Varna system for being divisive and emphasised the need of dismantling the caste system in order to end untouchability. He also felt that the issue of untouchability and caste system were relegated to background by the Congress. In his books 'What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables' and the brochure 'Mr. Gandhi and the Emancipation of the untouchables', Ambedkar expressed his views.

He therefore decided to work outside Congress party.

Ambedkar aimed at securing political power to the untouchables. He demanded rightful representation of the depressed classes in the legislative

council and demanded separate electorate in the First Round Table Conference. However, Gandhi disapproved the idea of separate electorate for untouchables for he believed that the untouchables were part of Hindu Society and separate electorate may divide the Hindu Society. Ambedkar criticized Gandhi's role as representative of the untouchables. Gandhi began fast unto death against he award. Ambedkar had no option but to sign the Poona pact with Gandhi that scrapped the separate electorates but made the provision for the reserved joint electorates.

Gandhi succeeded in keeping the untouchables in the Hindu fold and gave a larger share of seats to the depressed classes than the promised seats by the communal award. In spite of that, Ambedkar's bitterness towards Congress and Gandhi continued. After independence however Ambedkar's principle of Separate electorate for untouchables was not incorporated in the Indian Constitution and the provision of reservation for S.C. and S.T. was made to safeguard the interests of the Depressed Classes. Ambedkar and Gandhi differed in their views about the methods of annihilation of castes. While Gandhi propounded Village Swaraj and villages as the basic units of democracy, Ambedkar advocated leaving village life to condemn caste hierarchy and upper caste domination. Urbanisation was his answer for breaking the chains of the caste system. Ambedkar and Gandhi stood on the same side on the issue of non-violence; while Gandhi viewed non-violence as a 'principle' and not just policy, for Ambedkar it was primarily a policy. Ambedkar agreed with Gandhi on the issue of purity of means, which to him was an important differentiating feature between Buddhism and Marxism.

Check your Progress

1. Gandhi and Ambedkar on Untouchability

11.6 LETS SUM UP

Gandhi's leadership in the national freedom struggle was unparalleled. Nevertheless he thoroughly valued and respected his distinguished contemporaries, who were also his close associates. Gandhi's ideas converged and differed with those of his associates; but they never came in the way of consolidating their association and drawing strength and inspiration from each other. This Unit dealt with Gandhi's distinguished contemporaries like Tagore, Nehru and Ambedkar. In spite of their differences, they forged amicable relations and worked together for the larger goal of national freedom. Their political maturity and acumen were unparalleled and it is this intellectual convergence along with the mass support that ensured the independence for the nation.

11.7 KEY WORDS

Tagore: Poet, Painter of 19th Century India

Nehru: Freedom fighter of India, First Prime minister of India

Ambedkar: Freedom fighter of India, Chairperson of Indian Constitution

11.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Examine at length Tagore's ideas on nationalism, swaraj and swadeshi samaj.
2. Elucidate the political ideas of Nehru with special reference to nationalism and internationalism.
3. Discuss at length Dr. Ambedkar's social and political ideas.

4. Highlight Gandhi's convergent and divergent views from that of Tagore, Nehru and Ambedkar.

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11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- Gandhi and Ambedkar had differences on certain issues such as untouchability and representation of the depressed classes.
- Gandhi had faith in Varna System and believed that to eradicate the practice of untouchability, it is not essential to end the Varna system.
- Ambedkar criticised Varna system for being divisive and emphasised the need of dismantling the caste system in order to end untouchability.
- He also felt that the issue of untouchability and caste system were relegated to background by the Congress.
- Ambedkar aimed at securing political power to the untouchables. He demanded rightful representation of the depressed classes in the

legislative council and demanded separate electorate in the First Round Table Conference. However, Gandhi disapproved the idea of separate electorate for untouchables for he believed that the untouchables were part of Hindu Society and separate electorate may divide the Hindu Society.

UNIT 12 GANDHI AND HUMAN RIGHTS

STRUCTURE:

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Challenges to Human Rights:

12.3 Human Rights in Gandhian Perspective

12.3.1 Gandhian Ways to save Humanity

12.3.2 Relevance of Human Rights Gandhian Perspective

12.3.3 Gandhian perspective on human rights is basically a humanitarian and a non-violent one.

12.4 Gandhian perspective on human rights promotes the welfare of all

12.5 Gandhian perspective on Human Rights is based on human duties

12.6 Gandhian perspective on human rights promotes the fundamental freedoms and equality of rights

12.7 Findings of the Study

12.8 Suggestions and Policy Recommendations

12.9 Lets sum up

12.10 Key words

12.11 Questions for review

12.12 Suggested Readings

12.13 Answer to Check Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the human rights
- know the Gandhi's view on human rights

12.1. INTRODUCTION:

Human rights are essential for any civil society. In fact it is an inalienable right of every individual because she or he is a human being. The struggle to protect and preserve human rights is as old as human civilization itself. It has been a long and slow historical process for the realization of these rights. At the very beginning the concept of human rights evolved from the Doctrine of Natural Rights in which individual have right to life, liberty and property. In the LEVIATHAN, Hobbes assume that “every man has a “right to life” and the” right to its preservation” so much so that the social contract in which every man surrender all of his right to” this man or body of man” doesn't deprive the individual of his right to life.” Apart from the doctrine of natural rights the roots of the concept of human rights can be traced back to Magna Carta (1215), the Petition of Rights (1628), Bills of rights (1689), American Declaration of Independence (1776), and French Revolution (1789).The humanity had faced continuous suffering and exploitation in world wars. Hence special efforts were made by the UNO to protect the human rights. Thus in 1948, the human right has been universally declared by UNO. It consists of 30 articles with its preamble. It is one of the greatest achievements for all peoples and nations. The charter of United Nation Organisation in its preamble declared „we the people of UN determine to reaffirms faith in the fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of the nations large and small...”² The concept of human rights is difficult to defined. Generally human rights are those rights which are essential for the existence as well as the development of human personality.

12.2 CHALLENGES TO HUMAN RIGHTS:

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Even after the proclamation of universal declaration of human rights, the struggle for human rights is still continuous. Today, we notice the cases of violation of human rights at various levels. The prominent among these are unemployment, poverty, economic disparity, inhuman condition of work in factories, trafficking of women and children, sexual and mental harassment for working women, gender discrimination, terrorism etc. These are the major challenges to human rights in front of the whole world. Besides, violent conflict by religious fundamentalist and by militant groups is one of the acute tensions facing by every individual and nation. Fundamentalist such as Al-Qaida, Taliban in Afghanistan are the prime example, they openly engaged in violence in order to secure their fanatic goals and aspirations. It is evident from the 9/11 attacks on New York Trade Tower and Pentagon, London attacked, 26/11 Mumbai terror attacked, which threaten the whole world and create a mass violence and insecurity among the human being.

Besides the process of globalisation has also an adverse effect in human rights. Due to the rapid system of globalisation, it creates mass poverty, unemployment and economic disparity which are the major factor responsible for violation of human right. It would be pertinent to quote here Laski "Where economic disparities are glaring high, the relation among citizens will turned into masters and slaves." With the emergence of industrialization, in spite of tremendous changes in the directions of development as well as rapid progress in science and technology, the modern world has failed to eradicate the problems of violence, poverty, unemployment from the world, which posed a serious challenge to the whole humanity. Although, there has been lots of development at all level but the disparity between the haves and have-nots has been increasing on one side and the violence on the other side. Under such a critical and vulnerable condition the Gandhian way of saving the humanity has become very much relevant. The appropriate and effective remedy of this violence is not counter violence rather non-violence. As Martin Luther King says that

“Today, the choice is no longer between violence and non- violence. It is either non -violence or non- existence”.

12.3 HUMAN RIGHTS IN GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE:

The essence of what is to be human is expressed clearly in the life and action of Mahatma Gandhi. In his whole life he made personal sacrifices for others and he teaches us the sincerity and love of humanity. We all came across that his whole philosophy is rooted on the welfare of whole mankind. As we know that, ever human on this earth has the right to live in peace. To him, in pursuit of these human rights the only hope for the human was for every one of us to become non-violent. Gandhi was always ready to challenge the condition which destroyed peace in life. He wanted the upliftment of all human being and tries to protect from the various socio-politic-economic evils. His idea of Sarvodaya’ means welfare of all, is very much connected with the modern human rights and humanity. The globalisation of the commodity markets does not bring humanity closed to peace and justice rather it may result in hostile competition which will lead to violence. Gandhi was aware of structural violence under which the mass poor people are oppressing around the world. Once Gandhi wrote to Pandit Nehru that, “I must not fear if the world today is going the wrong way. It may be that India too will go that way and like the proverbial moth burn itself eventually in the flame around which it dances more and more furiously. But is my bounded duty up to my last breath to try to protect India and through India the entire world from such a doom. The essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs become self- sufficient .If he does not have this control he cannot save himself. After all the world is made up of individual just as it is the drops that constitute the ocean”⁵. From the above quote it’s clear that Gandhi was very much concern to save the humanity from violence and injustice.

12.3.1 Gandhian Ways To Save Humanity:

We are in dire need of Gandhian method for peaceful solution. His method of Non-violence is the precious gift for saving the humanity. According to him, to be human one must be non-violent. As we know that the most important threat for humanity is violence either created by religious fundamentalist or by nuclear weapons. Under such a vulnerable situation Gandhian non-violence is the one of the best solution to protect the humanity. Gandhi always fought without weapons and he was able to get victory in different fields. To him non-violence is the force of active love and truth which seeks justice and peace for every human being. During World War II, Gandhi wrote: “If the mad race for armaments continues it is bound to result in a slaughter such as has never occurred in history. If there is a victor left the very victory will be a living death for the nation that emerges victorious.” In the due course, the war which Gandhi talks, brings the death of millions of men, women and children, the prime example is the explosion of atom bomb in Japan by USA, still suffering the innocent people. We know that the direct requirement of today is establishing global peace and this will be possible only through Gandhian non-violence. According to him non-violence is a force more powerful than any weapons in the world. The US invasion in Iraq shows the massive violation of human rights. The innocent people suffered a lot but the main concern is only for oil not for saving human rights and humanity. He argues that the ends and means should be always same.

Besides, there are numerous methods given by Gandhi for saving the human rights from poverty, unemployment and economic disparity such as decentralisation, village industry and spinning–wheel. As we know that the world today, under the system of globalisation and industrialisation made both positive and negative effect. As far as concern with negative effect it creates a lot of poverty, hunger, unemployment and economic disparity. Gandhi was a great supporter of decentralisation at grassroots level. To him the village should have their independent production and administration. He

wants to uplift the poor people who are lived in village. So that, in India, we have the system of Panchayati Raj. Because of his great concern for poor people he gave more emphasis on village industry like spinning- wheel, khadi etc so that the rural people will be able to fulfil their basic needs. Due to rapid flow of industrialisation that destroys the village industry and millions of people were become unemployed and it creates a great economic disparity between rich and poor. Gandhi once said that, " Anything that millions can do together becomes charged with unique power". To him Spinning-wheel as a symbol of tool for development. Though, he was not against the machinery as such but against the craze for machine.

Today more than ever before the people of the world are well aware of their rights. As a member of human family, each and every one has certain inherent and inalienable rights. Human rights have been described as the minimum rights which every individual possesses against his state by virtue of being a member of the human family. They are inherent in every human being as endowed by nature and not given by any ruler or even by the Constitution. They are inalienable and so cannot be taken away by state action. In the world today, one of the major concerns is to recognize and respect the dignity of men and the equal rights of man and woman. human beings are equal, irrespective of sex, race, language and religion. Without human rights, a person ,cannot develop his or her physical, mental and moral faculties. They are essential for the development of an overall personality. Civil society is based upon the concept of human rights which are essential not merely to fulfil biological needs of the mankind but as well as for the dignity of the individual. Without recognizing the concept of human rights no polity can be a democratic one.

12.3.2 Relevance Of Human Rights Gandhian Perspective

Rights have always been regarded as the backbone of every democratic set up. However, from the practical aspect of our political system, the Indian society is known for its inequality, social hierarchy and the rich and poor divide. 'The social hierarchy is the result of the caste system, which still exists in India. 'The caste system has created invulnerable walls among groups of human beings where birth solely determines the social position in society. If a person is born into low caste family he or she is considered to be 'low' in the society. It is an open human rights violation which is prevalent in the Indian society. And moreover, it hurts the fundamental right of the citizen, 'the right to live with dignity'. The caste system is one of the worst forms of societal violation of human rights in India even today. Moreover, the caste system denies basic education to the lower castes and they are forced to live separately, away from the upper castes, mostly in the outskirts of villages. They are often denied the right to vote and they are also forced to work without any remuneration and treated as bonded labourers. Caste system is a major source of human rights violation in the society. It remained as a curse on Indian society and the humanity as a whole. Conflicts destruct the social security and peace among the people. The atrocities and human rights violations against the lower castes can be controlled only through a culture of equality of human beings. Gandhiji believed all human beings belong to one family a

The family is the humanity as **whole**. Gandhiji had said: "For we are children of one and the same creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world". Hence all men are the children of God They must be considered as brothers and sisters of the universal human family. And moreover, they must equally accept and respect each other without having any discrimination based on caste, colour, creed, tribe, sex, etc. Gandhiji believed and dreamed: "The

moment, we have restored real living equality between man and man, we shall be able to establish equality between men and the whole creation. When that day comes, we shall have peace on earth and goodwill among humans.

12.3.3 Gandhian Perspective On Human Rights Is Basically A Humanitarian And

a non-violent one.

The entire public action of Gandhiji in South Africa and India, regarding human rights was based on his humanism and the strategy on nonviolence. Gandhiji's humanism based on the great truth of inseparable identity and also of the fact that all men and women are 'Children of the same God

I do not want England to be defeated or humiliated. It hurts me to find the St. Paul's Cathedral damaged. It hurts me as much as I would be hurt if I heard that the Kashi Viswanath Temple or the Summa Masjid was damaged. I would like to defend both the Kashi Viswanath Temple and the Jumma Masjid and even the St. Paul's Cathedral with my life, but would not take a single life for their defense. That is my fundamental difference with the British people, my sympathy is there with them nevertheless. Let there be no mistake on the part of Englishmen, Congressmen or others, whom my voice has, as to where my sympathy lies. It is not because I love the British nation and hate the German. I do not think that the Germans as a nation are any worse. We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinction. I cannot claim any superiority for the Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into water tight compartments They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, India should be a consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact, and its freedom also intact only if I have the

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goodwill towards the whole: of the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India.

For Gandhiji, service to humanity is service to God because they are the creations of God. His humanism was based on the love of all. Hence he practiced the method of Non-violence to protect the rights of the people. Gandhiji found that Satyagraha is a positive method of protest against social evils. Human rights violation is a social evil. Satyagraha has the power to convert the violator and restore the rights of the people. His great mission in life was to work out non-violent techniques which could be applied to solve social and political problems. Respect of human rights comes from adherence to higher principles of life. As a champion of human rights, the personality of Gandhiji was based on certain moral principle. It was the greatness of his personality. The principles are mainly, Truth Non-violence, Satyagraha, morality and religion, and Sarvodaya.. For him truth is the sovereign principle. (Gandhiji's entire life was an experiment with truth. Hence he named his autobiography **The Story of My Experiments with Truth**. For Gandhiji, truth is God. Thus, the life of Gandhiji was an experiment with God. Hence the secret of success of his life was his co-existence with God. If a man has faith in God and fear of God, he can accept and respect the rights of his fellow beings because all are the creations of God. Hence a firm faith in God or Truth is an essential element for respecting the rights of others. Gandhiji believed God is the creator of man and all are equal before God and all have equal dignity and rights in their own self. Hence he fought for the rights of his people. Nonviolence

is another inevitable and basic principle for safeguarding the rights of the people. It was the first article of Gandhiji's faith and it was also the first article of his creed. He always acted according to it. Violence always hurt or violates human rights. But Non-violence protects human rights. In the contemporary world of violence, regarding politics, religion, terrorism: and communalism, non-violence has a significant role to establish peace

and harmony among the people. Eminence we must practice Non-violence in our day to day life to safeguard the human rights of all. Gandhiji successfully applied the method in South Africa and India to protect the rights of the people. And moreover, according to the constitution, it is the duty of a citizen to 'cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom'? Hence to practise Non-violence is the constitutional duty of a citizen. It is the highest duty. Truth and Non-violence are the fundamental noble ideals, which Gandhiji had applied, in the national struggle for freedom.

For safeguarding human rights we must practice Non-violence to be a way of life and infuse all social relations: familial, political, economic, and educational. Non-violence is not a negative virtue. It is not merely abstaining from violence or harmlessness, but a positive state of live or doing good even to the evil-doer. In other words, to resist his evil acts without hatred or harm to him. Moreover, the underlying principle of nonviolence is 'hate the sin hut not the sinner'. The philosophy of Non-violence is aimed at reconstructing, rebuilding and reshaping human nature. Violence is counter productive resulting in anger, hatred, jealousy, revenge and blood shed.

Therefore, non-violent means is the only alternative to eradicate the inhuman and anti-social tendencies from the: human mind and to elevate human society to a superior plane where the entire: humanity can live in peace and harmony.

For Gandhiji, means are more important than ends. Hence to gain rights, Non-violence must be the means. Gandhiji believed that if the means were right, the end would take care of itself.

Satyagraha is a powerful weapon against evil. It is the weapon **of** love and therefore never looks upon any stranger as opponent. It is based on

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soul force or love force. 'The underlying principle of Satyagraha is not to destroy or injure the opponent but to convert or win him by sympathy, patience, and self-suffering. As a tool of social action, Satyagraha is based on a strong moral content - self-suffering is its unique character which distinguishes it from all other forms of violent methods of action. It is a nonviolent

passive resistance for all problems. The entire public action of Gandhiji was based on morality. Morality is the base of respect to the rights of others. For Gandhiji, the base of morality is religion. The religious virtues, Truth, love, mercy, goodness, faithfulness, justice, ahimsa, peace, patience, and suffering come to be known as the basics of morality. According to Gandhiji,

religion and morality are intimately related. Those who lead a good moral life are really religious, because the essence of religion is morality. All religious scriptures have laid down certain moral precepts for human life. The ethical principles of all religions are basically the same. "Religious principles and dogmas may differ, but the principles of ethics must be the same in all religions". Unless we practise these moral precepts, we cease to be religious. Religion is a relation to God and to man and he held them to be synonymous".

Hence religion has an important role to mould a moral personality. The early influence of Gandhi from his mother regarding religion, deserves great attention in this context. His mother was a very religious woman and never took meals without saying and performing daily prayers. Hence the parents or the family background played an important role in children's morality.

'(catch

them morally' in their early life is an essential factor to mould a moral generation free from violent nature. Positive influence makes a creative personality but negative influence makes a destructive personality. Parent's religious life is very influential in their children's moral life. Children have the tendency to imitate their parents. Hence parents must be transformed as good role models of morality of their children in their family. Moral

degradation is the basic cause of human rights violation. Law only cannot protect human rights. But the law with morality can protect human rights. Hence to practise morality is an inevitable one to protect human rights.

12.4 GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTES THE WELFARE OF ALL

The present world is full of rush in mind and physique. People are fully engaged in their own goodness and progress. Nobody has time to listen to others. There is life tension all around. It increased the level of chaos and confusion of mankind. Man is utterly selfish. In this context, the principle of Sarvodaya deserves great attention. Gandhiji attended to the welfare of all.

Human rights stand for the welfare of all. The universe of Sarvodaya included

the rich and the poor. Gandhiji said to the rich: "Earn your crores by all means, but understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people.

. Through this Gandhiji aimed the equitable distribution of wealth to all.

Gandhiji wanted the rich to act as trustees. The concept trusteeship was imagined as, all are trustees and the trust has to be used for the welfare of the society. Economic equality is the aim of trusteeship. The society is filled with economic inequalities. Hence Gandhiji was also concerned with minority rights. He realized that in society some sections of people are deprived of their due share and are even treated badly. He wished to uplift their lives, and named them as 'harijans', the 'children of God'. Thus Gandhiji gave special attention to the rights of the downtrodden too. Through the upliftment of the downtrodden people, Sarvodaya would become a reality.

The rights of the downtrodden people had been violated over the years owing

to lack of democratic system of governance at the community level where

they could participate effectively. In this context, Gandhiji's concept of panchayatiraj constitutes the system of village Swaraj has an important role to safeguard the fundamental rights of the citizens at the local village level. The constructive programme attempted the welfare of all. It was intended to be instrumental for the eradication of social evils such as alcoholism, untouchability, child marriage, inertia and uncleanness. The other positive objectives to be attained through the programme were the rural uplift, self-sufficiency of the villages, education, sanitation, nutrition, promotion of women, communal unity, care for the lepers, economic equality etc. Moreover, all of these the education played an important role in the overall welfare of the individual according to Gandhiji, "Education is an elementary right and it is necessary for the development of individuals. And it is the fundamental right to protect culture, language, scripts of minorities, etc. has he to defend.

12.5 GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IS BASED ON HUMAN DUTIES

According to Gandhiji "the true source of rights is duty". Without duty we have no right. Duty is the base of right. Gandhiji compatibly held duties as equally important as rights. Each individual has to earnestly attended to his duties without having an! violation. "The exercise of right depends on one's sense of duty". When a man makes a deviation in his duty then also makes a violation of right to the person concerned. Hence Gandhiji viewed rights and duties as inseparable Gandhiji's concept of "Swaraj consists in knowing our rights and our duties. There is a growing tendency today to remember one's right and forget about one's duties towards fellow citizens and the society. Every right has a corresponding duty. The right of one imposes

a corresponding duty on others to respect his right. Hence rights and duties go together as they are two sides of the same coin. My right to live with dignity implies that others have the duty not to kill me or harm me. At the same time my right to live with dignity also implies my duty to respect other's right to live with dignity 2nd hence not to harm them. And moreover, it is our duty to practise truth and Non-violence in all walks of our life to protect the rights of others. Hence there is a need for each one of us to be conscious of our duties and obligations. To obey the constitutional laws of the state regarding human rights is the fundamental duty of a citizen.

12.6 GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTES THE FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND EQUALITY OF RIGHTS

Gandhiji had a vast concept of freedom. He fought for individual and national freedom. Gandhiji is known to the world as a leader of the freedom struggle of India. Freedom is based on man's personality. Without freedom, personality development is imperfect. Freedom is the foundation of all human actions. According to Gandhiji "Individual freedom can have the holiest play only under a regime of unadulterated ahimsa". Violence violates the freedom of individual. Hence to practise ahimsa is an essential condition to safeguard individual freedom. In individual freedom, moral freedom is the foundation of social, economic and political freedom. Religious freedom deserved great attention to Gandhiji's heart. He had accepted the freedom of the individual to follow any religion without interference from the state. The attitude of Gandhiji towards other religions was 'sarvadhama samabhava'. According to Gandhiji before God all religions are equally valid, valuable and worthy. Gandhiji's ideals inspired and influenced greatly the Constitution of India

which came into existence in 1950. It has given full and equal freedom to all individuals and religious communities. Human dignity is based on human freedom. Gandhiji had an intense love and thirst for human freedom. According to Gandhiji, "We must be content to die, if we cannot live as free men and women" The development of human personality and human life is based on human freedom. Freedom of conscience is the base of moral freedom. It also related to individual freedom. Without freedom development is impossible. The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development in which all human rights and fundamental freedom can be fully realized. For the realization of the 'right to live with dignity' freedom is the basic necessity of all. Freedom and rights are correlated. The freedom of each person and each community must respect the rights of other individuals and communities. According to Gandhiji: "So long as a person, whether man or woman,is oppressed and does not enjoy equal rights with other citizens of the country, we cannot enjoy freedom". For Gandhiji, all human beings -men and women -are equal in dignity and rights because all are the creations of God. This divine approach inspired him to fight against the racial discrimination in South Africa. The satyagraha in South Africa was a struggle for social equality. The fulfilment of social progress is based on social equality. Gandhiji gave equal importance to the rights of men and women. It is necessary for the development of the society. Article 15 of the Constitution declares that the state shall not discriminate against anyone on the ground of religion, caste, sex, race, place of birth etc. Thus equality of all is a legal necessity of all.

12.7 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Today the world is facing various tensions related to violence based on communalism, religious fundamentalism, terrorism etc. Increasing violence

destroys the peace and harmony among the people and also denied the right to live with peace. All individuals have the right to live with peace so that the violence from any corner is an inhuman activity against humanity. People

always wished to live with peace. Gandhiji firmly believed that peace can be attained only through Non-violence. Hence we must practise and propagate the message of Non-violence in the society and the nation as a whole. It is indispensable for the protection and promotion of human rights. Hence some of the findings of the study are given below.

1. Human rights existed in human society from time immemorial and it has played an important role in the life of human being.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (U.D.H.R) and the Part **III** of the Indian Constitution too, theoretically recognizes the prime importance of the concept of human rights.

The study shows that Gandhian perspective on human rights is basically a humanitarian and non-violent one. Non-violence is the foundation of Gandhian method of protection and promotion of human rights. Gandhiji believed that, all human beings are the children of God. Hence all have equal dignity and rights and it must be protected without having any discrimination based on caste, colour, creed, tribe, sex etc.

The study reveals the Gandhian method of protection and promotion of human rights is based on non-violent means.

According to Gandhi non-violent passive resistance is the remedy for all problems. For him means are more important than ends.

Satyagraha is the effective non-violent means to fight against all social evils. Human rights violation is a social evil. It can be removed through the practice of satyagraha techniques like,

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picketing, strike, non-cooperation, non-payment of taxes, civil disobedience movement, fasting etc. Satyagraha has tremendous potentialities. It has the capacity to radically alter the power structure of society which are based on the principles of exploitation, violent: and coercion.

4. The study shows that the legal provisions (Human Rights Protection Acts) alone cannot protect human rights. Law is enough and essential but the law only cannot protect the rights ' the people. But the law with morality can safeguard human rights. Gandhian perspective on human rights is based on morality. The entire human rights activities of Gandhiji was based on morality. Morality was the foundation of his personality. Gandhiji was a 'moral man in an immoral society'. A moral man can accept and respect the rights of his fellow beings. Moral degradation is the root cause of human rights violation. Hence a moral regeneration based on Gandhian principles is essential to protect human rights in India and the whole world. Gandhian purification in all walks of life is the need of the hour, especially in the world of corrupted politics.

5. Morality comes from religion hence a good religious background is a must to mould a moral personality. (Gandhiji had a good religious background. His mother was a very religious woman. Hence the parents or the family background played an important role in children's morality. 'Catch them morally' in their early life is an essential condition to mould a moral generation free from violent nature. Hence parents must be transformed as good role models of morality of their children in their family.

6. The study reveals that Gandhiji's public action in South Mica was for the attainment of the fundamental right of the Indians, the 'right to live with dignity'. Hence he fought against the racial discrimination of the Britishers, with his soul force - Satyagraha. The principle of Satyagraha based on a strong moral content, that

the opponent may have power over the body and material possessions of a Satyagrahi, but not over his soul. Hence the soul can remain unconquered and unconquerable even when the body is imprisoned. Satyagraha is a soul-force over brute force.

7. The study shows that the method of Satyagraha in a public cause is a spiritual approach toward a material cause. Spirituality has the power to transform any hard attitude. Hence Satyagraha can change the hard attitude of any person or any government. India's struggle for freedom, Champaran Satyagraha, Kheda Satyagraha etc are the proven models of the power of Satyagraha.

8. Gandhiji was a great humanist the world has ever seen. His humanism was based on God. He believed that all human beings are the children of God. Hence all are equal in dignity and rights, His faith and relation to God was the base of his love toward humanity. For Gandhiji 'God is Truth'. Hence truth was the foundation of his life. His life was an experiment with truth. It meant that, the entire activities of Gandhiji's life was an experiment with God. Hence he succeeded in all endeavor on behalf of the public.

9. The study reveals that Gandhian perspective on rights is based on duty. According to Gandhiji the 'true source of rights is duty'. Without duty there is no right. Hence the duty is the 'backbone of rights'. Duty violation caused to the rights violation hence the duty and rights are Correlated. Every right has a corresponding duty. Gandhiji felt that doing one's duty is the only bask of enjoying rights. For to realize the welfare of all each and everyone must do their duty without negligence.

10. Gandhiji's personality was a 'religion in action'. It meant that he imbibed and practiced religious values in his life. Hence he said 'my life is my message'. His words and deeds were based on values. Hence he could love all human beings without having any discrimination based on caste, colour, creed, sex, tribe etc.

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11. The National Indian Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji Worked the moral, social and political upliftment of the Indians in South Africa. Moreover, Gandhi tried to educate the Indians about their rights through the weekly 'Indian Opinion'. And also took the leadership to defend the human rights of Indians through the courts. This method of leadership is very relevant in today's world too. The public activists and political leaders they must work for the socio-political and moral upliftment of the people and moreover to teach the people about their rights and also gave them proper guidance to gain their rights. The absence of proper guidance-and leadership is the root cause of the absence of effective protection of human rights in the present day society.

12. The very need of total more than ever before is to practise and propagate the message of non-violence among the individuals and the nations as a whole to protect the rights of all in the contemporary world of violence. It was a comprehensive philosophy that would serve the purpose of all countries, all men and women, under all circumstances. 'Back to the Gandhian principles' is the only solution to solve the socio-political and communal tensions of the world. 'Back to the Gandhian principles' meant 'back to the basics of religion'. Hence religion played an important role to protect human rights. The message of Gandhiji towards humanity is that truth and Non-violence only can cure all social evils crept into the minds of the people and the mind of the nation.

13. The relevance of Gandhian ideas in the present day society reveals, the relevance of religious values in the present day society too. The foundation of the universality of Gandhian ideas is its religious nature. Religion is a universal reality. Hence the Gandhian ideas existing in the peace as world as a peacemaker and also promotes

peace . Non-violence is the 'message of ' peace' to the whole world. Violence always demolish peace and harmony in the world. The humanity must make an inviolable agreement with the Gandhian values. It is the real treaty the man and the nation should make for the maintenance of peace in the world. It is the need of the hour.

Check your Progress

1. Gandhi’s philosophy allied to human rights

**12.8 SUGGESTIONS AND POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Gandhiji was a spiritual leader in politics and an upholder of human dignity and human rights. Materialistic leadership in politics is the root cause of political violence, corruption and communal tension. the leadership must be transformed as 'spiritual' as Gandhiji. It is an essential condition to restore, the lost dignity of Indian politics and the world as a whole. Gandhiji spiritualized politics. But today the politicians politicize spirituality. It is the root cause of communal tensions in India and the whole world. Moreover, Gandhi had a great vision about his nation. It was the foundation of his mission towards the nation and it makes a Mahatma. Hence leader of vision is the need of the hour and its absence is the cause behind the lack of making of mahatma in the present day society and nation as a whole.
2. If the public servants were willing to do their duty properly and firmly

they could act as human rights protectors in their job. For the effective implementation of public welfare projects, and the reforms concerned, Gandhian nature of fearlessness is an indispensable quality for the servants. Gandhiji was a self-less public servant of the nation. Hence the public servants also should be the same. They must keep morality in all their actions towards the public. Law alone cannot protect human rights. Human rights should be placed above legal rights.

3. As a man of selfless public action, Gandhiji always stood for public interest. His interest was always determined by the public interest. This method of public action is quite relevant in the contemporary world too. Public activists must stand for public interest only at any time. They must come down to intervene with the public for understanding their problems in a grassroots level. Gandhiji had always intervened with the people to understand their problems at its real state. Initiatives of the conscious individuals aware of their duties towards their fellow citizens are therefore necessary preconditions for building public opinion for protection of human rights. Through the proper exercise of everyone's duty, each one can act as a 'human rights commission'. If it is possible everybody would take 'the commission' to accept and respect the rights of others.

4. Human rights and moral values should be made a compulsory subject in all the educational institutions; right from the lowest level to the level of university. It would be worthwhile to teach the young people the concept of human rights and the principle of truth and non-violence as the basic factors contributing to the peace, harmony and the welfare of the society. Human rights education is very much relevant today when the nation finds communal clashes in Bihar and religious clashes in Gujarat, Orissa etc. The students must go to the villages to propagate the message of human rights among the people. In this context, the words of Gandhiji have great relevance. According to him, the greatest drawback of the present system of education is that it does not bear the stamp of reality, that the children do not react to the varying wants of the country to

ensure human rights is the fundamental need of a country. Hence the students must act as spokesmen and activists of human rights in the society.

5. Gandhiji's view on a good and successful strike is that the cause of the strike should be good and just. Moreover, the strikes should never resort to violence and it should be last resort to secure justice. It is very relevant in the contemporary world. Today many strikes are unjust and unnecessary and ended in violence. It caused the destruction of public property and public security. Hence the strikes should be non-violent any cost and at any time. It is necessary for the protection of human rights. Violence always destructs or violates human rights. The tendency going on in today's world is that, for anything and everything strikes are employed. It is an anti-Gandhian method fully excluded from the method of action and reaction. Moreover, Gandhiji gave intimation to the concerned authority prior to the strike to redress the public grievance in a peaceful manner. It is quite relevant and applicable to exclude many strikes from the public life.

6. The Gandhian approach to Hindu-Muslim unity is very much relevant today. Gandhiji advocated non-violent means to resolve conflicts between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Violent means is counterproductive resulting in anger, hatred, jealousy, revenge and bloodshed. Therefore non-violent means is the only remedy to eradicate the inhuman and communal tendencies from the human mind and to elevate human society to a superior realm where the entire humanity can live in peace and harmony. The dispute related to Ram Janmabhoomi and Babri Masjid can be solved only on the basis of Gandhian principles and only through Gandhian means.

7 For the extension of the degree of human rights awareness into the public the Human Rights Commission has to publish a journal named as **Opinion**. Through this the people can understand their rights in various aspects. Besides, the Women's Commission has to publish a journal named as **Woman** and **Young India** for the protection and promotion of human

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rights. Through this the women and children can get an awareness about their rights and also they can strengthen themselves to fight against rights violation. The absence of rights awareness is the root cause of the absence of response against rights violations from the public. Hence the publication is an essential one to propagate rights awareness among the public. It is the need of the hour to educate the public about their rights. The journals must be sent freely to all the gramasabhas of the state. Moreover, each gramasabha must constitute a 'Human Rights Forum' with a president, secretary, treasurer and should have two members. The forum must be an open forum. All members of the gramasabha are its members. The gathering of the gramasabha must have a session of human rights. In this session the Secretary of the forum must explain the content of the journal in a nutshell. Moreover, the session should give an opportunity to all its members to express his or her rights violations regarding the public life. The Secretary of the forum must notice the report and also take initiative for its remedy.

8. Gandhiji has worked as a voice of the voiceless especially the downtrodden people of the villages. He believed that India lives in villages and hence the upliftment of the villager is the upliftment of the nation too. For their upliftment he spent the best part of his life. He gave them education and made them well aware of their rights. Hence the social workers, political activists, public servants, human rights activists, and other voluntary workers and laymen all of them must act as a 'voice of the voiceless' as Gandhiji was, to uplift their life in the realm of political, economic, and social and cultural and also make the fundamental human right - right to live with dignity - a reality in their lives. Gandhian personality is the need of the hour to take initiative against human rights violations in India and the whole world. For human rights protection the serious question still exists is that who will take the initiative?

12.9 LETS SUM UP

It's clear from above, that the Gandhian methods of nonviolence, decentralisation and village industry are very much relevant in the era of globalisation in order to save and protect the human rights and humanity. Its only through his system of non-violence the individual will be able to save their life from the violence. The day has come to implement the Gandhian philosophy to bring global peace which becomes a great concern for everybody. Its pertinent to quote the view of Dr Ram Manohar Lohia "If the world and humanity have to survive we will have to be with Gandhi otherwise let it run". Therefore we need a peaceful, harmonious co-existence otherwise humanity would not survive and it can be achieve through Gandhian principles.

12.10 KEY WORDS

Khadi: Hand woven cotton cloth with spinning wheel

Panchayat Raj: Governed by the elected five members the village

12.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How does Gandhi's philosophy become valuable in times of globalization.

12.12 Suggested Readings

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Harijan,

12.12 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress

- Today the world is facing various tensions related to violence based

on communalism, religious fundamentalism, terrorism etc.

- Increasing violence destructs the peace and harmony among the people and also denied the right to live with peace.

- All individuals have the right to live with peace so that

the violence from any corner is an inhuman activity against humanity.

- People always wished to live with peace. Gandhiji firmly believed that peace can be

attained only through Non-violence.

- Hence we must practise and propagate the message of Non-violence in the society and the nation as a whole. It is

indispensable for the protection and promotion of human rights. Hence some

of the findings of the study are given below.

UNIT 13 CHANGING PERSPECTIVES ON ECOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

STRUCTURE

13.0 Objectives

13.1 Introduction

13.2 Critique of Contemporary Development

13.2.1 environment: two views

13.2.2 environment and development: three
approaches

13.3 sustainable development in practice

13.4 Gandhi: Ecology and Sustainable Development

13.5 ecology and development- the recent

Debate

13.6 Ecological Impact of Agricultural Advancement

13.7 Ecological Impact of Pastoral Practices

13.7.1 Ecology of Forest and Human Adaptation

13.8 deep ecology: concept and meaning

13.9 principles of deep ecology

13.10 environmental values: religious sources

13. 11 lets sum up

13.12Key words

13,13 questions For Review

13.14 Suggested Readings

13. 15 Answer to Check Your Progress

13. 0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit enables you to understand

, The concept of development and its critique from varied perspectives

- Development as related to environment
- The sustainable development that is in practice.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

In a general manner of speaking development is considered to be about widening people's choices in life in as democratic and participatory manner as possible such that people are able to realise their fullest potential. At the same time development is considered as the means of promoting the economic growth and self-reliance of a nation with as much concern for equity as possible. Definitions of development are contextual and dependent on the epistemological and methodological orientation of the theorists. Accordingly, there is evident a multiplicity of labels associated with development, namely 'reconstruction and development', 'economic development', 'modernisation', 'redistribution with growth', 'dependent development', 'interdependent development', 'meeting basic needs'; 'top down development', 'bottom-up development', 'another development', 'empowerment', 'post-development', and 'post-modern development'.

Development appears as both means and the end; the end is often assumed to be present at the onset of the process of development itself. If, for instance, development is considered about increasing the choices of people, it has to be assumed that the desire and capacity to choose and knowledge of various options are available. However these elements of the process of choosing are assumed to be as much preconditions for the development process as the ends in which the process results. This contradiction is evident even in the notion of "instrumental freedoms" in Amartya Sen's theory of development as freedom.

However, amidst the plethora of contested and negotiated understandings of development, two ideas have stood the test of time, namely 'progress' and 'modernisation'. If one traces the lineage of 'development' back to Thomas Malthus, August Comte and J.H. Newman, one comes across the ideas of progress, intent to develop and stewardship.

The idea of progress referred to the linear unfolding of the universal potential for human empowerment which need not be recurrent, finite or reversible. It was initially believed that the revelation of God through an increasingly scientific understanding of Nature made a potentially limitless progress possible. In its more secular and somewhat later versions, the idea of progress spelt out the possibility of directing the potentially unlimited capacity

13.2 CRITIQUE OF CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT

The idea of modernisation and its contemporary incarnation as neo-liberalism has enjoyed long-standing dominance. This is because it remains consistent with the ideology of neoclassical economics which is the dominant paradigm of development in the West, it is a very simplistic and universalistic formulation, it has had strong institutional advocates, and it has had the luck arising from the failure of alternative interventionist strategies in the 1960s and 1970s. Modernisation theory is now to be seen in new forms such as late

modernity, advanced modernity, radical or reworked modernity, neo-modernisation theory or new modernity. New modernity includes the notion of risk society meaning that all developed and developing societies are exposed to the globalised ecological and other risks.

However, by the mid- 1980s, there was an impasse in mainstream understanding of development mainly because of failures of development projects around the globe, the dismantling of socialist systems as alternatives, growing economic diversities in developing nations, the crying need for environmental sustainability, the increasing assertiveness of voices 'from below', and the rise of post-modernism to universalising theories. There have been sustained critiques - ranging from 'dependency theory' to 'post-modern development' - of the ideas of progress and modernisation

which have focused on the unrequited dominance of a particular ideology, exclusion"of certain groups from the development project, and on the processes and procedures of development. Development is rejected because variously it means the new religion of the West, it is the imposition of science as power, it does not work, it means cultural Westernisation and homogenisation, and it brings environmental destruction. Mainstream development economics is reductionist in nature and therefore has to be rejected not only in terms of its results but also in terms of its world-view, intentions and mindset.

Some of this criticism has coagulated into alternative thinking, although in the long run many strands of these alternatives have been co-opted by mainstream development understanding so much so that today it is difficult to distinguish very clearly mainstream and alternative development approaches. Nonetheless many of these criticisms have highlighted the need for greater self-consciousness, reflexivity and encouragement of heterogeneity and difference. Many of the traditional or indigenous traditions, histories and 'knowledges', which were subjugated or excluded by colonial and modernist developmental regimes as being primitive or irrelevant, have been highlighted to contrast them with the arrogance of models from the West.

13.2.1 Environment: Two Views

One of the major critiques of development has come from the environmental and ecological movement, The influence of environmental concerns on development policy was recognized for the first time by the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development- the Brundtland Commission - and at the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

These Reports produced an international consensus to apply environmental criteria to the development projects in order to attain sustainable development which was defined by the Brundtland Commission as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the

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ability of future generations to meet their own needs." However many environmental agenda are not concerned with developmental goals. This is because there are two different meanings to the term 'environment'. One meaning identifies the environment with the natural world whilst another regards it as all human and non-human activities and entities which are external to a particular sphere of decision making and action such as a development project.

When we look at the environment as nature, we find that the boundary between humanity

and nature runs like a perpetual theme in human consciousness, much influenced by the degree and nature of domination and subjugation of the forces of nature. In contrast to early human visions of nature as being imbued with supernatural force and grace, the European Enlightenment proclaimed the conquest of nature as an essential ingredient in the human quest to overcome constraints in the path of greater fulfilment of its desires.

In this imperialist vision, the role of nature was utilitarian, to be used for the achievement of happiness by humanity. However the development of industrial society, first in Europe and later in the rest of the world, prompted a questioning of the extent and nature of the human understanding of the changes it had effected over nature. This often took the form of an escape by the rich from the squalor of the newly-developing cities to the pristine splendour of rural areas. This gradually formulated itself into a position of the romantic rejection of the industrialists' utilitarian approach to nature. As a matter of fact it was thought that the real force of nature was to be experienced in the rural and mountainous regions. Between these two views of nature as a romantic idyll and nature as an exploitable resource was a third view which perceived human beings as being superior to nature but at the same time being responsible for its efficient management. This view gradually became popular with the growth of the conservation movement in Europe and America which called for huge areas of untouched nature to be kept aside and protected from human activity.

However environmental regulation in the Western industrial societies (and now in other parts of the world too) has been led by a broader meaning of the term 'environment'.

According to this understanding there is an uneven distribution amongst people of the costs and benefits of industrial action on the environment. Usually, whilst the industrialists and developers gather most of the benefits the cost tabs are left to be picked up by the working class and other less powerful social groups. These external costs include unsafe working conditions, unhealthy and polluted living conditions, and a diminished scope for recreation and for aesthetic pursuits. Although this was the scenario in the nineteenth

century, by the mid-twentieth century it became more and more of an untenable proposition because of greater political consciousness. There was a greater demand to make the polluter pay through public health and environmental legislation. This approach was institutionalised with the establishment in 1969 of the Environmental Protection Agency in the U.S., which was concerned with environmental impact assessment of all government works. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has become the norm in both the public and private sectors across the world today. In this perspective, the environment includes not only nature but also those parts of human society which are external to a development

project or activity. In this sense the term environment addresses the conflicts of interest posed by the unequal distribution of costs and benefits - the externalities of development. Therefore the environment as nature is focused on conservation and protection of vast swathes of land from human interference whilst the externality view on the environment includes the impact of human activity on nature but is predominantly applied from the utilitarian perspective of who owns, uses or manages the natural resources concerned.

The overlap between the two views explains the ability of the environmental agenda to unite a broad range of views although there may be

several bristling issues in the implementation of the programme of sustainable development.

13.2.2 Environment And Development: Three

Approaches

According to the modernisation perspective - whether of the capitalist or socialist brands- natural resources do not constitute a limit to economic growth. Technological triumphalism ruled the roost and this got manifested by grand projects to harness nature and construct infrastructure projects. The costs of such massive infrastructure projects nature was to be conserved by demarcating certain' pristine areas and prohibiting economic and other human activity, leading to a separation of nature from development. However, realization soon dawned that this path makes mankind vulnerable to the destructive power of industry over nature. The risks of nuclear technology and pesticide accumulation in food-chains highlighted these issues. There was also the concern that limited and finite resources would pose a potential brake on economic growth, on unlimited production and consumption. The proverbial last straw was the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica which highlighted the issue of chlorofluorocarbons arising from refrigeration gases and aerosol propellants. This discovery confirmed the worst fears that the danger is world-wide and that our scientific knowledge of the atmosphere was severely limited.

Henceforth it became impossible to bank on technological triumphalism and stressed the need for global regulation of industrialisation. This gave a boost to the environmental movements for sustainable development.

By the 1980s, however, modernisation gave way to neo-liberalism. This effected a change in the approach to the environment. Neo-classical environmental economics is the bedfellow of neo-liberalism which converts the goods of environment into commodities governed by market price mechanisms. The goods of nature such as air and water, landscape, etc. are considered as services provided by nature which are When taken to be a form of natural capital which can be augmented or depleted, leading to the

further development of physical or financial capital. Environmental economics stresses that because the scarcity of natural resources is not reflected in adequate pricing mechanisms, they are overused.

This conversion of environmental goods in monetary terms played a major role in the absorption of environmental concerns into mainstream development thinking. However, environmental economics deals with aggregate demand and the distribution of the demand only in terms of purchasing power. The unequal distribution of purchasing power between countries and within countries highlights the need for proper distribution of ownership of natural capital. Environmental economics would therefore work only if property rights and institutional access to and use of natural resources are fairly addressed.

Interestingly, the environment has proved to be the rallying ground for much of the

opposition to the neo-liberal project of development today. This has often taken the form of alternative thinking on the environment. One of the perspectives is the communitarian

one which stresses on the knowledge, social support and cohesion of local communities. Some of the themes stressed are the effectiveness of local institutions in regulating use of natural resource, facilitating role of women as users and managers of resources, and advantages of small-scale owner-operated systems of production. By arguing that the poorest should benefit most from sustainable development, this perspective is able to place the poor at the centre of the development debate. Local ownership and rights of disadvantaged sections over local resources have been stressed based on the entitlement theory of rights. It is claimed that such an approach actually goes a long way in conserving common resources globally. This perspective is bulwarked by a movement for rights of

indigenous peoples and those living in rain-forest areas. Anthropological and development field-studies have now provided widely circulated knowledge of how local communities are experts in preserving commons and other natural resources such as land, water, forests, grazing lands, etc. Local

communities also have extensive knowledge of diversity of species and are therefore crucial in biodiversity conservation. Significantly, the management strategies of people living in the 'wilds' have challenged the Eurocentric notion of separating nature from development under the modernisation perspective: examples abound of how humans, human activity and nature can sustainably co-exist. This strengthens post-modern analyses of universalistic solutions in favour of socially constructed multiple realities. It also strengthens the thesis that indigenous criteria and perception of resource conservation should be considered as valid as those arising from scientific study. Political economy analyses have been used to argue for greater economic and political rights over the use of natural resources by who have been pushed to the margins by mainstream development.

One of the advantages of the people-centred alternatives is that they rigorously examine power relations in the domain of resource use - power relations between local communities and the external agencies of the state and market are thoroughly scrutinised. This conglomerate of approaches stresses on rights-based advocacy and pose the greatest counter-challenge to the dominant neo-liberal model of development and environment.

The environmental agenda of sustainable development thus provide a broader canvas for many of these groups to achieve their aims.

13.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

Whilst it is true that sustainable development has become the rallying cry as well as victory point of many environmental and ecological protest groups and counter-perspectives, the battle is by no means over as the very meaning of sustainable development is being debated by the neo-liberals and their opponents in the development domain. Agenda 21 reflects a tension between the neo-liberal emphasis on allocation of natural resources through market

mechanisms and the local and participatory emphasis of the alternative schools. In practice, there is a lot of negotiation which has taken place between these two perspectives in the internationally ratified treaties on biodiversity, climate change and desertification.

For instance, the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer led to the Montreal protocol of 1987 which agreed to limit the use of CFCs. In fact it was decided soon after that the ' manufacture of CFCs should cease by 2000. This international agreement was the model for a more wide-ranging agreement required to tackle the issue of greenhouse gases which were contributing to the rise of the earth's temperature. A decade of hectic scientific and governmental effort to take a look at the phenomenon of climate change followed the 1979 World Climate Conference, resulting in the 1988 Intergovernmental Panel on Climatic Change (IPCC) by the World Meteorological Office and the United Nations Environment Programme. In 1990, the IPCC recommended a reduction of green house gases to 60 per cent of the 1990 level and in 1992, at the Rio Summit, a framework document for. a convention on climate change recognised the need to protect climate change. What was new was the emphasis on equity such that different countries had different responsibilities and capabilities. This meant that developed countries took the

lead of reducing greenhouse gases to the 1990 levels by 2000. Inventories of greenhouse gas emissions and sinks by the signatories were to be monitored by the newly-instituted

Global Environmental Facility at the World Bank. The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 committed industrialised countries to reduce their collective emission of greenhouse gases to an average of 5.2 per cent below the 1990 .levels by 2012. However the U.S. was successful in inserting some mechanisms which would enable the industrialised countries to reducetheir gas emissions through activities taken 'abroad rather than at home.

In this entire effort, manoeuvres, negotiations and shifting alliances, although the levels of environmental concerns vary between European Union member states it is strong and growing in many countries. Strong

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emission reductions have been effected in Germany and the U.K. The internal allocation of emissions within the EU has enabled the least industrialised countries within it to increase their emissions whilst the overall EU levels are likely to match the targets set by the Kyoto Protocol. On the other hand, the position of the U.S. has not been so straight-forward. Home to some 25 per cent of the worldwide emissions there has been hostility amongst U.S. consumers, corporations and labour unions. The industries in the U.S. were very keen at Kyoto that they be not made subject to emission reductions from which other countries were exempt. Hence the U.S.

acceptance of targets was conditional that there would not be change in the use of

domestic energy. Through transfers under the Kyoto Protocol's joint implementation mechanism, the U.S. could reduce its commitments because of the reduction in emissions of the erstwhile Soviet-bloc countries. The other OECD countries allied with the U.S. because of high political costs of energy reduction or high marginal costs of emission reduction in already efficient energy sectors. The erstwhile Soviet-bloc countries joined the U.S. alliance because they could exchange the 'surplus' emission reductions in their countries with the U.S. for higher U.S. or Japanese investments in their countries. By contrast, many developing nations were vulnerable to rise in sea levels because of climate change and they vociferously advocated the strongest measures for emission reduction.

On the other hand India, China and some Latin American countries - all of which were rapidly industrialising - were for economic development as their priority and for national sovereignty in decisions regarding emissions. They were successful in blocking the imposition of emission-reducing targets but failed to block the flexibility mechanisms of the U.S. and other countries.

Increasingly the resistance of U.S. industrialists is reducing because it is becoming clear that 'carbon trading' by building wind, solar and other clean energy facilities in non industrialised countries and selling carbon credits so acquired to industrialised countries was a golden opportunity. However, the

general trade and market in emission credits were to have several limitations. The Kyoto protocol is likely to have only a modest effect on global warming as it would only bring about a change in the culture of energy use and a search for technological alternatives to fossil fuels. Secondly, from the economic standpoint, "evolving market-based mechanisms for implementing the protocol through a proliferation of projects to generate emission reductions via flexibility mechanisms – action abroad, rather than domestic reform of energy use - risked an inflationary effect on the

value of the (fixed) amount of emissions to which the industrialized countries had committed themselves under the protocol, undermining any incentive for technological innovation. Thirdly, from the political standpoint, failure to demonstrate domestic reform would **undermine** the 'moral leadership' of the industrialized countries on emission reduction, and - with it any hope of extending future reductions to developing countries. A century ago, George Perkins Marsh said, "Man has too long forgotten that the earth was given to him for usufruct alone, not for consumption, still less for profligate waste".

Environmental degradation with development happened throughout the history. The emergence of ruining soil in Mesopotamia several thousands of years ago due to the establishment of an irrigation system which brought the salt up from the saline groundwater to the agricultural field is a well known example to begin with. The level of degradation has reached alarming heights in the developed countries owing to their ever rising efforts to raise their living standards resulted in the exhaustion of the very ecology that it exists in. Now, the Third World countries are trying to improve their economic conditions but they too are contributing to the degradation of ecology around. The tussle between poverty and extreme starvation forced the Third World countries to remove wood from the forest, extract minerals from the surface of rocks, expanding the agricultural field to

the steep slopes and into the areas which receives scanty rainfalls; hence, they extract the ground water randomly and eventually establish various types of industries to contribute to air pollution.

In the Indian context, there has been a phenomenal increase in literature dealing with ecology and development, where ecology was understood to study the relationship between the living organisms with the external world. Hence, it has a natural entry into the realm of natural sciences. The body of knowledge that contains ecology as the central theme has received the concern of nature as basically a non-human world. This very complex layer of defining ecology limits its natural relationship with development which is very much human society-oriented in nature. On the other hand, the concept of development has long been associated with social sciences due to its central concern being merged with ever changing human society. Thus, the web of perspectives of ecology and development has been very ambiguous.

Environment has always been one of the most neglected domains of social research. It is during the seventies that the demand for planned strategies in the developed and underdeveloped countries fuelled the necessity of protecting the environment resulted in looking into the ecological components like air, water, land and the familiar aspects of developmental issues in a more comprehensive manner.

13.4 GANDHI: ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The natural environment has never degraded. It is suffering increasingly from the impact of man's own actions, either productive or consumptive. Ecological components - land, water, forests, atmosphere, habitat and resources have been threatened due to the growing prosperity of human society and its developmental actions. To understand the relationship between the ecology and development, let us make an attempt to look into

the historiography of ecology and its components as well as the impact of economic actions

of the human society around. This is required to understand how inextricably ecology is related to the development of human society over the years.

Literary texts, foreign accounts, explorations and excavation and spread of coins and inscriptions indicate that the upper and middle Gangetic plains, Malwa, the coastal area of Gujarat, western Deccan, The Krishna-Godavari basin, the Cauvery basin, the coastal belt of Kalinga, and some coastal areas of West Bengal were fairly well settled by inhabitants as early as in third century AD (Sharma, 2011).

Water

"In the beginning this world was just water. .. all this world is woven, warp and

woof, on water" (The Thirteen Principal Upanishads)

Water is an essential life-support substance, even more essential than food ...

(Iyer,

2007). Water is needed for basic requirements like cooking and cleansing as well as for irrigation and for industrial uses. In India, water bodies play very important role and are an inextricable part of Indian culture, society and history (Indus, Ganga, Brahrnaputra, Cauvery, Narmada - to name a few, the rivers which are of ancient Indian culture and civilization). These river basins not only played the role in the expansion of human settlement but also had deep impact on the formulation of social structures within those settlements. The quality of soil, land grants, formulation of states within these basin areas created the foundation of the Indian culture in a nutshell.

Forest and Land

Thapar (2001) highlighted the relationship between - the vana to ksetra - the relationship of the forest to the settlement. She opined that there is a dichotomy between the vana and grama evolved in early times when the village constituted the settlement. With the emergence of urban centres, and particularly in the early centuries AD, there was also a growing dichotomy between the grama and nagara - the village and the town respectively.

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At the same time, vana and aranya had ecology different from that of the settlement, and would have included the desert and the semiarid regions as well. In early India, the forest was the context for at least three activities: the hunt, the hermitage, and the place for exile. Hunting as the activity of chiefs and kings was looked upon as an enviable

expertise. From the perspective of grama, if the forest was seen as the chaotic unknown, the king had to conquer it and refashion the chaos into the order. The hermitage is set so deep in the forest that it is almost another world, enveloped in a translucent green of sun and trees. This is luminal space, the threshold between the two contrasting ecologies of the vana and the ksetra. The hermitage may have been the vanguard of the encroachment into the forest. But at the same time the choice of the forest and the symbolic act of going to the forest for purpose of asceticism and renunciation has multiple meaning: there is a distancing from civilization, a seeking of knowledge through isolation and meditation; and a search for the meaning of life through experiencing the unknown.

With the advent of the concept of state in the form of mature monarchy with a concentration of political authority vested on a single person, power and authority in the state system became dependent on revenue. Consequently, as different sources of revenue came to be considered, forest became one of them.

Kautilya, the well known economist of the Maurya dynasty, advised to settle sudras on wasteland or land which had been deserted for the purpose of extending agriculture, both in order to bring in larger revenue and to support growing population. It has been found that he also advised granting of tax free, cultivable land to special categories of persons - Brahmanas and professionals working for the state.

The policy of Ashoka regarding forest was quite strict and it took further turn under Guptas. The change in the agrarian economy brought about by grants of land from the Gupta period onwards has been analysed as an innovation in political economy (Thapar,2001). She concluded that by

recognising the dichotomy of the vana and ksetra, their complementarities immediately surface.

13.5 ECOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT- THE RECENT DEBATE

In the recent past, the rapid developmental activities seem to have lost touch with our ancient tradition and wisdom in protecting the natural ecological balance. The haphazard approach has been adopted in the developmental activities in utilising the locally available natural resources, forestry, agricultural and industrial technology based on outdated models.

The pressure of population and the growing demand for resources and the poverty which depend directly on natural resources for their sustenance has also taken a heavy toll of the environment. Environmental conservation and economic development are not contrary to each other but are actually inseparable domains in the regional context.

The natural environment is not rapidly degrading. But it is suffering increasingly from the consequences of man's own action, either productive or consumptive. Harmful discharges into the environment are the cause of the pollution of air, water, and soil. Since the prosperity of human society is continuously growing, so are the emissions of polluting materials due to multifaceted developmental processes.

The age-old practice of eco-friendly agricultural practice farming had changed drastically . about three decades ago. The farmers switched over to the massive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Agricultural degradation is caused due to the material erosion from land, impregnation into the soil in inorganic salts and minerals resulting from irrigation, water logging, chemical fertilizers, pesticides etc. So, soil is degraded as a consequence of improper agricultural practices. The whole system of agriculture began to change by cultivating large fields with single highly profitable crop e.g. the wheat or the rice.

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Cultivating the same crop and the use of chemical fertilizers year after year, has resulted in the disruption of soil and diminishing of organic matter in the soil. Thus, the steady destruction of natural agro-environment and mismanagement of agricultural resources have started showing a decline in the agricultural productivity.

Each one of the major natural resources has been degraded to an unbelievably low level with an amazing rapidity. Less than 12 percent of the land has no tree-cover worth the name (Forest Policy 1988); though there is a target of **33** percent of the area under the forests. Besides, some of the areas are suffering from scarcity, droughts and floods and removal of forest cover. The erosion process is being induced or accelerated by human activities, such as overgrazing, tree-logging for fodder, collecting fuel wood and tree killing.

There is ample evidence of all kinds of industrial pollution at micm-regional level. In fact, the natural eco-systems have been seriously affected in the recent years. Industrial wastes contain large quantities of raw materials, final products, co-products and by-products. Air pollution is the result of the discharge into the atmosphere of gases, vapours, droplets and particles, such as CO₂; suspended particulate matter produced by the burning of fossil fuels create imbalance in the ambient air. Large quantities of NO₂ and SO₂ are emitted into the air by large and medium scale industries and power plants which get transformed into Nitric and Sulphuric Acid, ultimately getting washed down with rain in the form of acid rain.

The natural resources are a common heritage. They have been shared by the past

generations and the future generation will be inheriting these resources. The rapid pace of their exploitation is resulting in the exhaustion of some of the resources. The Indo Gangetic divide and the adjoining area is one of the agriculturally advanced regions of the North-Western India. The conservation of soil and water is essential for increasing agricultural output. Water is a cyclic resource. Water resource management in the irrigation system thus plays a crucial role.

13.6 ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL ADVANCEMENT

Agriculture constitutes the backbone of the economy and is the mainstay of the majority of people. The two-crop cycle of rice wheat round the year cultivation marked Green Revolution in the 1960's. The main crops grown in the green revolution belt are mostly irrigated crops like rice and wheat of which the per hectare yield was much higher. The adoption of new agrarian technological and chemical inputs and the proper management of land and water resources resulted in the achievement of required targets of production.

However, in contrast to the economic gains of the Green Revolution, the adoption of new agrarian technologies has resulted in a number of agronomic problems e.g. the arable land degradation, increase in soil salinity and alkalinity and water logging etc. Thus the excessive use of some of the fertilizers and pesticides and intensive irrigation not only degrades the land, water and air in general but also causes reduction in the agricultural production, both in terms of quality and quantity by their toxic effects on plants and animals.

13.7 ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF PASTORAL PRACTICES

Livestock animals form the economic base of the marginal and small farmers because of the small size of their landholdings. The rapidly increasing human and livestock populations are both competing for limited land resource exploitation; because of the livestock population, pressure is one of the important biological engines of desertification and indiscriminate exploiter of the natural ecological system in one way or the other in the fragile semi-arid belt of this country. Therefore, the over exploitation of the natural resources, such as the natural vegetation by way of overgrazing and

removal of tree species for fuel, fodder and cultivation of marginal land like sand-dunes etc. led to a series of ecological changes in the semiarid regions, sometimes eventually leading to desertification.

13.7.1 Ecology Of Forest And Human Adaptation

The fuel wood consumption differs very significantly, particularly in the spatial context. The fuel wood consumption is generally higher in the hilly region because of variability in temperature and high density of population, requiring more wood not only for cooking, but for water and space heating also. A high proportion of fuel-wood requirement is met from the forest. The cooking and heating requirements of a household differ significantly according to the family size and climatic conditions. The availability of fuel wood in the nearby areas also tends to influence the consumption pattern. When the wood is freely available in the nearby areas, the tendency is to use it liberally. There are many agroecological problems that have recently emerged due to the extensive human interference with the forests. The delicate ecological system in that the arable land is not only severely affected but is gradually deteriorating to an irretrievable condition by the soil erosion and deposition. Thus both these problems need proper and adequate measures not only to check deposition process on cultivable land but also to protect the level and terraced fertile agricultural land against the deposition and spreading of coarse sand materials.

To counter such situation, the afforestation would usher in many ecological benefits, apart from providing fuel, fodder and other biomass to the settlements in semiarid regions. A strategy is needed to bring in marginal lands and wasteland under permanent tree cover, and to better manage the demand for fuel wood and small timber. Thus, the priority should be given to those forestry programmes which cause minimum agricultural land loss and encourage the local villagers as participants.

Industrial development plays a crucial role in the economic development strategy, particularly with regard to self-reliance. On the other hand, pollution due to industrial activities is an effect caused due to an excessive

presence of an undesirable substance in the air, water or soil in the surrounding areas of the large and medium and small scale industries. Many of these units do not have effluent treatment plants and even those which have such treatment plants are not utilising them properly. Hence, people living near industrial sites often complain of skin and other disorders. The industrial wastes are dumped into the drains, canals, rivers and sea in a ramr form creating health hazards for the people and

also, in the process, destroyirgl the flora and fauna of local ecosystem.

The chemical industries create air and water pollution. The textile industries generate a huge amount of waste water per day. It also produces dyes and alkalies which have

adverse effect on human population as well as livestock. The metal based industries constitute hot and cold processes. The hot process produces imperceptible noise pollution.

Cold process produces acidic waste. The forest-based, building materials-based and of their liquid, solid and gaseous effluents. The poor disposal techtuques including inadequate supervision of dumping grounds have led to gross contamination of the agricultural land in the immediate vicinity of these units. Although the leather industry fetches lot of foreign exchange, it does pollute the air and ground and surface water level.

- last few decades have witnessed serious concerns at all levels- loca!, - regional,

national and international- regarding the environmental degradation and its cruel impact on both the human and non-human habitat. The sustainability factor of the planet earth has become a point of debate and there has been a reiteration of reviving the local cultures and customs that are eco-friendly. Numerous debates have been on the rise about the environmental values, duties and rights. These debates are crucial in the background of fast eroding natural resources and the possible debilitating impact on the ecology. As has been mentioned in the previous Unit, there existed once an indelible harmony between the human beings and the nature or environment. Today this relation has taken a strenuous turn, thus leading to pollutions of all

kinds- air, water, soil, land etc. Further, there has been an increasing level of consciousness towards environmental protection and scaring about the planet earth. Several conventions, conferences, debates etc., are being held to discuss issues related to pollution, environmental degradation, soil erosion, deforestation and so on. Almost all the sections of society like the environmental groups, academics and policy makers are now biting active interest in restoring the natural habitat.

13.8 DEEP ECOLOGY: CONCEPT AND MEANING

Before we dwell upon the aspects relating to respect and veneration for nature, it is

necessary to understand as to what is deep ecology, its importance and impact on our livelihoods. In this Unit, the terms ecology, environment and nature are being used synonymously so as to accommodate the important views and expressions as spelt out through various sources. The learner may keep this mind so as to avoid any confusion. Coming to the explanation of the concept of deep ecology, it may be noted that according to the Wikipedia, 'deep ecology is a contemporary ecological philosophy that recognizes an inherent worth of other beings, aside from their utility. The philosophy emphasizes the interdependent nature of human and non-human life as well as the importance of the ecosystem and natural processes. It provides a foundation for the environmental, ecology and green movements and has fostered a new system of environmental ethics'. It also states that unlike other branches of sciences that view ecology more as a biological science, 'deep ecology seeks a more holistic view of the world humans live in and seeks to apply to life the understanding that separate parts of the ecosystem (including humans) as a whole' (Ibid).

The term 'deep ecology' was coined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, who did not believe in the relative ranking of the beings, such as humans having more claims than other beings in their existence. To him, all

have an equal right to life, a right that is universal in nature. No single being or species can claim specific rights to live, while depriving or denying it to others.

Similar views have been propounded by Bill Devall and George Sessions in their work on Deep *Ecology* (1985). Holding the view that everything is connected to everything else, they observe the changing trends of emerging deep ecological consciousness that goes beyond anthropocentrism.

To say in precise terms, deep ecology contends the view that the self should identify with all living beings as everything and every being is created by the creator of the universe, the Supreme Being. It is a process of self-realisation and re-connecting with the plant, animal and ecosystem all together. The Indian culture and civilisation has been very much in harmony with this concept if we understand the real meaning of deep ecology. Our ancestors believed in the harmonious co-existence of nature and human beings and had better realisation as to what the ill-effects of the disharmony, when it arises.

13.9 PRINCIPLES OF DEEP ECOLOGY

Devall and Sessions elucidated the principles of deep ecology in their mentioned work (p.30). They forward the views of the proponents of deep ecology who believe that the world is not freely available to the human beings to indulge in over-exploitation of resources. The eight-tier platform, as they call it, is given as under:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital

human needs.

4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.

5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

13.10 ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES: RELIGIOUS SOURCES

While much has been debated and discussed on the role of governmental, nongovernmental, judicial and other agencies, inadequate attention has been paid to the role and responsibility of the citizens towards environmental values and behaviour. Some of the environmental threats include excessive emission levels, heavy usage of the energy consuming gadgets, littering one's surroundings, unsustainable consumption levels, increased domestic waste including e-waste, dumping of harmful and hazardous medical waste. The materialistic consumption is now being calculated as the measuring standard of human development, leaving behind the basic issues of health care, sanitation, and hygiene, which are much more crucial to human health. Most importantly, the environmental values

are being inadequately inculcated in the present times and generation.

Environmental ethics and values are closely related to our behaviour towards the

' conservation of our nature or natural environment. Values, as Bharucha notes, lead to a process of decision making which leads to action. For value education in relation to the , environment, this process is learned through an understanding and appreciation of nature's oneness and the importance of its conservation (Bharucha, 2005, p.230). It is an intellectual code of behaviour that regulates man's relationship with nature. It cannot be imposed by law but has to be articulated, systematized, codified and brought to the doorsteps of each and every individual (RP Misra, 1995). In this regard, the individual responsibility towards the environmental protection has been rather dismal. This stems partially from

the lack of social awareness and partly from the lack of environment ethics, values and education. James Speth identifies two factors that are central to the environmental ethics- 'the protection of their (people's) own sake of the living communities that evolved here with us and our trusteeship of the earth's natural wealth and beauty for generations to come' (Speth, 2004, p.192). He also contends that 'to realise such a future, societies will have to free themselves from a variety of pernicious habits of thought, including enchantment

of limitless material expansion and what John Kenneth Galbraith has said 'the highly contrived consumption of an infinite variety of goods and services' (Speth, 2004, p.192). India has had a distinct civilisation and culture that was very much in consonance with natural habitat. Nature (prakriti) was revered with utmost devotion and the civilization was known for its cultural and spiritual heritage in protecting its environment. These factors constituted an important element in sustaining the natural wealth but have been constantly neglected by the mankind. The western concept/perception that nature and environment exist for the service of humanity have slowly crept into our society, promoting the values of unsustainable consumption and acquisitive materialism. Dwivedi rightly observes

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that 'culture and religions of the world can provide a solid foundation for changing

people's attitudes on the preservation and conservation of the environment. World religions and cultures, particularly Oriental belief systems, do not inherently subscribe to the abuse and exploitation of Nature for material and selfish gain' Unfortunately, 'culture and no part of the world has remained immune from mankind's irreverence towards nature, an irreverence that has brought in its wake the destruction of our own habitat, our progeny and ourselves' (Dwivedi, in preface, pp.vi-vii). He also identifies that ethical values emanating from the world religions and cultures are some of the basic determinants of our behaviour towards nature.

Almost all the religions of the world have, in a direct or indirect manner, referred to the protection of environment as a fundamental duty of the mankind. For example, cultivating the earth and planting trees is considered as an act of spiritual upliftment in Zoroastrian faith. As Dwivedi mentions, 'one of the important duties of a Zoroastrian is to look after the seven creations of the skies, waters, earth, plants, cattle, man and fire. Purity and cleanliness are forms of caring for these creations for 'whosoever has learned the care ' all these seven, acts and pleases well, his soul never comes into the possession of Ahriman and the demons'. Thus, caring for the creations is basic ecology for Zoroastrians, and hence nothing impure should contaminate the seven creations' (Dwivedi, p. 42).

Further, they are said to have special and precise prayers that are recited so as to retain the sanctity of the creation. The words of the prayer are as follows: 'I invoke the holy world made by Mazda Ahura (the Supreme God of Zoroastrians), I invoke the earth made by Ahura, the water made by Ahura, and the holy trees. I invoke the sea, I invoke the beautiful heaven (sky), I invoke the endless and sovereign light'.

Judaism speaks of care and concern for other living beings on the earth: under its

tradition, though it clearly states that the world is for human benefit, it does not undermine the importance of God's creation. All the human beings are

required to respect and revere nature and not squander it as nature is a precious creation of God. Their Biblical laws reiterate the importance of showing concern for the rest of the creation and especially espouse showing compassion and care for non-human species. The injured animals may be taken care of, and the commands include showing mercy, humility and care for all.

Hinduism believes in the existence of the divine in all its living forms and severely condemns any violence against the natural habitat. Similarly, the cultural moorings have also a positive impact on our environmental behaviour. For example, some of the communities like Bishnois have a high regard for nature and animals and do not tolerate inflicting of harm on the living species. For people living in the hilly terrains, nature is an inseparable part of their life and do not subscribe to exploiting it for material gains and comforts. The philosophy and way of life, especially in the ancient India, was 'living in tandem with nature'. The sacred texts like Vedas and Upanishads laid emphasis on this aspect and were followed reverently by the sages and great philosophers. The guidelines were based on the Hindu philosophy that enshrined the principles of worshipping nature (other religions

were unknown during the ancient times) including rivers, forests, earth, sky, air, water, plants and animals. The cutting of trees, air, water and land pollution were considered as sinful acts and the natural calamities like floods, droughts, and earthquakes were considered as violent forms of anger manifested by the gods and goddesses. While worshipping of trees and plants was regarded as bestowing of prosperity and purity of word, thought and action, respect to animals and birds was considered as a sacred duty for these were taken as the mounts of gods and goddesses. Violence was also forbidden to animals and other creatures emphasising the principle of equality of all living creatures. Consequently, these acts have taken religious connotations but carried the undertones of utility and medicinal values apart from creating a sense of spirituality.

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In Christianity, both the Old and New Testaments underline the importance of nature and God alone is considered as the sole owner of the nature. Psalm, 24:1 says, 'the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it'. It also advocates a harmonious relationship between the humanity and the environment. All beings, including humans, are dependent on God as He is the sole creator and preserver of nature and thus makes no division between the concepts of nature and humanity as separate entities.

The earth is in no way a lifeless entity and failure to venerate nature is said to bring in alienation of man from God. Neither do the human beings have a right to destroy nature, which they cannot create. The concept of divine love for all thus enriches the harmonious relation between man and other creatures.

As in other religions, Islam too acknowledges God's creation as the foundation of life on this earth. The harmony and balance need to be maintained not only between individuals but also with other creatures. Man is only a guardian of nature, which is God's creation; he is definitely not the owner. Any alteration to God's creation is unacceptable in this religion and is considered as sinful. Such acts are made accountable before God after one's death and invites punishment for any violation of harmonious relation with nature.

Since man is endowed with the wisdom of distinguishing between right and wrong, he/ she should desist from doing wrong deeds towards other creatures. Nature is not created simply for man's use; in this context, the concept of *tawheed* (unity of God) is significant as it is said that 'Allah (God) is Unity, and His Unity is reflected in the unity of mankind and nature. Further, His trustees have been made responsible to maintain the unity of His creation, the integrity of earth including its flora, fauna, wildlife and the natural environment.

And this unity ought to be maintained by balance and harmony' (Dwivedi, p.52).

Environment is considered as a gift of God to all for all ages and not just for the present.

The earth is considered as an utmost important place because it is a place for worship of God and is thus a source of purity.

The core principles of Buddhism revolve around compassion and love for all beings.

Human beings are part of nature and not separate from it; therefore disregarding nature is strictly forbidden. The other species have an equal right to life and survival. Since the tenets of this religion are based on non-violence, harming any of the species is considered as malicious. The nature cannot also be used indiscriminately. For example, cutting of the trees is forbidden: firstly, it is akin to cutting off one's child's arms and secondly, they are venerated as sources of peace, enlightenment and meditation. Since all life is interconnected, there is an imminent need to practise ethics to protect the nature at all costs.

Similarly, Jainism too thoroughly underlines the need for non-violence and strictly denounces harm to any creature. Since peace can be achieved only through peace, violence or injury to any being is deemed as sinful. Even digging grounds for no reason, cutting trees, plucking plants and flowers, sprinkling water etc., are also a sort of source of violence and should be avoided under all circumstances. As in Buddhism, Jainism also places special emphasis on the protection of trees as they are irrevocably linked to spirituality and compassion. Since ahimsa is the core principle of this religion, the humans should show compassion to other living beings and discard the sense of superiority, for all have the same destination or goal to achieve, and that is peace and harmony.

~ikhismis no different when it comes to achieving peace and harmony of mankind. As

iii other faiths, here too God is the Supreme Being and has not bestowed any special privileges to the human beings to conquer nature. Infact human beings are only part of the holistic creation, including nature. Since God has created this universe, only He has the right to destroy it. It teaches the mankind to behold the beauty of nature, the marvelous creation of God,

elements of nature like air, water and earth. Any interference with nature by human beings would wreak nothing but destruction. Therefore, the Gurus of this religion have attached much importance to all beings and elements. Keeping in view the sacred veneration and respect attached to nature by all religions, it can be understood that the Indian civilisation did have an irrevocable bond with the nature and has been highly venerated as the creation of God. Therefore, the sacred principles were followed with much faith and sincerity for many ages. Regrettably these values are now being corroded owing to the external cultural influences. The traditional environmental ethos is being replaced by the current trends of western materialism and consumerism. The concept of what is morally right or wrong has been changing from time to time, thereby resulting in an automatic change in our behaviour patterns towards our natural environment. There is also an ensuing change in the value systems that affect the holistic perspective; a similar change is now being witnessed in our perception of the nature and environment. Nature, once valued and revered, is at the receiving end of the changing human behaviour patterns, now attuned to the materialistic culture. As discussed earlier, we are all bound by the creation of God and need to view other beings with equanimity and compassion. At the same time, we are also under obligation to fulfill certain prime duties to ensure the same and live in harmony with nature.

13.10 RESPECT TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT

Science and Technology have changed the course of our lives in an unprecedented manner. While it is perceived as the cause of the current state of environmental degradation, it is also viewed as an effective way to combat the environmental degradation through environmental-friendly technology. It needs to be noted that we cannot formulate solutions through technological means alone. There is a need for a change in the way

'individuals think about and interact with their environment. ...if respect for environment is to be achieved and an ecological crisis averted' (Dwivedi, p.28). It has to be remembered that:

1. Development does not connote material culture and its enjoyment;
2. Human beings do not have the right to harm other forms of life; and
3. I-Human beings cannot conquer nature for individual gains

Our rights need to conform to our duties. All the religions of the world stress upon the individual's responsible behaviour towards the environment; therefore we have an obligation to sustain our natural resources and ensure their judicious usage. An ethical strategy for environmental conservation has been effectively spelt out in the first draft of the report on the World Conservation Strategy for the 1990s (IUCN, 1989, pp.3-4):

- (a) People should respect nature, like all creatures we are an integral part of nature as well as users and consumers of nature;
- (b) Every life form is unique and warrants respect regardless of its worth to people;
- (c) All persons should take responsibility for their impacts on nature;
- (d) People should ensure the means of survival of all other life forms; and should not knowingly cause the extinction of another species;
- (e) People should treat all creatures humanely, and protect them from cruelty and avoidable suffering. As rational human beings, we have specific duties towards our humanity and God's creation. As Dwivedi explains, these are categorized as *manava dharma* and *global dharma* (Here the term *dharma* refers to one's sense of duty and conformity to the moral law and not religion as is usually referred to). While the concept of rights of all specifically connotes the former, the latter is extended to our compassion for all living beings on this earth. From here emanates the concept of *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*, encompassing *an* expanded vision of our co-existence with all living beings as part of one family. Our moral duty, therefore, obligates us to view and treat all with compassion; this, in essence, is our *manava dharma*. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, our consumption should be need-based and not greed based. His saying thoroughly conforms with the

manava dharma dimension; he forewarned us to voluntarily reduce our wants so that there is less consumption of resources in individual terms. Our sense of duty enables us

to gain mastery over our basic human characteristics of greed **and** exploitation and also enables us to discipline our inner thoughts. This, in turn, reinforces our values **and** ethics that are necessary to create an ecologically sound and sustainable order .

We need to strongly inculcate in ourselves and our society to follow an ethical code of conduct towards protecting our environment. Some of the features include our determination to (1) work towards protection of nature; (2) judiciously use the natural resources; (3) protect the sanctity of nature; (4) morally commit to sustainable consumption; (5) responsibly behave towards environmental management.

On a note of individual responsibility, we can promote an effective transition to sustainable society by educating ourselves and others, by fulfilling the societal obligations to use resources with care and most importantly by recognising the fact that the **future** generations too are entitled to the resources, which we are depleting at an alarming rate. On a concluding note, we need to remember a crucial aspect as spelt out.

13. 11 LET'S SUM UP

In this Unit, we have learnt about the concept of deep ecology and how it is an imminent part of our life. We need to protect our nature so that we and the future generations could lead a harmonious life on this planet earth. The meaning and concept of deep ecology has been developed incessantly over the last few decades. When we reflect

There are different ideas of development depending on the theoretical perspective of the purveyor. Two ideas, however, which have stood the test of time, have been that of progress and modernisation. Development has been conceptualised as an unlimited linear growth of human potential or as

the spread of Western utilitarian modernity throughout the globe. However a number of alternative perspectives, ranging from dependency theory to post-modern development, have seriously challenged the ideas of progress and modernisation as development, resulting in a greater emphasis on reflexivity and on indigenous cultures and ideas of development. One of the startling phenomena has been the absorption of many of these alternatives in mainstream development agenda.

Two views on the environment have subtended the development debate. One sees the environment or nature as separated from nature which has to be subjugated for utilitarian purposes, or separated in swathes to be conserved, or to be used but under a strict programme of stewardship. The other view takes notice of the fact that costs and benefits of the use and exploitation of nature have differential impact on people depending on which side of ownership they stand and therefore call for environmental impact assessments in all developmental projects.

The first view of modernisation has given rise to technological triumphalism through which -the massive infrastructure projects on nature were constructed. However, it was soon realised that there are limits to growth based on infinite exploitation of natural resources and this created an atmosphere of sustainable development. However, by the 1980s, neo-liberalism became the ruling ideology and it focused on the contention that unless environmental goods are priced to match their scarcity, there would be overuse of natural resources. Both modernisation and neo-classical environmental economics have been challenged today by a plethora of environmental movements and perspectives which have focused on the gender, local and participative nature of far more sustainable projects.

Focusing on the communitarian nature of many sustainable measures of the environment the world over, these perspectives pose the greatest challenge to mainstream environmental thinking.

In practice there is a continuing conflict between mainstream and alternative perspectives on development and the environment; nowhere is this more reflected than in the negotiations and parleys between different countries when it comes to the framing of international arrangements for control of CFCs, greenhouses gases and climate change in particular.

The call for stricter adherence to emission controls by the developing nations has clashed with the drive for a market for carbon trading by the developed nations. The Kyoto protocol is witness to this continuing struggle.

Check your Progress

1. Features of Sustainable Development

13.12 KEY WORDS

Deep Ecology' s a contemporary ecological philosophy that recognizes an inherent worth of other beings, aside from their utility. The philosophy emphasizes the

interdependent nature of human and non-human life as well as the importance of the ecosystem and natural processes

Sustainable development : economic development that is conducted without depletion of natural resources.

13.13 SUGGESTED QUESTION

1. Discuss the different approaches to development according to their main ideological bases.

2. Critically examine the three types of relationship between the environment and development.
3. Discuss the main critiques of mainstream development.
4. Study the critiques and counter-critiques of development in the major international agreements on the environment and climate change.
5. What is meant by deep ecology? Explain its meaning and significance.
6. What are the principles associated with deep ecology? What significance do they hold in this globalised era?
7. 'Veneration of nature is akin to achieving peace'. Justify the statement in your own words.
8. What are the different religious sources that enumerate the environmental values? Discuss at length.

13. 14 SUGGESTED READINGS

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13.15 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress

- We need to strongly inculcate in ourselves and our society to follow an ethical code of conduct towards protecting our environment.
- Some of the features include our determination
- (1) work towards protection of nature;
- (2) judiciously use the natural resources;
- protect the sanctity of nature;
- (4) morally commit to sustainable consumption;
- (5) responsibly behave towards environmental management.

On a note of individual responsibility, we can promote an effective transition to sustainable society by educating ourselves and others, by fulfilling the societal obligations to use resources with care and most importantly by recognising the fact that the **future** generations too are entitled to the resources, which we are depleting at an alarming rate.

UNIT 14 NONVIOLENT OWNERSHIP: TRUSTEESHIP

STRUCTURE:

14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Trusteeship

14.3 Ownership

14.4 Hind Swaraj

14.5 Let's Sum up

14.6 Keywords

14.7 Questions for review

14.8 Suggested Readings

14.9 Answer to Check Your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVES

- Learn Key features of Trusteeship
- Understand Gandhi's idea of Trusteeship

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Economic equality being an essential principle and indispensable condiment of the sarvodaya society, trusteeship is a natural corollary of Gandhi's sarvodaya. "It is sarvodaya extended to the as a means for correcting the inequalities of assets ownership; it emanates &om his overriding belief in

nonviolence to bring about a change of the unequal social relationship without violence. He also had profound belief in the goodness of human beings and so appealed to the higher sense of the landlord and the industrialist." Gandhi propounded the principle of trusteeship largely in the context of the question of ownership of the means of production; it follows from and is based on the principle of non-possession. Coming from one of the richest Man Mr Bajaj placed all his wealth and possessions at the disposal of Gandhi and his programme of fighting poverty and inequalities. . Non-possession lies at the heart of his trusteeship, though Gandhi formulated the doctrine of non-possession as one of the key philosophical principles underlying satyagraha movement Gandhi had been gripped by the concepts of non-possession and samabhava (equality), which he found in Gita

He wrote,

To me the Gita became an infallible guide of conduct.. Words like Aparigraha (non-possession) and Samabhava (equality) gripped me. I understood more clearly in the light of the Gita teaching the implication of the word "trustee". ..I understood the Gita teaching of non-possession to mean that those who desired salvation should act like the trustee who, having control over great possession, regards not an iota of them as his own.

14.2 TRUSTEESHIP

By trusteeship is meant that beginning with one's body one holds everything one has as a trust and this includes intelligence, talents, powers, possessions and other natural gifts. Non possession follows from truth and nonviolence. It implies that a person should not possess anything that one does not need. According to Gandhi, the doctrine of non-possession means that everyone should limit one's own possession to what is needed by one and spend the rest for the welfare of others. He considered this as a desirable, nonviolent

method of reducing a Politically it was a nonviolent civil disobedience or civil resistance movement.

Philosophically, it was a movement led by a force which is born out of an intense desire to follow the path of truth. Satyagrahi a follower of truth has to pursue the principle of nonhoarding or non-possession, the main thing to be borne in mind is, not to store up anything

which we do not require. For agriculture, we may keep bullocks, if we use them, and the equipment required for them. Where there is a recurring bane, we shall no doubt store food grains. But we shall ask ourselves whether bullocks and food grains are, in fact, needed." a inequality of income distribution and distribution of wealth. Non-possession means "possession by all" I can only possess certain things when I know that others, who also want to possess similar things, are able to do so. But we know-everyone of us can speak from experience-that such a thing that can be possessed by all is nonpossession, not to have anything whatsoever. In other words, a willing surrender?

Non-possession, in other words, means voluntary poverty.

The morality behind the idea of non-possession is that all human beings are equal and that one person is not to be exploited by another. Accordingly, anyone who possesses things and objects not needed by oneself but needed by others is a thief. In the words of Gandhi: It is theft to take something from another person even with his permission, if we have no need of it. We should not receive any single thing that we do not need. It is theft for me to take any food that I do not need, or to take in a larger quantity than necessary. " The whole idea of private property comes under question here.

It may be remarked that non possession is not compatible with capitalism."

Later on, he discovered in Ishopishad the real meaning of property,

"God the Ruler, pervades all there is in the universe. Therefore renounce and dedicate all to Him and then enjoy or use the portion that may fall to thy lot.

Never covet anybody's possession". "Since God pervades everything, nothing belongs to you, not even your body. God is the undisputed, unchallengeable Master of everything you possess"."

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Trusteeship is based on the idea that "what belongs to me is the right to an honourable livelihood, no better than enjoyed by millions of others. The rest of my wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the community. "Gandhi himself believed that the concept of Trusteeship was one of the few that he thought would survive the ravages of time and history and even some of his own concepts because it dealt basically with the question of economic structure and organization which other systems, past and present, have failed to answer." "Gandhi has been misunderstood or misinterpreted as a defender of private property and as being soft on capitalism. Clearly the concept of aparigraha is the strongest denunciation of capitalist forms" .

Trusteeship consists in its being a movement as much as an idea with strong moral imperatives towards reforming, and restructuring of the economic system.

Gandhi is very articulate about the moral or spiritual principle underlying the

very idea of trusteeship. It is a principle of economic conscience. All those who are concerned with economic decisions (the producers, those who make policies) have to listen to the voice of their conscience before their interest. Trusteeship thus is a satyagraha or a movement towards invoking the conscience of those who are involved in the system. It is not enough just to listen to their conscience, but they need a change of heart; for Gandhi said, We may not dispossess the zamindars of their thousands of bighas. And among whom shall we distribute them? We need not dispossess them. They need a change of heart. When that is done, and when they learn to melt their tenants' woes, they will hold their lands in trust for them, will give them a major part of the produce keeping only what is sufficient for themselves?

He maintained that, by the nonviolent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and increase in his capital? In a message to the Zamindars, Gandhi

seems to warn them in the context of the struggles, especially in Uttar Pradesh

"I would like the zamindars to recognize the distress of the farmers position and make a correspondent change in their own outlook ... They should become trusted friends of their tenants. They should limit their privy purse. Let them forego the questionable perquisites they take them to the tenants in the shape of forced .They should give them fixity of tenure, take a lively interest in their welfare.. .and.. .make them feel that they, the zamindars, are their true friends, taking only a fixed commission for their manifold services..

In its gradual growth, Gandhi links trusteeship with 'voluntariness'. Gandhi wanted an end to the zamindari system and genuinely hoped for a voluntary trusteeship in its place. When

he realized that his appeal to conversion-of capitalists to trustees-went unheeded, he advocated even state intervention to implement trusteeship. About the state intervention,

Gandhi has this to say:

"As for the present owners of wealth they would have to make their choice between class war and voluntary converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. They would be allowed to retain the stewardship of their possessions and to use their talent to increase the wealth, not for their sake, but for the sake of the nation and therefore without exploitation. The state would regulate the rate of commission which they would get commensurate with the services rendered and its value to society..."

Gandhi's frequent reference during this period to the intervention by the state towards some form of trusteeship make voluntariness recede more and more to the back ground Perhaps the most systematic presentation of the theory of trusteeship is the one by one of his closest associates, Shri Pyarelal, in a paper presented to the Seminar on Gandhian Outlook and Techniques, held in New Delhi in 1953. According to Pyarelal, Gandhi "summed up his

trusteeship idea in the following formula: . Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one, it gives no Quarter to capitalism but gives the present owning class a chance of reforming it .

Gandhi realized that the perfect ideal of non-possession is unattainable because

it demands total renunciation. Nevertheless, he initiated a movement towards total

renunciation through the process of gradual reduction of wants and minimization of consumption. Reduction of wants or simplifying our wants is a central point in Gandhi's

concept of non-possession. Simplifying wants in the Gandhian sense means first to make a

Concentrated effort to reduce the sheer number of encrusted desires and habit patterns that vitiate our altruistic impulses and dreams for others, and to self-consciously check the tendency of the aggressive self to acquire more at the expense of others. Secondly, it means to be more responsive to the needs of fellow human beings. Thus our feeling for what others may attain is gradually enriched, while our fantasies about what we hope to acquire wane." There is a dynamic growth here, from the realm of narrow selfishness to other-centredness

14.3 OWNERSHIP

Trusteeship and ownership appear contradictory because in the words of Dada Dharmadhikari, a close associate of Gandhi, "The way of emancipating ourselves from the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption.. It does not recognize any right of private ownership of property except in as much as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.. It does not exclude legislative regulation of ownership and use of wealth. . Thus under state-regulated trusteeship, individual will not be free to hold on

disregard of the interest of society.. Just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, even so a

limit should be fixed for the minimum income that could be allowed to any person in society.

The difference between such minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable and equitable and variable &om time to time, so much so that the tendency would be towards obliteration of the difference. 6. Under the Gandhian economic order the character of production will be determined by sod necessity and not whim or greed. concept of ownership is trusteeship. "

In the words of. R Rao,"The concept of trusteeship excludes the notion of property right, as no individual right can override the right of all individuals to minimum needs. "" In the economic field, ownership or private property is the source of power and inequality. Private property and the social sanction for inheritance lead to the perpetuation and accentuation of inequality. Private ownership of instruments of

production leads to exploitation and appropriation of surplus value, leading to the

accumulation of capital and wealth and the concentration of the ownership of the instruments of production in the hands of a few. Capitalism sanctifies the system of concentration and centralization in the name of the liberty of the individual, the right to private property, the right to inheritance, and the right to pursue private profit without concern for the society. Gandhi held that true liberty of the individual was inconsistent with these rights". The unilateral exercise of these rights without self-restraint or social sanction had only resulted in inequality, injustice, exploitation, and conflicts. Ideally Gandhi would prefer people not to create wealth for its own sake and accept the vow of poverty as long as poverty existed in the world. If people acquire wealth, then he would want them to turn themselves into trustees, managing it for the benefit of the community.'~

Extending this principle to the global level, Gandhi rejected the right of individuals, nations and all groups to monopolise resources to the detriment of the minimum needs of the majority.

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Gandhi did not believe that the solution of the problem of exploitation lay in the violent dispossession of the owning class and the abolition of private property- nor did he believe that the transfer of ownership to the society or the State would automatically lead to the elimination of classes, and the emergence of a non-exploitative society. Nonetheless he proposed trusteeship as a third alternative to private ownership (capitalism) and State ownership (communism). In Gandhi's scheme, trusteeship, being an essential component of gramswaraj (village self-rule), is a movement for people's self-rule, people's birthright; village

ownership in this sense is his third alternative. Vinoba Bhave called his gram & "trusteeship in action" in which the individual owner surrenders his legal title collectively to the village, and not to the state, retaining his right to till the land."

Gandhi held on to the ideal of trusteeship as a "grand alternative" because of his firm conviction that trusteeship, if followed in all its details, will usher in a nonviolent, non-exploitative sarvodaya society. He was aware though that this ideal may never be realized in its entirety. He was also aware of the possibility of his theory being criticised as simplistic, unrealistic and impractical. He made considerable effort to counter such criticism.

He realized that a lot of "ridicule" had been poured on it. And yet he stated, ". . . I adhere to my doctrine of trusteeship. "" Gandhi's adherence to trusteeship in spite of its failure to achieve set goals made Acharya Kripalani, one of the closest associates of Gandhi for over thirty years, to say about the fate of the concept of trusteeship that: "Gandhiji was rather disillusioned in the end and held that his capitalist fiends could never become the trustees of the people. ..The capitalist went to him for their own purposes mostly ... but Gandhiji could not turn the heart of even one capitalist. They remained what they were. ..

Gandhi failed to understand "the mechanism and dynamics of the capitalist system and the parasitical and reactionary nature of the Zamindari system.. . Gandhi could never have expected all the capitalists to give up their property and become trustees, at his appeal. Nonetheless he pleaded for individual

landlords and capitalists to be humanitarian, charitable, noble and patriotic, but these appeals fell on deaf ears of the system. Gandhi was not ignorant about the impersonal, competitive, exploitative and violent nature of capitalism though. His ideal alternative was trusteeship.

The principle of trusteeship has been subjected to much misconceived criticism. It has been described as a "makeshift", as an "eyewash", as a shelter for the rich and as "merely appealing to the more fortunate ones to show more charity". It has been generally objected to on the ground that, as a means of effecting social transformation, this theory, its ethical content notwithstanding, is ineffective

The division of the society into the property owning and the propertyless classes, which is the characteristic of capitalism, is sought to be retained in Gandhism also. The only difference in Gandhism is that the erstwhile capitalist, property owning class will consider itself trustee on behalf of the proletariat. The change is purely on the subjective sphere.

.The class appropriation of surplus value, which trust production will continue in a pious guise, will mean larger and larger accumulation of the capital on the one hand and pauperization of the masses on the other .. These evils cannot be banished by wishing a change in the hearts and minds of the owners of property.'~

E. M. S. Namboodiripad has attacked not only Gandhi's philosophy but also his intentions. In his view, Gandhi's ideas were catering to the bourgeoisie,

Not only in relation to the rural poor, but also in relation to the working class and other sections of the working people, his was an approach which, in actual practice, helped the bourgeoisie. His theory of trusteeship,. . .proved in ad practice to be enormous help to the bourgeoisie in a) rousing the masses in action against imperialism and in b) preventing them &om resorting to revolutionary mass action. This ability of his to rouse the masses and yet to check things that made him

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the undisputed leader of the bourgeoisie?

Even a sympathetic reviewer of Gandhian economics, like J. J. Anjaria, doubts

the validity of trusteeship as a long-term solution. "As a short-term measure it is excellent; coercion is ethically bad; on any large scale, it is also not expedient. But running away from the problem by merely appealing to the more fortunate ones to show a little more charity . . . Possibly Gandhi realized this, for he demanded

a moral revolution, a change of heart among the rich. But in the real world, such a revolution is unlikely and the trusteeship ideal is a vision of society where the rich are charitable so that the poor can remain weak.. .by his

mess on the principle of trusteeship, and his friendliness towards many in exalted economic positions, he established a pattern of radicalism in talk but conservatism in action that is still very much a part of the Indian scene."

Jawaharlal Nehru too disagreed with Gandhi's theory of trusteeship. He wrote

in his autobiography,

Again I think of the paradox that is Gandhiji his keen intellect and passion for bettering the downtrodden and oppressed, why does he support a system, and a system which is obviously decaying,... Is it reasonable to believe in the theory of trusteeship-to give unchecked power and wealth to an individual and to expect him to use it entirely for the public good? Are the

best of us so perfect as to be trusted in this way? ... And is it good for the others to have even these benevolent supermen over them?"

The critics cited above seem biased and see only the negative side and totally

undermine the positive elements in the theory of trusteeship. Maybe it is a deliberate refusal to understand the implications of the concept. Trusteeship may be considered as another meta-category which is meta-legal or meta-economic. It defines a way of exercising responsibility or control over

resources whether as owner, official or bureaucrat. Stewardship thus can become an ideal model for any citizen in a sarvodaya society. As ideal or model, trusteeship becomes an effective utopian symbol to inspire people and challenge their conscience and the prevalent sense of justice. If, for instance, the capitalist were to become a genuine steward, he would inevitably reform (and perhaps reform beyond recognition) capitalism. The stewardship ideal does not discard economic issues, it is a meta-ideal needed to get true results out of whatever economic system prevails.

It is true that there is no historical example of trusteeship to go by. Moreover,

full trusteeship has not been experimented with anywhere. Experiments with limited trusteeship are few, mainly because of its deep and broad implications. The fact is that generally people are unwilling to limit their wants and part with their weak Ganesh D.

Gadre explains the real depth of trusteeship by an illustration

The Mantra of trusteeship", writes Gadre, "can infuse life into the skeleton of Gandhism, which, if revived, will swallow us along with our comfortable armchair. It will snatch away from our rulers, leaders, industrialists, bureaucrats, intelligentsia, and other elites their luxuries and will distribute them to the less privileged. This fear of losing possession of excess wealth and other luxuries and the very thought of giving up those things make most people shun any experiment with trusteeship.

These very people will give all possible reasons to show that trusteeship is illusory and impractical. The theory of trusteeship can transform the docile (God in the

form of poor and downtrodden masses) into a vigorous that will tear to shreds all the subtle system of exploitation of man by man.

One of them was worldly wise and the other three were otherwise. They had set out to make some money and were passing through a forest. In that forest they found a few scattered bones of a tiger. The first wise man whispered a mantra and arranged the bones into

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a skeleton The second, with his mmc powers, put flesh and skin on the skeleton. The third uttered another mantra and infused vital breath into the body. The animal, as soon as it regained life, swallowed up the three wise men. The worldly wise man saved himself by climbing the top of a tree before the beginning of these This fear haunts us. Despite this fear, Gandhi's ideas of trusteeship have been consciously applied in India and abroad.

As to the implementation of trusteeship, Gandhiji had this to say, "when the people understand the implications of trusteeship and the atmosphere is ripe for it, the people themselves, beginning with Gram Panchayats will begin to introduce such statutes."* The late Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia had given notice of his intention to move an Indian Trusteeship Bill to the Lok Sabh in March 1967. This was to provide for the voluntary conversion into trust corporations of concerns owning industries, plantations, banks, trade, transport etc., worth Rs. 10,00,000. If the shareholders of any such concern offered to become trustees and

accepted the workers as their partners the Government would constitute a Panchayat of trustees to manage the affairs of that concern. The bill made detailed provisions for efficient management of trust corporations in the light of Gandhi's views on trusteeship. The president of India withheld sanction to the introduction of this bill in Lo& &&ha on the ground that it is a Monetary Bill. Dr.Lohia had appealed to the President for reconsideration; but he died

before he could pursue the matter."

George Fernandes introduced the same "The Indian Trusteeship Bill" in the Lob sabha in November 1969, but it lapsed without discussion. Atal Behari Bajpayee introduced the same on 18 April 1975, but it also lapsed with the dissolution of the Loka -Sabha in 1977. The Janata Trusteeship Bill by Prof Ramji Sing on April 20,1978 also met with the same fate . Gandhi had hoped that statutory trusteeship would be India's gift to the world To this day it remains an ideal, an objective. Whether the members of parliament will ever make statutory provisions for enabling conscientious trustees to fulfill their moral

responsibilities is anyone's guess. One of the most important steps towards the implementation of trusteeship is mass drive for educating the people in the responsibilities of trusteeship and

organizing workers behind the demand for co-operatives of large concerns.

Shri

Shankarao Deo the veteran sarvodaya leader, has initiated some work on these lines. He suggested that, "the tea plantation industry in India provides an ideal target for intensive experiments in the implementation of trusteeship. he workers' demand should therefore be, not for higher wages, but for ownership of the concerns where they work. The owners fail to become trustees, workers should resort to non-violent satyagraha, making it impossible for the owners to counter their exploitation. Gandhi had advised the owners that, they should willingly regard workers as the real owners of the concerns which they fancy they have created ... they should at once offer the strikers final control of the concern which is as much the strikers' as theirs."

Writing on "Applied Trusteeship", K. Arunachalam claims that "Gandhian ideas of trusteeship have been consciously applied here and abroad in a few industrial and commercial units. , "in its broadest sense, is based on the principle of trusteeship".

Trusteeship even has found global relevance, says Shann Turnbull.

"Trusteeship offers a way to avoid not just violence between humans but also violence between humans and their environment. If human Life is to be indefinitely sustainable on the planet, then irreversible violation of the worlds atmosphere, water, soil, flora and fauna will need to be avoided; this could be achieved by adoption of the trusteeship principle at the local level on a global basis" .some of the practical elements of the Gandhian concept of

trusteeship are emerging in many parts of the world. Tax incentives have been introduced in leading market economies, such as England, France, Germany and the USA to promote the expanded ownership of enterprises on an evolutionary, voluntary basis. lo'

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Since 1974, the tax laws have been amended in the USA to encourage stockholders to introduce employees, consumers and others to become co-owners or take over their corporations. Business Week magazine reported in its 15 April 1985 edition, that as a result of these tax incentives, over seven &on workers in over 3,000 corporations have now of Churches generally embraced the stewardship model, which says we are trustees and keepers of creation. Sethi develops the scope and applicability of trusteeship in the context of workers' participation in management. Participation of workers in management logically leads to co-determination, which necessarily implies consultation. He gives the example of Japan and Germany where they have developed an intermediate arrangement based on the principle of co-determination. '

Gandhi claimed that trusteeship was likely to be his most lasting contribution,

whereas the votaries of all the existing systems reject it. Partly it is due to the fact that Gandhi did not elaborate it sufficiently, and partly because we ourselves have not paid adequate attention to it. Gandhi did not leave behind a detailed model for trusteeship; instead he enunciated the basic principle of its organization. Trusteeship has to be understood as part of the scenario of nonviolent revolution, as an instrument in the satyagrahi's struggle for economic equality and the elimination of classes. Trusteeship of Gandhi needs to be looked

at both as ideal and as experiment.

in Japan it is almost a part of the economic culture. In Japan the word used is "consensus", which depends on the workers' complete loyalty to the firm; the workers' willingness to implement any agreement arrived at between labour and management; personal security of the workers; unrestricted mobility, guarantee of workers' training and upgradation of skills, and democratic decision-making."

category which meta-economics. When Gandhi speaks of aparigraha gr& and amabhava as the basis of trusteeship, voluntarily Limiting one's own

needs, sharing of wealth for the welfare of others, appealing to the goodwill of capitalist and zamindaris for a change of attitudes and even suggesting voluntary poverty, he was laying the spiritual (theological) foundation for trusteeship. Such mem-categories may be considered as mod imperative towards reforming and restructuring the economic system. This offers challenges to

the existing global economic system that is based on competition, and accumulation without any limit. The issue that is often ignored is the possibility and extent of limiting one's need. Trusteeship as ideal also reminds every human person of one's responsibility of being a steward of property and wealth. As ideal, trusteeship is based on global sharing of resources. Trusteeship as experiment may have failed in many respects, but even a fded experiment does not defeat the ideals on which such experiments are carried out. A failed experiment prepares the way for a new experiment; and thus keeps the dialectic of the process in focus. This seems to be true with Gandhi's economic insights and trusteeship in particular.

As the grand alternative, "Trusteeship aims at achieving larger social benefits

rather than work for a narrow economic objective such as profit;. . . . As it is more equalitarian than all other systems, it makes participation not merely formal or of unequal economic, political or status weights, but bases it on the principle of all-round equality. Trusteeship cuts across classes in such a way as to produce over a longer period a classless system.

Trusteeship is also self-government, not only of workers but of the entire community. Above LL , trusteeship, being divorced from the profit motive, introduces the element of htemity without which neither equality nor freedom can be adequately safe-guarded"

14.4 HIND SWARAJ

Gandhi in his Hind Swaraj made a massive attack on machinery, of which

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reverberations can still be heard. In fact his severe attack on machinery, started therein, has made the name of Gandhi a synonym for anti-machinery, anti -technology. Gandhi took an extreme position about machinery and industrialization in the book *Hind Swaraj*, in which book he certainly was an un-compromising critic of all machines and declared himself in no uncertain terms against them: "It is machine that has impoverished India. It is difficult to

measure the harm that Manchester (home of the British Textile Industry) has done to us". In

Hind Swaraj, he posits an ideal state of things in which there will be no machine, no railways, no doctors, lawyers and such symbols of modern civilization. The target of Gandhi's attack in *Hind Swaraj* is machinery, that is technology. (Though Gandhi did not use the word "technology", his entire critique of machinery in effect is the critique of modern technology.)"

Through his indictment of machinery, Gandhi made a thorough indictment of this whole machine-based British rule in India and of the machine-based Western civilization.

Gandhi was reacting to a machine-oriented civilization or culture.

In Gandhi's human economy, machinery can be enslaving and large-scale industrialization degrading to human beings. From his experience of poverty and

unemployment in India, he came to the conclusion that the problem of poverty would not be tackled through the Western method of large-scale industries; instead he was seeking the resuscitation of the village through the revival of its handicrafts and village industries.

He was concerned with the misuse and abuse of machinery because the use of

machinery tends more and more to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few in total disregard of millions of men and women whose bread is taken by it out of their mouths. It was this underlying man-machine conflict that bothered him and, while he was prepared to accept machinery of certain type on a limited scale, he was concerned that the machine would one day

become the master. He saw in the improper use of machine a dehumanizing influence that needed to be countered if man was to retain his individual dignity and freedom.

In almost the last words he wrote on the subject in December 1947, after India

became free, he reiterated his faith in the supremacy of man over machine. "Through khadi", he wrote, "we were striving for the equality of all men and women in place of the gross inequality to be witnessed today". He saw in the machine an instrument of that inequality and exploitation of the poor by the rich of his own country now that the foreign master had left.

When he wrote *Hind Swaraj*, he was under the strong influence of Victorian socialists, who were at that time protesting against the evils of in- on and the degrading conditions under which even women and children were forced to work for long hours under difficult conditions.

His opposition against machinery in *Hind Swaraj* was mainly based on moral

and religious considerations. *Hind Swaraj* was a moral response to what Gandhi perceived as the evils of modern civilization. He saw violence rooted in modern civilization. For Gandhi, the propelling force of modern civilization is what he calls "the hunger for wealth and the greedy pursuit of worldly pleasures." The desire to amass wealth in a situation marked by resource limitations leads inevitably to violence both at the individual and the collective levels.

Also, modern civilization, in Gandhi's opinion, places the pursuit of self-interest at the center of man's existence. But once the pursuit of self-interest is recognized to be central in life, the pursuit of other things--morality spirituality etc.,-gets crowded out of the individual's Me.

As a result, morality and spirituality become insignificant and irrelevant. Gandhi considered Industrialization and craze for machinery as part of modern civilization. Hence his opposition to machinery is a logical consequence of his opposition to modern civilization." But his later writings

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on machinery contained arguments based on economic rationale. His opposition was three-fold in nature: sociological, based on the quality of life; economic, the impact it has on

rural life and the employment opportunities available in the village; and political, since machinery, he saw allied to the forces fighting Indian freedom struggle

Gandhi's attitude towards machinery saying that, "His opposition was not doctrinaire (except at the early stages when he wrote Hind Swaraj) but pragmatic: basically, his opposition was threefold in nature: sociological, economic and political.

It is true that the advancement of science and technology has made it possible

to produce more and more things on a large scale. But the problem is that technologically induced and sustained economic growth makes centralization of power and decision-making an essential part of modern World . Industrialization has succeeded largely in producing goods and services on a larger scale and at a faster rate. But for Gandhi, it is a curse for man because

it "depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. "

Colonization (industrialized country colonizing non-industrialized countries),

domination (minority dominated majority), and unhealthy competition ending in violent clashes and world wars have been the natural consequences of such industrialization. There is a kind of tacit approval of such exploitation in the global scenario which is enjoyed by the developed countries. Foreign aid, political control, and manipulation of trade relationship are various methods through which economic exploitation of the weaker nations is done.

Industrialization tends to destroy differing national economies and breaks their self-sufficiency and imposes the dominant countries' style of operation

on other countries. Gandhi opposed industrialization as a means of solving India's economic problems; he argued that:

... a big country, with teeming population, with ancient rural tradition which hitherto answered its purpose need not, must not, copy the Western model.

What is good for one nation situated in one condition is not necessarily good for another differently situated." Gandhi admits that abject poverty can and does lead to moral degradation and recognizes that, for a poor man, bread is his god. But he disagrees with the argument that material progress spells moral progress. On the contrary, he asserts that, after a minimum of physical well-being, it spells moral and spiritual disaster." In Gandhi's view a reconciliation between modernity and spirituality is impossible." An industrial India would mean an exploiting India, because, "...evils are inherent in industrialism and no amount of socialization can eradicate them." An India exploiting other lands was a horror to Gandhi:

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the

West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island Kingdom (England) is

today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locals.~~'

Gandhi rejects industrialisation also on the grounds that it offer a better standard of living . Inequality and exploitation force the majority of people to live a life of subsistence or even worse. What it does achieve, in reality, is to raise the standard of living for the already rich and widen the gap between the rich and the poor. In this regard, Gandhi's assessment of the West and his prediction about India remain valid.

Gandhi refers to the United States and says: "She has reached the acme of mass

production, and yet she has not been able to abolish unemployment or want. There are still thousands, perhaps millions of people in America who live in misery, in spite of the phenomenal riches of the few ..."

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Industrialism stimulates a multiplication of wants but satisfies the wants of only

a few. When unlimited wants and amassing of wealth become the essence of any culture is greed will rule the day, and dehumanization, exploitation and denigration of morality and spirituality will follow. In his human economy, therefore, Gandhi argued that India still remained primarily an agricultural country. He firmly believed that "India could retrace her advance towards industrialism and reconstruct her economic life and relations in accordance with the principles of human economy"." It should be pointed out that his suggestions for the reconstruction of economic Life and relations undoubtedly emanate from his distaste for industrialism. He Maybe lived that a nonviolent society cannot be built on the foundation of industrialism.

The past and current policies of the Indian government involve the furtherance

of capitalist method of production and industrialism. Industrialization has introduction of new technologies seem to have created more unemployment and poverty. It has made a few rich people richer. One would agree with R Diwan that "India cannot, any more, maintain its industrialist structure". Gandhi's struggle against industrialism was nearly neglected after India got political independence. (Already during the mid-thirties the demand for the industrialization

of the country arose inside and outside the Congress; Liberals like Nehru, nationalists like Subhas Chandra Bose, radicals like M. N. Roy and the emerging forces of socialism inside and outside the anti-imperialist platform stood for industrialization).Nehru formed the national government and gave up totally Gandhi's struggle against industrialization.

Gandhi's only solution to industrialization is the reconstruction of rural economy with an emphasis on the primacy of agriculture and the supplementary and complementary importance of cottage industries. By the revival and rejuvenation of the village economy, Gandhi wants to emphasize the simplicity of village Life, decentralized, self sufficient, self-reliant and autonomous communities, production by the masses instead of "mass

production", and limitation of machinery. Such Gandhian alternative may be qualified as "appropriate technology",'

or "holistic technology". It is not correct to say that Gandhi was anti-machinery. What he was opposed to was the indiscriminate use of machinery. More specifically, he objected to what he called the "craze for machinery". In his words:

What I object to, is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze

is for what they call labor-saving machinery. Men go on "saving labor". Thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save them and labor, not for a some of but for all. I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few , but in the hands of all. Today, machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions.. .
"

The Gandhian choice of technology is simple and straightforward. Production for him is a simple fiction of labour. Labour should produce what it needs. Machinery should be subservient to labour. He maintained that, Machinery .must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour. An improved plough is a good thing, but it must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour.. .I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace hand labor by the introduction of power driven spindles, unless one is at the same time ready to give millions of farmers some other occupation in their house Machinery may be introduced provided there is healthy alternative to the eliminated occupations of people. He detests machines if they remain the instrument of the satisfaction of the greed of a few. "I am aiming," says Gandhi, "not at eradication of all machinery, but limitations.""" The basic question Gandhi posed was whether Technology would remain controlled and in the service of man to reduce his drudgery and to help solve man's material problems" or "whether man would become so subservient to technology that ultimately he

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would be forced to sell his soul to materialism and become alienated both from his fellow beings and nature by plundering it"." What he asked for was an "appropriate technology", which can be adapted by the village homes. He said: "My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions. E.F. Schumacher takes Gandhi's economic principles seriously as much in dealing with the advanced industrial countries as in discussing the third world. Being influenced by Gandhi's economic ideas, he has professed his faith "in the evolution of large scale technology, relatively non-violent technology, technology with a human face.. . Gandhi's Schumacher's ideal is small production resting on small-scale technology. He is, like Gandhi, against "the technology of mass production" (it "is inherently violent, ecologically damaging, self-defeating in terms of non-renewable resources, and advocates "the technology of production by the masses" (which "making use of the best of modern knowledge and experience, is conducive to decentralization, compatible with the laws of ecology, gentle in its use of scarce resources, and designed to serve the human person instead of making him the servant of machines It was not, however, Gandhi's intention to turn one's back on technology such a step would be "not only stupid but immoral ... such a step would be to condemn billions to enforced and permanent misery at precisely the moment in history when their liberation is becoming possible. We clearly need not less, but more technology". But such technology needs to be tamed for man's use, to be relevant to his needs and to be responsive to his ideals. Toffler continues, "We desperately need a movement for responsible technology. We need a broad political grouping, rationally committed to further scientific research and technological advance -but on a selective basis.. .it should formulate a set of positive technological goals for the future. Today we are faced with a technological bover-choice and society must be careful enough, and wise enough to select its machines, processes and techniques to choose its style.

Gandhi was to some extent, pleading for the same approach; he was not

against the upgrading of technology; in fact, he took positive steps, as in the case of spinning, to devise an improved model. But his distinctiveness lies here: he insisted that the new technology should be relevant to rural India and not create more social and economic problems than those it was intended to solve. He wanted production limited to immediate needs and equitable distribution. Gandhi was opposed to an economy or technology where the interest of the masses figured but little. Instead, he posited a new technology which may involve the masses in decisions meant to shape their We. As we have seen earlier, modern technology tends to centralise power-economic and political- in few hands. Gandhi's alternative is decentralisation of power. To him, the solution of concentration of power lies in the small-scale manageable techniques capable of being worked upon by individual

producers, the cooperatives in the villages or the region. If such a technology could be evolved and put in the hands of the village, the problem of concentration of power might be easily solved. Such a development in the application of technology will obviously be opposite to the present trend and will be an altogether new dimension of technological growth.

In such decentralised technology as Gandhi visualized, every village is able to

own the technology and the economic power will be diffused in the villages. It will be village-oriented technology aiming at perfecting the cottage and village industries. The village will thus emerge in the Gandhian scheme as the nucleus of social life. The emphasis here, is on small-scale technique of production carried to even home and family in the village. When industry of the type Gandhi conceived is carried to the village, the relationship between industry and agriculture is changed. What is called for is a healthy balance between industry and agriculture at the village level because it will be the village which will occupy the place of importance in the social order of Gandhi's conception. Pyarelal has very lucidly described this relationship: "Agriculture in this set up will go hand in hand with industry. Such products

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of the village as enter into the daily consumption of the villagers or are needed for their

cottage crafts will be processed in the villages. The surplus alone being sent out to the cities in exchange for services and goods on a fair and equitable basis. Cities will serve as emporia for village products instead of the villages being used as a dumping ground for the manufactured goods of the cities.

Machines will not be abolished. On the contrary, the people

will have many more of them But these machines will be simple machines which people can themselves operate and own individually 'or collectively.

When a healthy balance is established between culture and industry in any society, production will be regulated by the needs of the village. The needs of the village will assume priority over the need to produce for the market. One factor that makes any technology people-oriented is this capacity to produce goods needed by people. Production self sufficiency .

In the village the means of production of the elementary necessities of life are to be "freely available to all as God's air and water" and are not to be "a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of other. The village is to be self-Sufficient in the matter of its vital requirements as a unit; and independent with other villages in many other spheres. As Gandhi put it, "My idea of village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbors for its own vital wants, and yet inter-dependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity

Provided villages manufacture mainly for their own use, "there would be no objection to villagers using even modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as means of exploitation".

Interdependence, while maintaining the independence of the village in essential

goods, is the keynote of Gandhi's approach to village life. Many observers, especially those who are more conversant with Gandhi's economic thought, think that although Gandhi wanted to make the village self-sufficient and self-reliance respect to the basic requirements of consumption, Gandhian

economics is not entirely based on small farm agriculture and cottage industry. Gandhi recognised the need for some large industries which are basic in character. He wanted a mixed pattern of industrial growth- a broad based network of production units in the villages with a few key industries in the urban areas, preferably under communal or state ownership. He regarded the latter as a necessary evil but looked to the former for supplying most of the wants of the people, whether in towns or cities. Gandhi would reverse the present rural-urban relationship and make the latter a market for the products produced in the former.

Gandhi was hopeful that cottage industries and big industries can be harmonised, provided "they are planned so as to help the villagers". He amplified it later:

do visualise electricity, ship building, iron works, machine-making and the like existing side by side with village handicrafts. But the order of dependence will be reversed. Hitherto, the industrialization has been so planned as to destroy the villages and village crafts. In the state of the future, it will subserve the village and their crafts."''

Gandhi was keen that India should, at any cost, avoid industrialization of the Western model. Even if the need for industrialization is accepted, there has to be an alternative pattern that can be adopted by the developing codes, because for a developing country like India large-scale industrialisation of the Western type may be neither suitable nor desirable. The basic problem in India has is adequate food production for the rapidly increasing population. In fact, cottage and large-scale industries were not competing alternatives, but complementary and helpful to each other. Small-scale production and large industries would have to be developed in such a manner that each sector will provide those supplies which

cannot be produced by the other. Each sector thus will help the other by supplying certain requirements and by taking in some of its output. The reason is that small farm agriculture and cottage industries based on local resources cannot make the village entirely self sufficient and self-reliant. The village would require would want structural support and tools and

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implements produced through large investment as well as a few consumer goods. Even more, the output

of the village industries may not be My absorbed by local demands. Therefore, it is necessary to combine small -scale production with large-scale heavy industries for the growth of rural economy. With the growth of rural economy, a large part of the local demand could be met by local production and the villages could be made much more self sufficient they actually were. In the light of Gandhi's views on economics and technology, P.L. Dhar suggests, "...a appraisal of our concept of technology and development so that a uniform, unbiased perspective of technology-valid for both rural and urban development¹⁶⁶ could emerge." Dhar prefers to name such technology, "holistic technology", where technology is viewed in the context of general human welfare.

To many, Gandhi's vision of technology may appear "to be more of a utopia visualized by a saintly person than a practical possibility suited for modern times", as Dhar opines. But, in the same vein, he says that "an alternative technology based on Gandhian vision thus seems to be a dire necessity. "What we need, therefore, in the light of sarvodaya economy, is a transformation of strategy based on the development of both low-stream, village-oriented, capital-cheap, rural industries and certain carefully selected, high-stream technologies, with an economy zoned to protect or promote both. "A new balance has now to be struck between" the most advanced science and technology available to the human race

" According to this model, there is a hierarchy of needs: 1. material needs-physical needs, safety, security etc. ; 2. social needs-self esteem, acceptance, affection etc.; 3. moral needs-justice, service, love etc. and "the Gandhian vision of the idyllic green pastures, the village republics",

Check your Progress

1 Gandhi's view on machinery as means of exploitation

14.5 LETS SUM UP

Such a practical combination requires a "total transformation of the society, its symbols and values, its system of education, its incentives, and the flow of its energy resources, its scientific research and a whole lot of other institution. The pre-requisite to such technology is an acceptance of a basic world-view: true welfare of individual and society culminates ultimately in holistic growth (physiological, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual). The most conducive atmosphere to develop and implement such technologies would be small units, like monasteries, ashrams and other similar organizations Gandhi's vision of the ideal village could become a reality "if collaboration of like-minded scientists and technologies with such organizations could be worked out.

14.6 KEY WORDS

Trusteeship : beginning with one's body one holds everything one has as a trust and this includes intelligence, talents, powers, possessions and other natural gifts.

14.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Explain Gandhi's ideas about Trusteeship

14.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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14.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answers to Check your Progress

- Through his indictment of machinery, Gandhi made a thorough indictment of this whole machine-based British rule in India and of the machine-based Western civilization.
- Gandhi was reacting to a machine-oriented civilization or culture.
- In Gandhi's human economy, machinery can be enslaving and large-scale
- industrialization degrading to human beings From his experience of poverty and unemployment in India, he came to the conclusion that the problem of poverty would not be tackled through the Western method of large-scale industries; instead he was seeking the resuscitation of the village through the revival of its handicrafts and village industries.
- He was concerned with the misuse and abuse of machinery because the use of machinery tends more and more to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few in total disregard of millions of men and women whose bread is taken by it out of their mouths.