



Gandhian Strategy Of Moral Regeneration And Political Emancipation

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Abstract

The emergence of Gandhi played a pivotal role in the history of Indian Nationalism. The development of Indian Nationalism occurred in three separate phases. It was the third phase of Indian Nationalism that witnessed the rise of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, as the man who took the country by storm with his novel political ideologies centered on the cardinal principles of ahimsa and Satyagraha. Armed with these ideological tools Gandhi shouldered critical responsibilities in the momentous events that finally led India to the path of freedom. The emergence of Gandhi, on the Indian political scenario was not the mere instance of another emerging new leader, but it was the rise of a whole new philosophy that permeated into every sphere of Indian psyche. Gandhi's political ideals were merely an extension of his spiritual tenets, which were rooted in deep humanitarian values. Gandhi's greatness lies not only within pioneering a unique fervor in Indian politics and the rise of the masses, but in the way he revolutionized the entire way of looking at politics as an extension of mankind's inherent greatness, enriched with an innate belief in and commitment to truth. No wonder, he is revered as the Mahatma and has been immortalized as The Father of the Nation. Gandhi reigns in the hearts of millions of Indians as The Father of the Nation, for the path breaking role that he played not in the Indian struggle for independence but for moulding the national character and the lives of the Indians alike. At a time when the fabric of the Indian society was tearing apart, he accomplished the Herculean task of unifying the nation. Confronted with diverse political ideologies like hard line extremism, the moderate approach and the newly emerging communist forces the confused Indians found solace in the simple philosophies of Gandhi. He worked assiduously for the upliftment of the downtrodden like the Dalits and gave them a new identity. Women, under his aegis, found back their long lost confidence and actively participated in the tasks of national cause. Gandhi with similar perseverance championed the cause of the secularism. As a visionary, he realized right at the onset that the real strength of India lies in communal harmony and brotherhood.

Gandhi is universally known as a messenger of peace and non-violence. To achieve peace and harmony he brilliantly used Satyagraha as a powerful weapon. In his view, absence of conflict, end of wars and the absence of conflict symbolise peace in a negative sense; where love, mental equilibrium, harmony, unity, cooperation, etc. are the positive forms of peace. Besides that Gandhi expressed that untruth is the main

cause of every conflict and its solution lies in truth. In order to achieve an enduring peace he invented the novel technique of satyagraha which means unwavering search for the truth. He said the first step towards peace is the attainment of political power. Besides, we should believe in the equal distribution of resources so that unrest may not raise its head in the society. And work for peaceful social life. Moreover, Gandhi has said that they should take person from every religions, which preaches peace and harmony.

The entire life of Gandhi is dedicated to the discovery of truth. His belief is contained in the statement : 'God is Truth.' Infact truth in his philosophy is expressed as God. Besides it is his favourable human value and inspired him to write his autobiography: 'my experiments with truth.' Besides in the opinion of Gandhi all religions, philosophies and societies have equally vouched for truth. Therefore, we must practice truth in the thought, word and deed. However, he is well aware that the path of truth is full of hardships, difficulties, sufferings and sacrifice,

Again, the essence of Gandhian philosophy lies in the truth and non-violence. Infact the entire life of Gandhi is dedicated to them. He regarded non-violence as an effective weapon of courageous and suggested them to use it to a peaceful cause. For instance, he himself applied non-violence in political field on a great scale. Further, Gandhi obtained the idea of non-violence from the principles such as 'Ahimsa Paramodharma' and 'Basudeva Kutumbakam' which stands for complete freedom from ill-will, anger and hatred, and the nurture of love for all. However, he expressed that for any society, non-violence is the rule of conduct because it helps people to live with human dignity and work towards the attainment of peace. On the matter of 'Ahimsa', he was of the opinion that it is the largest love and the greatest charity which avoids causing pain or harm to another living being just opposite to 'hinsa' which means causing harm or injury to others.

Thus, the emergence of Gandhi, as a national leader, as a humanist, as a visionary; as a social and political reformer and most importantly as a spiritual leader has been critically instrumental in shaping a new India, firmly rooted in its historical past and at the same time welcoming the progressive trends of modernity. Truth according to Gandhi cannot be considered as an absolute term. It is relative to the person concerned. In Gandhi's sense, truth is not just limited to only its literal meaning or to never tell a lie - it encompasses a broader dimension. In brief, truth involves being true to others as well as oneself - 'being true' means keeping one's ideals, soul, and thought intact of any provocations and in any circumstances.

It means walking on a path of honesty and fighting for one's rights. It means being true to the spirit of humanity. Gandhi often regarded truth as a religious belief common to all religions. The concept of truth in Gandhi's mind can be gauged through the talk that he delivered in Lausanne in Switzerland. The talk can also be useful in getting to know more about his philosophy of truth and non-violence and how he

interrelated the two concepts. ".. 'Being true' means keeping one's ideals, soul, and thought intact of any provocations and in any circumstances...

Gandhi was anxious to teach the Indians that modern civilization posed a greater threat to them than did colonialism, modern civilization was an unmixed blessing and colonialism is an unmixed evil, hence colonialism itself was product of modern civilization. Gandhi updated the concept of dharma that included the notion of citizenship, equality liberty, fraternity and mutual assistance; where in the past concept of dharma was tied to the hierarchical system of duties and obligations and to the preservation of status. in the era of nationalism, the expatriate Indians greatly attracted to terrorism and political violence. in answer school of violence he terminated it as "suicide policy", told violence was no remedy for India's ills and required the use of a different and higher weapon **for** self-protection . His concept of liberty harmonize with swaraj, rights with Duties, empirical knowledge with moral insight, economic development with spiritual progress, religious toleration with women's liberation with the demands of a broader, conception of humanity. The way he visualized Indian nationalism that starts with locality and then gradually extend itself to the province and finally to the differentiates his nationalism from other, leaving a broader message to Indian nationalistic propaganda. I4e found an irrefragable moral link between the order in the soul and order in society. Like the Socrates of modem India he argues Indians must become self-critical and examine their own short comings. India's body politic is being affricated by both the external virus of foreign rule and the internal virus of domestic corruption.. He appealed Indians to understand the need to have an inner experience of what Swaraj means; only then one would be able to communicate to others one's concern for them with credibility and authenticity. He did not believe in revivalism but on the practical commitment to non-violence. His real Swaraj required not only political power and economic prosperity but above all, a certain moral development among people. Aristotle bridges politics with the notion of ethics, but Gandhi did not have so much believe in politics but he considered that, it came on the way towards practicing social dynamism. Gandhian idea of freedom is interlinked with external {political and social} and internal {moral and spiritual} hence complementary as corresponding qualities. The idea of autonomy we find in western philosophy {Aristotle and Machiavelli}. turns that the classical republicanism is partial, covering citizens only and leaving the rest in a position of domination, Lockian noninterference, liberalism says little about non domination, but conversely Gandhi combines both civic republicanism and liberalism in one sphere and thus tried to bring commitment to equality, non domination and personal responsibility. He tried to unit India irrespective of communalistic bloodshed and the barrier of castism -the two dark pages of real Indian historical scenario under his nonviolence spectrum. He the path to realize almighty in the eyes of poor, the untouchables, and depressed groups renamed them as harijans to strengthen India with the rope of unity. Gandhi wanted

the emancipation of one's own self and thus it would be the emancipation of India as a whole, corollary a single emancipated person can make a difference in the world. Later on Gandhi's ideas have given impetus to such socio-political movements in France in 1948, Martin Luther's civil rights movements: the peace movement of the 1960-1970's and the contemporary green and environment movements.

In the recent phenomena it would seem to be a reasonable assumption that Gandhi's well publicized examples of non-violent resistance and the voluminous writings on his techniques at least set the society was tearing apart, he accomplished the Herculean task of unifying the nation. Confronted with diverse political ideologies like hard line extremism, the moderate approach and the newly emerging communist forces the confused Indians found solace in the simple philosophies of Gandhi. He worked assiduously for the upliftment of the downtrodden like the Dalits and gave them a new identity. Women, under his aegis, found back their long lost confidence and actively participated in the tasks of national cause. Gandhi with similar perseverance championed the cause of the secularism. As a visionary, he realized right at the onset that the real strength of India lies in communal harmony and brotherhood.

He rediscovered east through the west. His entire emphasis revolved around the proposition that Indian problems could be solved by indigenous methods and not by western ideas as these are incompatible. His feet remained firmly entrenched in his own culture. Gandhi's conception of Swaraj is different to the one articulated by Western Marxists, socialists or even the liberals though he assimilated their ideas. Though Gandhi is an ardent individualist like the liberals but still he believed in maximising individual freedom by promoting common good. He was a true seeker of indigenous roots that's why like Burke. He always emphasised to retain India's ancient heritage and modernising whatever is worth salvaging and useful. Gandhi always opposed British rule in India and made Swaraj as the soul of his national struggle for freedom. He always believes in the purity of means as well as ends. The means that he employed are such that they will successfully end only if the masses become self-acting towards the latter part of the revolution and the chances are that if the masses gain success through their fully developed conscious strength, they will also refuse to be exploited in future by any body who wishes to ride upon their back. He was a supporter of universal brotherhood that's why Gandhi transcended bourgeois nationalism. He provided a comprehensive critique of western modernity and disagreed with the views about the inferiority of the East and the superiority of the modernity of the west. Gandhi's political, social and spiritual ideas represents the fullest expression of the indigenous roots. From Ram Mohan to Vivekananda, the quest had been for assimilation of the western ideas and culture with that of the east but, in the 20th century Tagore and M.N.Roy along with Gandhi portrayed an autonomous evolution of political discourse. Gandhi used western concepts and ideals intelligently to deal with the problems prevailing in India. Gandhi's dissection

of the cause of disparity in the Indian situation led him to two conclusions: a) imperialistic exploitation and b) Limitation of the capitalised industrialised civilisation of the west.

Thus, the emergence of Gandhi, as a national leader, as a humanist, as a visionary; as a social and political reformer and most importantly as a spiritual leader has been critically instrumental in shaping a new India, firmly rooted in its historical past and at the same time welcoming the progressive trends of modernity. Truth according to Gandhi cannot be considered as an absolute term. It is relative to the person concerned. In Gandhi's sense, truth is not just limited to only its literal meaning or to never tell a lie - it encompasses a broader dimension. In brief, truth involves being true to others as well as oneself - 'being true' means keeping one's ideals, soul, and thought intact of any provocations and in any circumstances.

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