



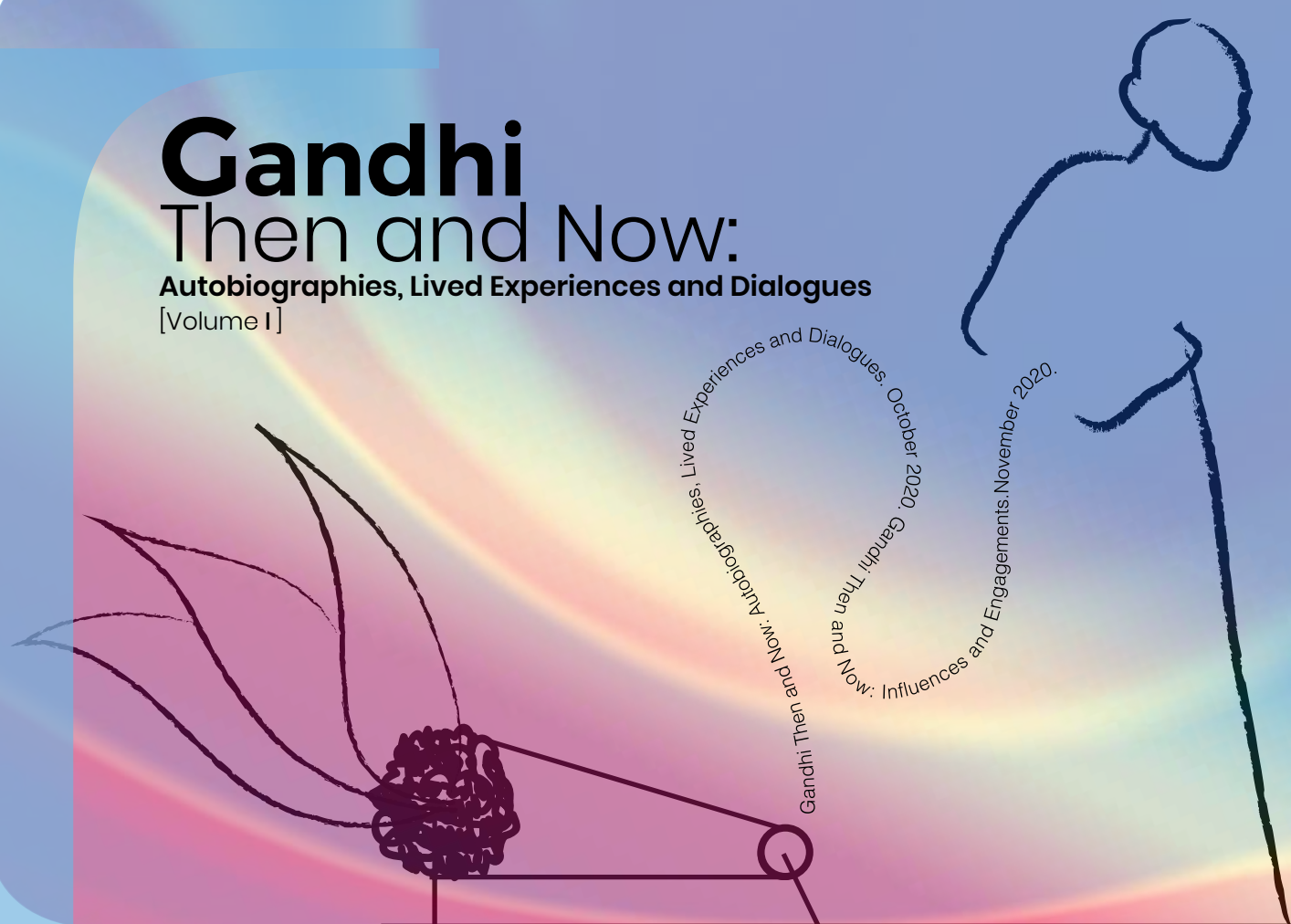
University of Mumbai



S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Interdisciplinary Journal
of the University of Mumbai

Gandhi Then and Now: Autobiographies, Lived Experiences and Dialogues [Volume I]



This special issue is in collaboration with the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Center,
Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Center, University of Mumbai

Special Issue Editor: Satishchandra Kumar

Volume 01 | Issue 06
October 2020

S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Interdisciplinary Journal

On the occasion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's 129th birth anniversary on 14th April 2020, the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Mumbai has launched a free open access online journal, Sambhāṣaṇ. This interdisciplinary journal hopes to bring diverse disciplines in dialogue with each other through critical reflections on contemporary themes.

Sambhāṣaṇ or conversation as an art of dialogue has been crucial to the development of both Indian and Western thought. Dialogos in Greek literally means “through word”, where one establishes relationships on the basis of conversations to initiate processes of thinking, listening and speaking with others. Thinkers such as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, David Bohm, Hans Georg Gadamer, Anthony Appiah and Martha Nussbaum have projected shared dialogue as a way of understanding the relationship between the individual and society. While Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Pandita Ramabai, Jürgen Habermas, Paul Ricoeur, Patricia Hill Collins and Judith Butler, to name a few, have started out anew through ruptures in conversations. The inevitability of conversation in academic life emerges from its centrality to human development and ecology. Conversations are not restricted to any single territory, but are enacted between global and the local topographies. This online bi-lingual journal aims at continuing and renewing plural conversations across cultures that have sustained and invigorated academic activities.

In this spirit, Sambhāṣaṇ an interdisciplinary monthly online journal endeavours to:

- be an open platform, where scholars can freely enter into a discussion to speak, be heard and listen. In this spirit, this journal aims at generating open conversations between diverse disciplines in social sciences, humanities and law.
- preserve and cultivate pluralism as a normative ideal. Hence, it attempts to articulate a plurality of points of view for any theme, wherein there is both a need to listen and to speak, while engaging with another’s perspective.
- act as a springboard for briefly expressing points of view on a relevant subject with originality, evidence, argument, experience, imagination and the power of texts. It hopes that these points of view can be shaped towards full-fledged research papers and projects in the future.

Framework

- This journal is open to contributions from established academics, young teachers, research students and writers from diverse institutional and geographical locations.
- Papers can be empirical, analytical or hermeneutic following the scholarly culture of critique and creativity, while adhering to academic norms.
- Commentaries and reviews can also be submitted.
- Submissions will be peer-reviewed anonymously.
- Some of the issues will publish invited papers and reviews, though there will be a call for papers for most issues.
- There would be an occasional thematic focus.

Guidelines for Submission

- Original, scholarly, creative and critical papers with adequate references.
- All references to the author should be removed from the submission to enable the anonymous review process.
- There can be a limit of approximately 3500–4000 words (for papers) and 1500–2000 words (for commentaries) and 1000–1200 words (for reviews).
- Essays should follow the Times New Roman font in size 12 with double space.
- All contributions should follow the author–date referencing system detailed in chapter 15 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (17th Edition). The style guidelines in this journal can be consulted for quick reference.
- Authors should submit a statement that their contribution is original without any plagiarism. They can also, in addition, submit a plagiarism check certificate.
- The publication of research papers, commentaries and book reviews is subject to timely positive feedback from anonymous referees.

Publisher

***Office of the Dean of Humanities, University of Mumbai,
Ambedkar Bhavan, Kalina Campus, Vidyanagari,
Mumbai-400098***

This journal accepts original essays that critically address contemporary issues related to social sciences, humanities and law from an interdisciplinary perspective.

“In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared... In other words there must be social endosmosis.”

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Editorial Note

On the occasion of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's 151st birth anniversary *Sambhāṣaṇ* has collaborated with the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Center, University Department of Applied Psychology & Counselling Centre, University of Mumbai on two volumes of special issues, October 2020 and November 2020. These volumes are based on the theme "Gandhi: Then & Now" reflecting Gandhi's relevance in the 21st century.

As is well known, Gandhi's autobiography is a story of his "experiments with truth" (2018). However, in an age of absolutism and credulousness – often spawned by corporatized social media – what is not so obvious is that it portrays his search for knowledge grounded in the labor of inquiry, experimentation and exploration. Instead of lazily asserting a claim, one experiments with it to get past gullibility, and the whims and fancies emanating

from subjective caprice. According to Gandhi, "...a votary of truth must exercise the greatest caution..." (2018, 469). He upheld an ideal of living in which the fallibility of the self was accepted, along with that of doctrinal truth. In questioning the latter, one questions the tyranny and violence of doctrinal truth, both in the individual and social spheres. Thus, overcoming violence requires a process of deep introspection and self-criticism in a space that is between the public and private. Experimentation for Gandhi is an alternative to social engineering of identities, propagation of fake news and the manufacture of thought. Experimentation requires freedom, imagination and creativity. It does not adhere to set ideas or inflict them on others. It enables transformation. Thus, for Gandhi it is possible to resist the "brute force" (2010, 75) of violence through the "soul force" (2010, 74) of love. But the latter is not given and has to be cultivated through arduous processes of penance, prayer, reflection and self-discipline. Gandhi began his self-disciplining practices of austerity and introspection in his ashram blurring the space between the personal and the public. This expanded to the whole of India with his swaraj based resistance to British imperialism. It spread globally after his assassination in 1948. On this note, the essays in this volume focus on "Autobiographies, Dialogues and Pedagogies". They engage with how Gandhi's search for the self was never isolated, but was always linked to others, so that the search for one's self is also a form of self-transcendence. Kirti Nakhare, Aarushi Sharma and Bhagyashree Varma explore Gandhi's "experiments" as still having the potential to infuse life and energy. Uday Narayan Singh (Sahitya Akademi award winner), Nikhil Katara and Madhavi Nikam engage with the dialogues that framed Gandhi's relationships with Tagore, Bose and Rolland. They tellingly reveal that differences are not closures, but provocations to converse and critique. The essays by Indu Prakash Pandey and Sibyl Thomas spell out the pedagogical force of Gandhi's introspective approach. The book review by Amita Valmiki explores the contemporary character of Gandhian thought.

These essays reveal that despite being routinely invoked and referenced, Gandhi's relevance in the contemporary context, continues to be strong and spirited. His journey poses several questions that are germane to the contemporary world, some of which include: How can non-violence speak to recent upheavals of race, caste and gender across the globe? How do the vicissitudes of Gandhi's autobiography address the certitudes of speculative thought and absolutism? How does autobiography serve as a critical space? How does one blur the line between the public and the private worlds in developing one's "soul force"? How does one respond to conflicting "soul forces"? The essays in this issue invoke Gandhi's notion of experimentation, in their attempts to discuss these questions.

Gandhi presents an enormous hermeneutic challenge in the 21st century. Much ink has been spent on discussing his relevance and his significance, in the course of reading his texts and engaging with the applications of his thoughts in diverse domains. Gandhi has his zealous admirers. To mention just a few whom he influenced, Ela Bhatt, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela. King professed to be inspired by Gandhian ideals of non-violence after spending a night in Mani Bhavan in erstwhile Bombay in the year 1959 (Frayser 2019). Yet, years later Obádélé Kambon has critiqued Gandhi's problematic relationship to race (Kambon, 2018). Gandhi's critics have posed questions regarding his relation to caste following B.R. Ambedkar or nationalism following Rabindranath Tagore. These criticisms open up the need for autobiographies being self-critical so as to participate in dialogues and pedagogies. These complex and conflictual perspectives show that one cannot adopt a reductionist and uncritical attitude in the continuous attempts to rethink Gandhi. The "hermeneutics of suspicion"¹ towards Gandhi, demonstrate that his thought is always in the plural and shaped by the readers who interpret him. Perhaps this is the meaning of contemporaneity. They also show how the hermeneutics of the self (reflected in autobiographies) are also hermeneutics of others,

given the inextricable relationship between the self and the other. The “contradictory resolve” (1977, 38) of Ricoeur’s hermeneutics, entailing both a willingness to listen, as well as, suspect is at work in reinterpreting Gandhi, both then, and now.

The Sambhāṣaṇ team thanks Prof. Suhas Pednekar, Vice Chancellor and Prof. Ravindra Kulkarni, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for their constant support. We thank our invited authors for contributing to this volume with their enriching essays. We thank our peer reviewers for timely and expert feedback on the essays, often at a short notice. Our gratitude to Prof. Bhagyashree Varma for her time and effort with translation. We are grateful to our Advisory Committee Members and Board of Consulting Editors, who often go beyond the call of duty to give us good counsel. Our *Dank* to our Review Editor for helping us out. Our task will be incomplete without the support of our Assistant Editors. We welcome on board our new Assistant Editors, Ms. Aishe Debnath and Ms. Anjali Majumdar with gratitude. Our *shukriyaan* to Ms. Prajakti Pai for her patience and artistic gifts. We remain grateful to Dr. Srivaramangai and Mr. Sanket Sawant for their oceanic help.

NOTES

¹ This expression is derived from Ricoeur (1977)

References

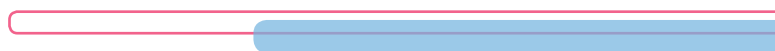
Gandhi, M.K. 2010 Hind Swaraj: A Critical Edition. ed. Sudesh Sharma and Tridip Suhrud Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan

_____. 2018 An Autobiography or the Story of my Experiments with Truth: A Critical Edition translated by Mahadev Desai and edited by Tridip Suhrud New Delhi: Penguin Random House

Freyer, Lauren 2019 "Gandhi is deeply revered, but his attitudes on race and sex are under scrutiny" npr accessed on September 5, 2020 <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/02/766083651/gandhi-is-deeply-revered-but-his-attitudes-on-race-and-sex-are-under-scrutiny>

Kambon, Obádélé 2018 "Ram Guha is wrong. Gandhi went from a racist young man to a racist middle-aged man" The Print December 24 accessed on December 20, 2020 <https://theprint.in/opinion/ramachandra-guha-is-wrong-a-middle-aged-gandhi-was-racist-and-no-mahatma/168222/>

Ricoeur, Paul 1977 *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* translated by Denis Savage New Haven: Yale University Press.



S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Interdisciplinary Journal

Editorial Team

We gratefully acknowledge the constant support from Prof. Suhas Pednekar, the Vice Chancellor and Prof. Ravindra Kulkarni, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Mumbai in publishing this journal.

Honorary Editor:

Rajesh Kharat, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities

Editor :

Kanchana Mahadevan, Department of Philosophy

Co-editors:

Meher Bhoot, Department of German

Satishchandra Kumar, Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre

Review Editor:

Gita Chadha, Department of Sociology, University of Mumbai

Assistant Editors:

Aishe Debnath, Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre, University of Mumbai

Viplov Dhone, Department of Philosophy, Birla College

Bharatwaj Iyer, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Mumbai

Anjali Majumdar, Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre, University of Mumbai

Rucha Pawar, Department of Philosophy, University of Mumbai

Designer and Artist :

Prajakti Pai

Advisory Committee :

Aravind Ganachari (Formerly), Department of History

Ashok Modak (Formerly), Centre for Soviet Studies

Indra Munshi (Formerly), Department of Sociology

Dilip Nachane (Formerly), Department of Economics

Biswamohan Pradhan (Formerly), Department of Linguistics

Board of Consulting Editors :

Anil Bankar, Institute of Distance and Open Learning
 Yojana Bhagat, Department of Pali
 Bharat Bhushan, Office of Academic Development YASHADA, Pune
 Pankaj Deshmukh Training Ship Rahaman College, Nhava
 Sanjay Deshpande, Centre for Central Eurasian Studies
 Narayan Gadade, Department of Philosophy
 Wilbur Gonsalves, Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre
 Kunal Jadhav, Department of Lifelong Learning and Extension
 Sampada Jadhav, Department of Library and Information Science
 Sanhita Joshi, Department of Civics and Politics
 P. M. Kadukar, Maharashtra Institute of Labour Studies
 Manjiri Kamat, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities
 Anagha Kamble, Department of History
 Manisha Karne, Mumbai School of Economics and Public Policy (Autonomous)
 Meenal Katarnikar, Centre for Extra Mural Studies, Archaeology and Ancient Indian Culture
 Muizza M.E. Kazi, Department of Urdu
 Balaji Kendre, Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Contemporary Studies
 Sakina Khan, Department of Persian
 Dhanraj Kohachade, Graduate Constituency, Senate
 Vinod Kumare, Department of Marathi
 Sachin Labade, Department of English
 Sunita Magare, Department of Education
 Renu Modi, Centre for African Studies
 Suchitra Naik, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities
 Madhavi Narsalay, Department of Sanskrit
 Mrudul Nile, Dr Ambedkar International Research Centre for Social Justice
 Renuka Ozarkar, Department of Linguistics
 Hubnath Pandey, Department of Hindi
 Daivata Patil, Department of Communication and Journalism
 Aparna Phadke, Department of Geography
 Sudhir Puranik, National Service Scheme
 Ratilal Rohit, Department of Gujarati
 Sheetal Setia, Department of Law
 Mohamed Shahid, Department of Arabic
 Rikeesh Sharma, Naval War College, Goa
 Smita Shukla, Indian Council of Social Science Research, (WRC)
 G.N. Upadhya, Department of Kannada
 Vidya Vencatesan, Department of French

DISCLAIMER: The editorial team does not necessarily share the views of the authors who are solely responsible for their papers, commentaries and reviews.

*“...my experiments have
not been conducted
in the closet, but in the
open;”*

–M. K. Gandhi

Note on original image used on this page:

Image source:
Image by Daniel Christiansz from Pixabay.



"EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH"

- 19 **A Journey in the Laboratory of Life: A Study of "My Experiments with Truth: An Autobiography"**

Kirti Nakhare & Aarushi Sharma

- 36 **Truth and Narration in Gandhiji's Experiment with Autobiography**

Bhagyashree Varma

DIALOGUES

- 50 **Gandhi as Reflected in Tagore's Biographical Sketches**

Uday Narayan Singh

- 62 **Gandhi and Bose**

Nikhil Katara

- 68 **M.K. Gandhi through Western Lenses: Romain Rolland's Mahatma Gandhi: The Man Who Became One with the Universal Being**

Madhavi Nikam

PEDAGOGIES

- 78 **Gandhi In My Life**
Indu Prakash Pandey
(Trans. Bhagyashree Varma)
- 97 **Transforming adversity into prosperity:
Application of Gandhian thought to higher
education**
Sybil Thomas

REVIEW

- 112 **Gandhi as Reflected in Tagore's Biographical
Sketches**
Amita Valmiki

CONTRIBUTORS' BIONOTES

" EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH "

A Journey in the Laboratory of Life: A Study of 'My Experiments with Truth-An Autobiography'

Kirti Nakhare
Arushi Sharma

Department of Business Communication,
SIWS College, Mumbai,
knakhare@gmail.com

Department of English,
University of Mumbai,
arushisharma296@gmail.com

Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography, is an interesting read for a discerning reader. His life's journey as etched, is replete with eastern and western influences; ranging from the Gita, the Upanishads, to Tolstoy and Thoreau, to name a few. These influences, percolating through the prism of his persona, indeed leave the reader astounded, as though peering through a kaleidoscope, with each turn providing, but a different, although a beautiful formation of the version of Truth, which he strove to unravel, all through his mortal journey.

This paper will attempt to study these influences on M.K. Gandhi and the culmination of these in the form of Satyagraha, Ahimsa and Self-Reliance and many other principles espoused, which made him worthy of the title of the Mahatma. His experiments undertaken in the laboratory of life, are a rich legacy, which are relevant even today and have touched the lives of not only the elite, but also of Munnabhai's as represented in the mainstream Hindi films, thus, gently prodding each one, all the same, to lead a life guided by Ahimsa and Satya.

Key terms:

Eastern and western influences, Truth, Satyagraha, Ahimsa and Self-Reliance.

“[...] and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John viii.32. NRSV (1999:101)

These words from the *Bible*, capture the life mission of Mahatma Gandhi. The quest for truth was the ultimate goal of Gandhi's life, which led him to Mahatmahood. Viktor Frankl in '*Yes to Life In spite of Everything*' has drawn attention to the 'fundamental truth'- "being human is nothing other than being conscious and being responsible." (Frankl 2019:47). Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's life was driven by the consciousness of responsibility towards attaining truth. The consistent pursuit of truth and the resultant impact on various spheres of his life, have been a matter of many a scholarly discussions. It would be appropriate to quote Gandhi in this context, "But for me, truth is the sovereign principle, which includes numerous other principles. This truth is not only truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also, and not only the relative truth of our conceptions, but the Absolute Truth, the eternal principle, that is God." (Gandhi 2017:12)

This paper is an attempt to study Gandhi's autobiography and delineate the influences which transformed him into the 'Hindu mystic'.

Early impressions:

Born into a staunch Vaishnava household, Gandhi was deeply influenced by his mother who was religious and would abstain from food till her daily prayers were accomplished. The foundations of fasting and restraint can be traced here. Gandhi describes his mother as one who took "the hardest of vows and she kept them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them." (Gandhi 2017:18) Mythological characters like Shravana from the play '*Shravana Pitri Bhakti*', extolled for his dedicated services to his parents, and the eternally truthful Harischandra; were the earliest influences. The play about Shravana, Gandhi read with intense interest, "Here is an example for you to copy," (Gandhi,2017:20) he said to himself. "Why should not all be truthful like Harishchandra?" (Gandhi,2017:21) was the question the young Gandhi asked himself often. In fact, Shravana and Harishchandra became living realities for him. The roots of selfless service and

the unflinching insistence on truth can be traced to these outwardly insignificant influences, which were subconsciously chiselling the young mind.

Early betrothal and marriage vis-à-vis ahimsa and brahmacharya:

Betrothed at the age of seven and married at the age of thirteen, Gandhi had his own share of trials with conjugal love. The jealousy and possessiveness, that characterised the newly formed relationship, and the overpowering lust; which eventually matured into a pure marital bond, are very candidly penned in his autobiography. It's essential to mention this, as we witness Gandhi's growth, from being a possessive husband thus: "If I should be pledged to be faithful to my wife, she also should be pledged to be faithful to me, [...] The thought made me a jealous husband. Her duty was easily converted into my right to exact faithfulness from her, and if it had to be exacted, I should be watchfully tenacious of the right." (Gandhi 2017: 24).

The progression, from being a possessive husband to the seeker-on the path of self-realisation, who, as part of the process, understood *ahimsa* in all its aspects, with the "canker of suspicion (being) rooted out." (Gandhi 2017: 36). *Brahmacharya* as an acceptable conduct, made him realise that the wife was not the bond slave of the husband, but an equal partner in all joys and sorrows, who had her own freedom and choices. Eventually, he realised, the path of attaining celibacy was filled with its own set of trials, but was one of the paths in attaining truth.

At this juncture it would be appropriate to refer to Ruby Singh's essay on the genre of autobiography (Singh 2015). Singh has thrown light on the earliest written autobiography of Saint Augustine titled *Confessions* in Latin, written in CE 397. Singh opines, autobiography is traditionally a Western genre drawing on the Catholic ritual of confessions and the classical autobiographical genre based on introspection of the self, confessions of sins, expressions of remorse and guilt, which is indeed very theological in letter and spirit.

Addressed to God, Saint Augustine's autobiography traces those moments and incidents of his life that mark and shape his spiritual development. Singh further elaborates by stating that Saint Augustine expressed the confessions of sins or evil as ways that lead to their cleansing and how he (the sinner Augustine) ultimately turned into a saint, resonances of which, can be found in Gandhi's autobiography.

The confessions of Augustine, states Singh; starting with his initial lack of faith in Christ, stealing fruit as a child, fornication and arrogance of youth, may evoke an ironic smile in the contemporary world, but they have to be understood in the context of early Christianity. (paraphrased from Singh 2015:76) Gandhi's autobiography seems to register similar kind of troughs and peaks, which transformed him into a Mahatma.

Exercise and good handwriting:

Coming back to Gandhi's work, where he attempted to delve deeply into every aspect of life, in order to achieve perfection and a cleansing, he professed the preference for long walks in the open air, which helped him build a fairly hardy constitution. These walks later, paved the path for the 'long marches' that were undertaken in a bid for independence. Besides believing in the power of regular exercise, he believed in good handwriting being a necessary part of education, to develop which, children should learn to draw before learning to write. He expresses thus: "Let the child learn his letters by observation as he does different objects, such as flowers, birds, etc., and let him learn handwriting only after he has learnt to draw objects. He will then write a beautifully formed hand." (Gandhi 2017: 29)

Meat eating and addictions–Lessons in ahimsa:

Amongst his many experiments were acceptance and denial of beliefs. One of them being hiding the unacceptable deed of meat eating from his Vaishnava

parents, which was initially not perceived as departing from truth; as meat eating was an act, that he undertook out of the spirit of bringing about a reform, under the influence of a friend. It was also partly the influence of the Gujarati poet Narmad, who held sway over schoolboys then, the poet expressed the might of the Englishman through his doggerel, thus:

Behold the mighty Englishman
He rules the Indian small,
Because being a meat-eater
He is five cubits tall. (Gandhi 2017: 33)

Not before long, Gandhi overcame this line of thought, as he believed that food reform and eating meat were essential, but deception of parents was not the right way to achieve reforms. Around that time, in fact even before, Gandhi and his relative became fond of smoking, fancying the clouds emitted by the act! To finance this addiction, money was stolen from a servant's pocket money, in order to purchase Indian cigarettes, he eventually overcame this addiction.

Along with this, the young Mohandas stole money on various occasions and the ultimate theft was clipping of a part of his brother's gold armlet, which was utilised to clear the brother's debt of twenty-five rupees. After clearing the debt, he resolved to never ever steal again. He confessed through a note written to his father, asking for an appropriate punishment, he expected violence, but when he saw tears flow down his agonised father's cheeks, that was an object lesson in ahimsa and the power of love. It was possible, only when the confession came out from a pure and repentant heart. Gandhi was thus convinced about the all-embracing power of ahimsa which transformed everything it touched.

The self-realisation after a wrong deed suggests evolution, and growth towards the better self, only an individual who has set out to seek Truth, will but reach there. In this context it would be fitting to mention, another important influence on Gandhi, who has succinctly encapsulated this idea. "But man is not stationary in regard to truth, but every individual man as he passes through life, and humanity as a whole in the same way, is continually learning to know a greater and greater degree of truth, and growing more and more free from error." (Tolstoy 2005: 183)

Ramanama and other influences:

Religion was construed as knowledge of self in the broadest sense for Gandhi. He received the lessons in repetition of the Ramanama to allay his fear of ghosts from his nurse Rambha, at a tender age. Ramanama was an infallible remedy. Gandhi was exposed to his father's friends of all religions, who would discuss about their faiths. This gave him an early grounding in religious tolerance. The *Manusmriti* did not entice Gandhi due to its propagation of violence, and meat eating. Amidst all these influences, Gandhi believed in morality as being the basis of all things and truth being the substance of it. Thus, the pursuit of truth became his sole objective.

At the same time, Gandhi could not accept Christianity as a perfect or greatest of all religions, neither was he convinced of Hinduism to be so with the scourge of untouchability and its division in so many sects and castes. Also, he questioned if the Vedas were inspired by the word of God, why not the Bible or the Koran? Young Gandhi was thus evolving into a rational thinker. Another interesting influence, was a didactic stanza, from Gujarati, which became his guiding principle, that professed returning good for evil:

For a bowl of water give a goodly meal;
 For a kindly greeting bow down with zeal;
 For a simple penny pay thou back with gold;
 If thy life be rescued, life do not withhold;
 Thus, the words and the actions of the wise regard;
 Every little service tenfold they reward.
 But the truly noble know all men as one,
 And return with gladness good for evil done. (Gandhi 2017:45)

These influences slowly but surely laid the foundation for the principles of ahimsa and satyagraha.

The vow and departure to England:

After clearing the matriculation examination in 1887, it was unanimously decided that Gandhi should pursue the profession of a Barrister, and in accordance, he was sent to England, not before being administered three vows by the family adviser, to not touch wine, woman and meat. Following which, he was permitted to set off for England. Once in England, procuring vegetarian food was a challenge, after reading the book, Salt's Plea for Vegetarianism, he became a confirmed vegetarian by choice, being a vegetarian was in the interests of truth and the vow he had taken. However after reading the book, the spread of vegetarianism became his mission.

The experiments in dietetics followed this choice, and helped him search deeper and accordingly, an inward and outward change ensued. His experiments in leading a simple life, that was lived frugally, harmonised his inward and outward life. This modification made his life more truthful and added joy.

The moral reform followed the change in diet. Gandhi started a vegetarian club which was dissolved later. However, these associations helped him develop his persona and helped him slowly and steadily improve on the skills of public speaking. Yet, he could never get over the hesitancy in speech and later, he grew to find it to be a pleasure. "Experience has taught me that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. [...] My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow. It has helped me in my discernment of truth (Gandhi 2017: 70).

The role of the Gita and its comparison with the Bible:

In the second year of his stay in England, Gandhi came under the influence of two Theosophist brothers, who read the translation of the *Gita* by Sir Edwin Arnold. The verses from the second chapter discussed the impact of the world of 'maya'-the materialistic world, on the purpose of life and on the mind, due to which, man could be completely undone. He considered the *Gita*, as the best resource, for

seeking the knowledge of truth. At the same time the 'Sermon on the Mount' from the New Testament had a different impact, which he compared with the *Gita*. The *Bible* verses, "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." and "If any man takes away thy coat, let him have thy cloak too." (Gandhi 2017:75) influenced Gandhi; who compared this with Shamal Bhatt's "For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal." (Gandhi 2017:75)

Assimilating the teachings of the *Gita*, the *Light of Asia* and the Sermon on the Mount, the fact that "renunciation was the highest form of religion", appealed to Gandhi immensely (Gandhi 2017:75).

It would be pertinent to draw attention to Tolstoy's influence on Gandhi's thought processes. Through his book, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Tolstoy expresses, "Not without good reason was Christ's only harsh and threatening reproof directed against hypocrites and hypocrisy. It is not theft nor robbery nor murder nor fornication, but falsehood, the special falsehood of hypocrisy, which corrupts men, brutalizes them and makes them vindictive, destroys all distinction between right and wrong in their conscience, deprives them of what is the true meaning of all real human life, and debars them from all progress toward perfection." (Tolstoy 2005:177-178) This work of Tolstoy impacted the understanding of truth and its many aspects. In his autobiography, Gandhi describes the book as one that promotes independent thinking, is profoundly moral and truthful.

Three moderns:

Gandhi was impacted by three moderns: "Raychandbhai as his living contact; Tolstoy through his book, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*; (which has already been mentioned earlier) and Ruskin through his *Unto this Last*." (Gandhi 2017:93)

The teachings of Ruskin from the same text that influenced Gandhi, were as follows:

1. The good of an individual is contained within the good of all.
2. The value of a lawyer's work is the same as that of a barber's, in that all have the same right of earning from their work.
3. The life of labour, i.e. the life of the handicraftsman and the tiller of the soil, is the life worth living. [Our paraphrase of the points] (Gandhi 2017:273)

Gandhi was immensely/extremely influenced by these principles and ready to put them to practice. The influence of Ruskin was irresistible on Gandhi; so much so that he translated Ruskin's '*Unto the Last*' into Gujarati, and named it *Sarvodaya*.

Life and struggle in South Africa:

Kicked, shoved and pushed in South Africa, it was no country for self-respecting Indians. Asiatics in South Africa were regulated and their free movement controlled. Gandhi was known as a 'coolie barrister' there, 'coolie' was a common appellation for all Indians. To salvage self-respect, Gandhi traded the Indian turban for an English hat, as being forced to take out the Indian turban would be construed as an insult.

The Natal Indian Congress fought for the rights of Indians in Natal. Gandhi was Bhai for the indentured labourers in South Africa, who were mostly South Indian. The case of Balasundaram, an indentured Indian labour, who entered Gandhi's office with head gear in hand, was one of the many individuals, for whom Gandhi stood up. Balasundaram was severely beaten by his European master, who lost self-control, which resulted in breaking two of his teeth. Gandhi fought for the transfer of the indenture Balasundaram to somebody else. Gandhi was present in Natal to espouse his cause. When Balasundaram visited Gandhi, he did so with the head gear in his hand. The practice of visiting a European with the head gear in hand was followed in Gandhi's presence too. A salute with both hands was not sufficient. Gandhi asked him to tie up his scarf. Balasundaram did so with a little

bit of hesitation, but a great deal of pleasure on his face. The ill-treatment at the hands of another human being made Gandhi wonder thus:

“It has always been a mystery to me how can men feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow-beings.” (Gandhi 2017:149)

Gandhi knew the causes that needed his energies; the Mahatma, who insisted on wearing the Indian head gear in the District Magistrates court in South Africa, on the other hand took it off, in obedience of the order of the Supreme Court in South Africa. As he wanted to reserve his strength for fighting bigger battles, his skills were to be used for better causes. The pursuit of truth, taught him to appreciate the place of compromise. This spirit, as he saw later in life was an essential part of Satyagraha. This insistence entailed endangering his life and inviting the displeasure of friends. “But truth was as hard, as adamant and tender as a blossom.” (Gandhi 2017:144)

Gaining popularity as the messiah of Indians in South Africa, Gandhi was perceived as a threat by the Natal whites. When he got along his wife and children to settle in Natal, false charges were pressed against him and as a result, all the passengers on the ship were quarantined for an uncertain number of days, under the pretext of preventing the spread of the plague. However, at the end of twenty-four days, the passengers were allowed to enter the harbour. This surely reminds one of times not having changed even in 2020, quarantining people who prove to be a threat to those in power still holds true!

Finalising brahmacharya in 1906:

Gandhi realised, “in order to serve society, he had to relinquish the desire for children and wealth and live the life of a vanaprastha of one retired from household cares.” (Gandhi 2017:194) To attain brahmacharya, control of the palate was a prerequisite, the brahmachari’s food should be ‘satvik’ and “it should be limited, simple, spiceless, and, if possible, uncooked.” (Gandhi 2017:196) Brahmacharya thus entailed control of senses in thought, word and deed. Gandhi began leading

a simple life by cutting down unnecessary expenses, doing the laundry by himself, throwing dependence on the barber, these were the extreme forms in which his passion for self-help and simplicity expressed itself.

He believed, fasting of the physical self was not adequate, it was one of the means to the end of self-restraint, but that was not all, and it was to be accompanied by mental fasting, else it was bound to end in hypocrisy and disaster.

“Passion in man is generally co-existent with a hankering after the pleasures of the palate.” (Gandhi 2017:291) opined Gandhi. As always, the *Gita* influenced Gandhi in pursuing this thought process:

‘For a man who is fasting his senses
Outwardly, the sense-objects disappear,
Leaving the yearning behind; but when
He has seen the Highest,
Even the yearning disappears.’ (*Gita* quoted in Gandhi 2017:302)

The vow of brahmacharya was sealed in the middle of 1906. This was a preparatory step, part of the self-purification exercise undertaken by Gandhi. This paved the path for the movement which was adopted by Gandhi; Satyagraha. The term comprises *Satya* i.e. Truth and *Agraha* i.e. firmness, this was going to be the mainstay of the Indian freedom struggle.

Service and truth: Incessantly serving the Indians in South Africa revealed to Gandhi new implications of truth at every stage. Truth he opined, “... was like a vast tree, which yielded more and more fruit, the more you nurtured it. The deeper the search in the mine of truth, the richer the discovery of the gems buried there, in the shape of openings for an ever-greater variety of service.” (Gandhi 2017:204)

The Phoenix Settlement was a twenty-acres of land near Durban railway station, established in 1904. Gandhi set up his little village with nearly half a dozen industrious people and their families and the Indian Opinion press was set up on the same land. Inmates of Phoenix and Tolstoy Farm and the Sabarmati Ashram co-existed as one large family, who did their own tasks, including scavenging,

cleaning, cooking etc. Living together was a lesson in religious tolerance, as also an exercise in self-reliance.

The influence of Thoreau on Gandhi cannot be denied opines George Hendrick in his essay studying Thoreau's influence on Gandhi (Hendrick 1956) he expresses, Gandhi may have read *Walden* as early as 1906; as it is evident that, before the first *Satyagraha* movement he dispensed with servants, acted as his own scavenger, and attempted to be independent of machinery. His views were seemingly influenced by *Walden*.

Also, readers of *Indian Opinion* were frequently reminded of Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience. "Thoreau had opposed the enslavement of man; Indians, being enslaved themselves, needed encouragement in their struggle. The Indian community was openly defying the registration act, and the resistances of Thoreau, Tolstoy, Jesus, and Socrates seemed vital confirmations to Gandhi." (Hendrick 1956:467)

More on the work in South Africa and the influence of the Gita: After having worked for the cause of Indians in South Africa, Gandhi enrolled with the Transvaal Supreme Court and set up office in Johannesburg. The influences on Gandhi of the Theosophists was the belief in universal brotherhood, the Gita, which he had fairly memorised and was his spiritual guide all through his life at all times, "I turned to this (Gita) dictionary of conduct for a ready solution of all my troubles and trials." (Gandhi 2017:244) These influences were steadily preparing Gandhi for the non-violent war for the nation. The qualities of non-possession and equability presupposed a change of heart and a change of attitude.

'Hate the sin and not the sinner' was a precept that is as easy to understand as it is rare to practise, was what Gandhi believed in and staunchly in ahimsa "... ahimsa is the basis of the search for truth. I am realizing every day that the search is vain unless it is founded on ahimsa as the basis. [...] For we are all tarred with the same brush, and 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." (Gandhi 2017:253). He thus, cultivated consciously the virtues of ahimsa,

brahmacharya, aparigraha and other cardinal virtues. Gandhi believed that the search for Truth should be based on ahimsa. Seeing the divine in every living being and the violation of another fellow being is the violation of oneself and the divine powers that rests in one.

On the act of writing the autobiography:

In the midst of the act of writing his autobiography, Gandhi introspects, he expresses, “I am not writing the autobiography to please critics. Writing it is itself one of the experiments with truth. One of its objects is certainly to provide some comfort and food for reflection for my co-workers.” (Gandhi 2017:257)

It would be interesting to once again refer to Rosy Singh’s essay on the genre of autobiography, where she has discussed whether autobiography as a genre can be classified as ‘fiction’ or ‘non-fiction’. Singh opines, Gandhiji’s autobiography can be defined as the life-story of a Being, it cannot be termed fiction. Some critics therefore call it literary or creative non-fiction. Others who are more distrusting assert that autobiographies are more often than not works of fiction for they invariably ‘construct’ a positive image of the self (Wagner-Egelhaaf 2000 in Singh 2005:80).

Thus, writing about Gandhi’s autobiography, Singh mentions that Gandhi cleverly tried to make his autobiography sound sincere by giving it the title ‘*The Story of my Experiments with Truth*’ (1927) with emphasis on ‘truth’ and on the scientific nature of his ‘experiments’. He further emphasizes his point in the introduction: “I hope to acquaint the reader fully with all my faults and errors. My purpose is to describe experiments in the science of Satyagraha, not to say how good I am. In judging myself I shall try to be as harsh as truth, as I want others also to be.” (Gandhi 2008: xiv in Singh 2005:80).

Singh’s critique is aimed at warning the reader to read Autobiographies with a pinch of salt, and look through the personal biases that could possibly seep in.

The reader should not turn a blind eye to these biases and erroneously take every word at face value.

Experiments in India:

Coming back to Gandhi's experiments with truth in India, the Champaran inquiry was a bold experiment in truth and ahimsa. Due to the efforts of Gandhi, the planters in Champaran were asked to refund a portion of exactions made by them and the *tinkathia system*² which had been in existence for about a century was abolished. The ryots, who were crushed so far, some what came to their own, the stain of indigo was washed out. Gandhi's ideas were slowly and steadily gaining a strong foothold. To quote Tolstoy once again in this context would be appropriate:

“Just as a single shock may be sufficient, when a liquid is saturated with some salt to precipitate it at once in crystals, a slight effort maybe perhaps all that is needed now that the truth already revealed to many men may gain mastery over hundreds, thousands, millions of men, that a public opinion consistent with conscience may be established, and through this change of public opinion the whole order of life may be transformed. And it depends upon us to make this effort.” (Tolstoy 2005: 185)

Gandhi had garnered the might, through incessant work both in South Africa and in India and was a force, who's slightest of effort, brought about a change in the lives of several Indians. The benevolent father to the inmates of Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati Ashram, Gandhi fought for the mill hands in Ahmedabad and also reached a peaceful settlement for the peasants - Patidars in Kheda, who were unable to settle the annual assessment, due to the failure of crops and wanted exemption from the same. Gandhi was the driving force behind the adoption of the resolutions supporting Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability, and uniting India with khadi.

Conclusion:

Barring a few exceptions like the Chauri Chaura incidence, where people went out of control and defied the principles of ahimsa laid by Gandhi in letter and spirit, Gandhi's experiments in attaining independence, by following non-violence, satyagraha and self-reliance proved to be successful. Towards the conclusion of his autobiography, Gandhi claims that ahimsa is the extreme extent of humility and it should be followed completely. He concludes his autobiography thus: "My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. [...] that a perfect vision of Truth can only follow a complete realisation of *Ahimsa*." (Gandhi 2017:451-452)

Tolstoy opines, "The sole meaning of life is to serve humanity by contributing to the establishment of the kingdom of God, which can only be done by the recognition and profession of the truth by every man" (Tolstoy 2005:190). Gandhi was a living example, who established the kingdom of God in the hearts of Indians, by being a relentless votary of truth, all through his life.

On a parting note, the malleability and timelessness of Gandhi's teachings, can be reckoned by the fact, that mainstream Hindi Film Industry also, could entice cinephiles with films based on the Gandhian ideology. The box office successes in the form of *Munna Bhai MBBS* (2003) and its sequel *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* (2006) based on Gandhian thought stand testimony to this fact.

Interestingly, the pursuit of 'truth' has always been at the core of parallel cinema. The insistence on truth is taken to its extreme and most of the times, to its logical conclusion. This can be witnessed through films like *Aankhon Dekhi* (2013) which stars the versatile actor Sanjay Mishra, who essays the role of a middle-class individual and decides to believe 'only' in the version of 'truth' which he experiences first-hand. He pays dearly for this experiment, by losing his life, as a result of the insistence on this belief. He takes the idea to the extreme, by embarking on the experience of feeling the experience of 'flying', he sets out on the venture and reaches the ultimate destination of mortal beings; leaving the audience awestruck, with questions, groping for answers.

Notes:

1. Hindu mystic-Webb Miller, a long-time admirer of Thoreau and an American Journalist, referring Gandhi as one.

2. Tinkathia System: The Champaran tenant was bound by law to plant three out of every twenty parts of his land with indigo for his landlord. This system was known as the tinkathia system, as three kathas out of twenty (which make one acre) had to be planted with indigo. (Gandhi 2017:364)

References:

Frankl, Viktor E. *Yes, to Life In spite of Everything*, Penguin Random House, London, 2019.

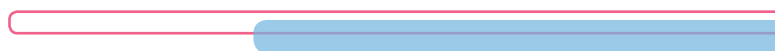
Gandhi, M.K. *My Experiments with Truth- An Autobiography*, India Book Distributors, ISBN: 978-93-87585-20-1, 2017.


George, Hendrick 1956. "The Influence of Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" on Gandhi's Satyagraha, Source: *The New England Quarterly*, Dec. 1956, Vol.29, No.4 (Dec., 1956), pp.462-471.Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/362139>.

'*The Holy Bible*', NRSV, Catholic Edition, 1999, Theological Publications in India, New Delhi reprinted in 2017.

Singh, Rosy 2015. "On the Genre of Autobiography: Typology and Evolution" *The Delhi University Journal of the Humanities & the Social Sciences* 2, pp. 76-86, Vol.2: 2015.

Tolstoy, Leo. *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, ISBN: 1-4209-2487-7, Stilwell, 2005.





Truth and Narration in
*Gandhiji's Experiment with
Autobiography*

Bhagyashree Varma

Department of English
University of Mumbai
bhagyashreemam@gmail.com

Abstract:

An autobiography is the self-life-narration in the sense that the person whose life is it, himself or herself is narrating about it, which is so matching to the present selfie-culture, that looked initially like the self-obsessing fashion of youngsters but soon became a very routine and normal part of living. The blend between this worldly popular form of autobiography and our national pride Mahatma Gandhiji with his experiments of truth is actually his narration in the book while he must have been very well aware of how complicated it would be for him to talk about the truth that he lived and experimented with. Finally, one can simplify that all the scholastic efforts to define autobiography in clear terms may seem deceptive or failing in one or the other point. Yet there can be narrators like Mahatma Gandhiji who can rise above and look beyond the personal self and transparently bring out the truth of one's life on personal as well as social planes. So now if you do not talk about yourself, do not take a selfi, or do not write about yourself probably that would look away from the normal.

The most popular example that we sight and proudly study is the story of Mahatma Gandhiji. There are peculiar events in his life that he narrates in his autobiography and probably only he could narrate not merely as the person who lived through those events but also as the thinker and philosopher who could retrospectively evaluate them in the relevant context and as the critic and the

narrator who could scrutinize their worth even in narration. The way he designs the title of his autobiography is a very thoughtful confession and one can see that his comic sense of receiving life as it comes also is conveyed as he dares to call the experiences as experiments.

Moreover, it is only Mahatma Gandhiji's profound sense of perception and conception that he could name it as the story of not simple experiments but his experiments with truth. So originally if autobiography was taken as the self-life-in-written script, with Mahatma Gandhiji's visionary illustration of the same genre it now becomes a kind of self-experiment-with-truth and the truth that replaces life is actually synonymous to the truth that life was spent in seeking.

An ideological jumble indeed in philosophy but it is Mohandas, the barrister who had the brains of Mahatma the father of the nation, may be the would-be father, so to say, at that time, yet he was the one who could combine the life he lived with the truth he identified as his personal truth to be identified in universal view and call it the experiment in the context of rationalizing like an experiment in the laboratory of science.

In fact, the question is not about who is the narrator as far as it is the information of universal experiences but when an individual is narrating his or her own life in the first-person voice...! In the days when Mahatma Gandhiji was writing autobiography it was not only an unpopular or half-popular form of bio-historical account of an individual's life but also was not really seen with such liberated eyes. The bias of interpretation on readers' minds and the hesitation on author's part were two huge blocks in the spread and repute of autobiography as a genre.

Many a people would respect diary more than autobiography since the common perception was you are not in general supposed to publish diary. So for private record anyone may write a diary and that looked like a sacred personal property of the sensitive individuals who were crazy about writing more than crazy about themselves.

After the long and painful struggle of autobiography to get identified as an established genre, finally it could achieve some space and regard due to people

like Augustine known for *Confessions* (397 to 400 A. D.) that happens to be the first autobiography. Though that was classified by some as 'spiritual' or religious for its exploration into the conflict of a thinking mind, on account of conversion. In his book on the *Design of Truth and Autobiography*, Roy Pascal takes a look-back into the earlier history of autobiography, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century is the appropriate period for nourishment of the form.

Referring to Franklin, Gibbon and others, he concentrates his discussion on Rousseau, Wordsworth and Goethe. The blend between this worldly popular form of autobiography and our national pride Mahatma Gandhiji with his experiments of truth is actually his narration in the book while he must have been very well aware of how complicated it would be for him to talk about the truth that he lived and experimented with.

Andre Maurois agrees that autobiography is to be singled out as a form with no parallel, as he remarks that Autobiography is... as interesting as novels and as true as the finest life. It has ... fidelity and impartiality in portraiture of a very high quality indeed ...since it has... the direct link of truth from life. One has to relate the generic frame of how the written script of life was traditionally seen as the direct link of truth form life. The two words that actually link Mahatma Gandhiji's vision of life are truth and experiments and why he does not wish to simplify the life story as experience, should be taken as his sense of responsibility for his own life, rather for shaping the life that he lived and not for being shaped by life that he was made to live.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhiji as a person born in the soil of Gurjarat and evolved to become a linking chain in the minds of people from all states not only in India and out of it but across the whole world. He lived by words and ruled people by wordless actions. He created the humility and terrorized the humiliating forces of foreign rulers. He made statements that looked so simple that people found his simplicity unbelievably confusing and complex. How can a man be so honest? How can he be so simple? so straightforward? Is it the truth that he speaks of all the time? Is it the complete truth that he narrates in his autobiography? If yes, why does he call it 'experiments' with truth? If it is all experimental why does he call it autobiography?

Away from the controversial statements about certain elements in autobiography as truth, authenticity etc., the fact remains that it is an attention-capturing form of literature. It happens to be a creation that offers a kind of knowledge enlightening both, its author and readers. Before writing autobiography even the writer does not know himself so well as after having written it.

William C. Spengemann hints this by observing that autobiographies, “despite their fictiveness, grapple with the problems of self-definition”.

So, chronicling one’s life may seem to any thinker as personal space on page of narration and the relativism of truth would naturally narrow down to the narrator’s subjective vision of the truth. How this is not applicable to the story of Gandhii’s life is something interesting to find. This man too had a very ordinary life in the first phase as he was born in Porbandar and spent his childhood in Rajkot in Gurjarat. A man who can retrospectively feel the pain of his first discovery of how he was going through the regretful discovery of his own lying ... and the very journey back in past is not mere nostalgic but cathartic when her recalls every detail with this sense of realization.

“I was convicted of lying! That deeply pained me. How was I to prove my innocence? There was no way. I cried in deep anguish. I saw that a man of truth must also be a man of care. This was the first and last instance of my carelessness in school. I have a faint recollection that I finally succeeded in getting the fine remitted. The exemption from exercise was of course obtained, as my father wrote himself to the headmaster saying that he wanted me at home after school.” (p. 35)

Even the account of meat-eating experience which he calls a tragedy, is recapitulated with lot of regressive sense of realization and consciousness of how a young gullible guy was just carried away by some idiotic idea of becoming stronger to drive away the British from our nation and that can be possible by meat-eating....!

“So the day came. It is difficult fully to describe my condition. There were, on the one hand, the zeal for ‘reform’, and the novelty of making a momentous departure in life. There was, on the other, the shame of hiding like a thief to do this very thing. I

cannot say which of the two swayed me more. We went in search of a lonely spot by the river, and there I saw, for the first time in my life, – meat. There was baker's bread also. I relished neither. The goat's meat was as tough as leather.

I simply could not eat it. I was sick and had to leave off eating. I had a very bad night afterwards. A horrible nightmare haunted me. Every time I dropped off to sleep it would seem as though a live goat were bleating inside me, and I would jump up full of remorse. But then I would remind myself that meat eating was a duty and so become more cheerful.” (p. 44)

The trauma is also narrated while it was occupying the mind of Mohandas in the very tender teen age when first he was married to a girl one year elder to him and he narrates with illustrative routine about that phase of his life when Kasturba was a disobedient and confident wife while he did not like her to be that kind of woman.

Many critics consider autobiography a self-oriented pamphlet of one's ideology or a chronicle of philosophical life. Such a prejudice springs from their undue emphasis on the subjective and the righteous nature of autobiography. In a truthful autobiography the inner self of writer is depicted through the life-narrative. Gusdorf in this reference, suggests that autobiography, “is an effort to recapture the self in Hegel's claim, to know the self through consciousness”. Shari Benstock believes that autobiography is initiated into the ‘act of writing’; is directed towards ‘self’ that is presumed to be knowable. She makes it clear that the form stands between the crossroads of ‘writing’ and ‘selfhood’.

The sense of responsibility in fact makes a boy grow suddenly into a man and that is what happened with Mohandas when he lost his father in his fifteenth year of age and in a short while also lost his first child. The double loss, for a young boy has to be the source of his wisdom dawning on his mind as the incidents that he narrates in the experimental discoveries of truth one by one in the self-narration. But the traumatic teen age also in the narrative flow does not become the source of seeking any sympathy from his readers. It is in this sense that autobiography has no rival in literary creations.

The experience of involvements, dilemmas and conflicts make the writers offer a sort of dramatic monologue of self in autobiography. It may or may not seem logical to others but it holds the pressure of self from within, for the author. Its core is the pre-occupation with self that the cousins of sceptic critics may see as a sort of Narcissism or self-love.

One has to consider that an experience may not be quite a similar thing as a reflective, retrospective or philosophical statement of it. The best quality that Gandhiji had learnt from his childhood life was not being a prey of self-pity. And that helped him rapidly to evolve into the leader of individuals, small groups, large masses in South Africa and finally of the nation in India after his return from the South Africa.

“These views were confirmed during the days of the Satyagraha in South Africa. That magnificent campaign extending over six years was carried on without permanent funds, though lakhs of rupees were necessary for it. I can recollect times when I did not know what would happen the next day if no subscriptions came in. But I shall not anticipate future events. The reader will find the opinion expressed above amply borne out in the coming narrative.” (p.228)

The reader consciousness is referred in the interpretative reading of any autobiography as one of the implicit intents on the mind of the author but very few authors did mention it like Gandhiji with this kind of straight and connecting address. The fighter spirit that he inculcated in people around was contagious because he spent that one crucial year in South Africa when his mind could adopt not only rage and resistance against injustice but also the beginning of Indian Congress and Civil Rights activism discovered his potential leadership and 1915 onward, he could contribute all the important ideological wisdom that looked like revolution in the garb of activism.

Autobiography is no less than what is described by a term ‘Bildungsroman’ in novel. It has a story and the story builds up from a remembered beginning from the narrator’s personal memory and moves on with the phases of growth in life and also perceptions of living through various phases one after the other.

Finally, one can simplify that all the scholastic efforts to define autobiography in clear terms may seem deceptive or failing in one or the other point. Yet there can be narrators like Mahatma Gandhiji who can rise above and look beyond the personal self and transparently bring out the truth of one's life on personal as well as social planes.

So his ideas of Ahimsa, national integration as the essential fruit of Hindu-Muslim and Upperclass-Harijan unity and the non-cooperation movement, the jail life, Dandi yatra, leadership of Quit India movement all the phases that he lived were truly his life in the experimental mode of living. It was his pattern of behavior from initial stages of his being Mohandas and becoming the Mahatma.

He tried the lies and regretted and propagated the truth. Not as the moral responsibility but mainly as the personal source of peaceful existence. He registered his trial of the meat-eating temptation, the stealing and regretted and confessed to finally take an oath of morality not for the sake of morality but for the sake of peace of mind. The religious inclinations were not a rigidity right from the beginning even in his family.

“In Rajkot, however, I got an early grounding in toleration for all branches of Hinduism and sister religions. For my father and mother would visit the Haveli as also Shiva's and Rama's temples, and would take or send us youngsters there. Jain monks also would pay frequent visits to my father, and would even go out of their way to accept food from us – non-Jains. They would have talks with my father on subjects religious and mundane. He had, besides, Musalman and Parsi friends, who would talk to him about their own faiths, and he would listen to them always with respect, and...” (p.55)

He had conflict with his wife Kasturba again and again but he learnt to understand her though very slow pace in it, and finally evolved into a regretful husband but never to repeat the mistake. So much so that in late age he probably was known as an ideal husband too, to some extent.

The experience of moving out of Indian and in various regions in India made him aware of the need that British rulers would easily conquer all states and regions in

their isolated culture and creed so he could like a very wise thinker and visionary could discover some binding ideas like truth and non-violence and the word truth became so significant with him that Satyagraha was the firm stance forever and non-violence the tool to establish that firmness.

At the outbreak of the world war first when Gandhiji arrived in England again, his mind was already prepared with lot of prophetic plans to roll activism in India. The narrator Gandhi was not yet born perhaps he was in making. The personal life of Mohandas was already converted into the social investment for the sake of nation and the national freedom that had started haunting his mind.

A writer would have written the autobiography at this age with lot of stuff and personal trauma to be narrated but that was not the purpose of Mohandas. He was not interested in writing the story of his life as he suffered and learnt his lessons but his idea of using the 'mahatma' figure in his own personality as the narrator to convert people and see how his 'experiment with the truth of his life, the truth that he learnt and the life that he lived becomes the source of inspiration and action for others.

Four or five years ago, at the insistence of some of my nearest co-workers, I agreed to write my autobiography. I made the start, but scarcely had I turned over the first sheet when riots broke out in Bombay... The Swami wanted me to write it separately for publication as a book. But I have no spare time. I could only write a chapter week by week. Something has to be written for Navajivan every week. Why should it not be the autobiography? The Swami agreed to the proposal, and here am I hard at work. But a God-fearing friend had his doubts,... 'What has set you on this adventure?' he asked. 'Writing an autobiography is a practice peculiar to the West. I know of nobody in the East having written one, except amongst those who have come under Western influence. And what will you write?

Supposing you reject tomorrow the things you hold as principles today, or supposing you revise in the future your plans of today, is it not likely that the men who shape their conduct on the authority of your word, spoken or written, may be misled? Don't you think it would be better not to write anything like an autobiography, at any rate just yet?'(p.17)

One may easily say that it would enrich the analysis of an autobiography if the readers try to define or debate the truth. Is it that easy to offer definitions of truth like people believe? Is it that simple to just debate with the truth only because the author of an autobiography makes a statement that it is this truth that affected his or her future, shaping of his or her personality and so on? In fact one has to remember that truth is neither definable nor debatable entity when it comes to narration of one's own story or written autobiography.

The very approach to put a question mark on the truth narrated by the autobiographer seems like a wrong approach for the sake of pulling and placing the form of autobiography in the same rank as a news or a report that can be questionable in its account. The sanctity of the reader-author connection can be maintained by keeping the element of 'willing suspension of disbelief' on one hand and trying to understand rather than question the truth as defined or described by the autobiographer in his or her narration.

Can a thinker ever imagine that he would write his autobiography in such a way that people should learn from it what he learnt from his life. The philosophy of teaching and preaching people through self was not new but writing the story of one's own life to preach people what is truth and how to live it, and in that sense declaring that it is his experiment with the truth was something very unique even at that time.

The incidents like Amritsar Massacre and his jail life had motivated his mind to follow the path he was dreaming of but not alone. He had known the power of his experimental capacity to use the 'truth' to charge people and to create that energy in the masses to lead as well as follow for the cause of nation.

Despite his prison-life experiences and his desire to avoid politics in the years after 1920, he was largely drawn into the public sphere for Indian National Congress and further the eventual movements of salt march, non-cooperation and Round table conference. The latter phase of his life does not appear in the autobiography as he was now driven by the mission and the father of the nation already called as Bapu by all, was more engrossingly into people discovering the

truth, of the groundlings in India rather than scribbling the truth of his personal experiences labeled as experiments with truth.

My respect and adoration for Mahatma Gandhi, each time I brood about his life and narration of that life, results in one or the other poem in general to console myself that probably I am able to understand this mysterious man to some extent. So here is this one on 2nd October while people were holding meetings and probably programming on Gandhiji with lots of ideas and debates I was only scribbling few lines to comfort myself.

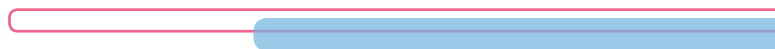
A skeleton man
 With the stick in his hand
 Half-clad like a saint
 Half mad like a vagabond
 Creates history in India
 By his magical words
 By his crowning the labor
 By his path of compassion
 Not only cuts the chains
 Of slavery and dependence
 Not only preaches
 love and persistence
 Not only calms the lost souls
 By singing prayers and ringing alarms
 Not only weaves the dress of nativist identity on the spinning wheel
 But also
 Clarifies the uselessness of violence
 Of discrimination and dominance
 Electrifies the stony minds
 To trigger showers of thinking
 Thinking into normalcy
 Normalising into compassion
 Compassionate in understanding
 Understanding the bondages
 Bonding with truth and living


Truth simplified
Life purified
This one half clad old man
Erases the artificial prickly pros
And cons of conservative society
And becomes a figure
Becomes a diagram
Becomes map of ideas
Map of nationalism
Mapping the minds of millions
He finally becomes
A non-violent image
Of the independent India
Shot by an angry civilian
He dies like an army on the border
To protect the nation
From ideas of violence
The man who fasted
for stopping violence
Becomes the prey
Of violence in the end
Ironically
He dies to be reborn
In the numberless minds
As an idea as an ideology
As an ideological ideal
An ideal idealism
That can survive only in reality
This one old man
The epitome of love and peace
The temple of peace and compassion
The pedestal of sacrifice and martyrdom
Is born on 2nd October
The day unforgettable
For all of us

We celebrate
Not his birthday
But our own
Being born once again
Into Gandhian world.

Note:

All the quotes cited are taken from the version of Gandhiji's autobiography, on the link <https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/An-Autobiography.pdf>





Gandhi as Reflected in Tagore's Biographical Sketches

Udaya Narayana Singh

Faculty of Arts
Amity University Haryana, Gurgaon (India)
unsingh@ggn.amity.edu

The compilation and editing of my senior colleague, Prof. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya's work (1997) titled '*The Mahatma and the Poet : Letters and Debates between Gandhi and Tagore 1915-1941*', have given us a set of refreshing ideas on what the two, both born around the same time in 1860s had thought about the future of India. The work contains both public discussions and personal communications, starting with Gandhi's arrival in India in 1913. There, the narrative was periodized (1915-22, 1923-28, 1929-33 and 1934-41) to understand their different perceptions better, and in particular, Tagore's farsighted condemnation of state-sponsored 'Nationalism' in all forms. Tagore found the widely acclaimed 'non-cooperation' as a negative impulse that would in no way be able to rejuvenate our polity and its dwindling economy. It would instead contribute to our sense of intolerance that would ultimately destroy our democratic aspirations. Although both desired to see "a true independence, a reliance upon spiritual force, a fearless courage in the face of temporal power, and withal a deep and burning charity for all men" as Bhattacharya put it, it was unacceptable for the followers of Gandhi to accept Tagore's criticism of 'Satyagraha' or 'Non-cooperation'.

The manner in which the agitation against the division of Bengal in and around 1905 became politically divisive, causing Tagore to stop participating in real-life political agitation, was at the back of his mind when Gandhi gave call to boycott all British institutions. Tagore thought that boycotting of schools by students

would lead to anarchy from where recovery would not be easy. For Tagore, non-cooperation was an unduly simplistic response to a complex problem of how to shun the alien rulers' governance. In response to this, of course, Gandhi is supposed to have stated: "I, therefore, think that the Poet has been unnecessarily alarmed at the negative aspect of Non-cooperation. We had lost the power of saying 'no'. It had become disloyal, almost sacrilegious to say 'no' to the Government. This deliberate refusal to cooperate is like the necessary weeding process that a cultivator has to resort before he sows. Weeding is as necessary to agriculture as sowing. Indeed, even whilst the crops are growing, the weeding fork, as every husbandman knows, is an instrument almost of daily use. The nation's Non-cooperation is an invitation to the Government to cooperate with it on its own terms as is every nation's right and every good government's duty. Non-cooperation is the nation's notice that it is no longer satisfied to be in tutelage."

In Gandhi's (1927) autobiography *'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'*, Ch 127 'Shantiniketan' – during the initial phase of his arrival and learning the intricacies of politics in India under G.K. Gokhale, when he was returning to Pune from Santiniketan after hearing about Gokhale's death, Gandhi described his conversation with Andrews: "Andrews accompanied me up to Burdwan. 'Do you think,' he asked me, 'that a time will come for *Satyagraha* in India? And if so, have you any idea when it will come?' # 'It is difficult to say,' said I. 'For one year I am to do nothing. For Gokhale took from me a promise that I should travel in India for gaining experience, and express no opinion on public questions until I have finished the period of probation. Even after the year is over, I will be in no hurry to speak and pronounce opinions. And so, I do not suppose there will be any occasion for *Satyagraha* for five years or so.'# I may note in this connection that Gokhale used to laugh at some of my ideas in *Hind Swaraj (Indian Home Rule)* and say: 'After you have stayed a year in India, your views will correct themselves.'" Thus, Tagore was not the only one who was skeptical of Gandhi's ideas.

Looking back at the effect of Non-Cooperation, Martin Luther King, Jr. (2001 : 129) had made an interesting comment in his autobiography (See Carson 2001) on the effect of this peaceful instrument that was ingeniously discovered by Gandhi: "Gandhi was able to mobilize and galvanize more people in his life time than any other people in the history of this world. And just with a little love and

understanding goodwill and refusal to cooperate with an evil law, he was able to break the backbone of the British empire. More than 390 million people achieved their freedom, and they achieved it non-violently.”

The symbolism in Gandhi's inimitable style of protestation, especially in the context of destroying the foreign clothes and in promoting the *Charkha*, or the Spinning Wheel, mainly to tell the world that economic domination imposed by the imperial powers would not be tolerated did not impress Tagore who thought that clothes be distributed among the needy instead, as the poor in the country lived in great misery. Tagore wrote a sarcastic essay in *Modern Review*, a Calcutta-based magazine of great repute, titled *The Cult of the Charkha*. There are often great misunderstandings and misreading in Tagore's texts which make us believe that he was perhaps against the Gandhian principles and methods. One such example could be seen in the following editorial comment on Tagore's 1916-novel, *Home and Alone (Ghare Baire)* by Alam and Chakravarty (2011: 612) where the background was set in the times of Swadeshi Movement dated 1905. He showed a triangular relationship there between “the intertwined lives of the visionary but politically ineffective landowner Nikhil, the flamboyant, militant nationalist Sandip, and Nikhil's wife Bimala, torn by her divided loyalties. The sophisticated, multivoiced narrative lays bare the troubled interface between the confines of home and the turbulent world outside. Georg Lukacs criticized the novel for presenting “a contemptible caricature of Gandhi,” forgetting that the narrative is set in a period that precedes Gandhi's rise. But Bertolt Brecht recognized this as a “wonderful book, strong and gentle,” about the limitations of nationalism (26 September 1920, *Diaries 1920– 1922*, 55).”

While the *Swadeshi* movement during Gandhi's *Satyagraha* period was aimed against the system imposed by the British, and not against all that was Western, Tagore rather believed in the power of the western thought and science, and that it had tremendous healing and emancipator influence. Celebration of the individual choice and freedom, on the other hand, was hallmark of Tagore's arguments on what kind of future the leadership of our times would like to achieve. That Tagore did not appreciate fasting as a method of protestation thought to be unique in the Gandhian era is also a well-known fact now, as Tagore thought this self-mortification as a purification would not lead us anywhere. Fasting for political

purposes was something that Tagore was skeptical about. He was also critical of Gandhi for what many believed was his irrational declaration that the Great Bihar Earthquake was God's punishment for our sin in upholding 'untouchability'. Krishna Kripalani (1980: 391-92) suggests that Tagore's 1932-play Chandalika that was built on top of a Buddhist legend, explored selfishness and vanity, and juxtaposed solipsism with selfless love, which was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's long fast against the British government's decision to separate the "untouchables" of the country from the rest of the electorate through the Communal Award.

As is known, in March-April 1919, Gandhiji had launched a nationwide campaign of passive resistance to protest the repressive act designed by Sir Sydney Arthur Taylor Rowlatt, known as the 'Rowlatt Act' which was basically to take emergency measures of preventive indefinite detention, incarceration without trial and judicial review to curb a perceived threat from revolutionary nationalist organizations. The success of Gandhi's '*Hartal*' (or public strike) in Delhi on 30th March and in Punjab on 6th April of that year led to the massacre by the British of nearly 400 unarmed protesters and the wounding of another 2,000 in Amritsar's Jallianawala Bagh on 13th April 1919. British repression in the Punjab continued, even after Gandhi called off the campaign on 18 April 1919. When he failed to muster support from politicians, Tagore felt compelled to register a lone protest. On 31 May, he wrote a letter to Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy, rejecting his knighthood. The letter was published on 2 June, and it aroused the consciousness of the western world against the atrocious rule of the so-called civilized British government. In 1921, after much thought, Tagore decided to oppose Gandhi's Noncooperation Movement spearheaded against the British government, for which he faced strong criticism from all quarters, and even from Bengal.

Many view these incidents as Tagore's disrespect for the Gandhian ideas, methods and principles. However, if we look at the biographical sketches of Mohandas Gandhi in Tagore's writings that are spread in different essays and chapters, the impression would be otherwise. In his opening essay on মহাত্মা গান্ধী Tagore begins by making a comment on a new kind of tribe that emerged in the initial phase of political movements in our country – in the following words: “পোলিটেশিয়ান ব'লে একটা জাত আছে তাদের আদর্শ বড়ো আদর্শের সঙ্গে মেলে না। তারা অজস্র মিথ্যা বলতে পারে; তারা এত হিংস্র যে নিজেদের দেশকে স্বাভাবিক দেবার অস্থিলায় অন্য দেশ অধিকার করার লোভ ত্যাগ করতে পারে না।

পাশ্চাত্য দেশে দেখি, এক দিকে তারা দেশের জন্যে প্রাণ দিতে পেরেছে, অন্য দিকে আবার দেশের নাম করে দুর্নীতির প্রশয় দিয়েছে।” (“There is a caste called ‘the Politician’. Their aims never match with bigger ideals one may have. They can tell innumerable lies. They are so ferocious that they never hesitate to occupy another country in the garb of protecting their own. In the west, I have seen while they are able to dedicate their lives, they have also tolerated corruptions in the name of national interest.” – Translation: UNS).

In fact, Tagore opens the discussion on ‘Mahatma Gandhi’ by saying that “India has a complete geographical image and identity (ভারতবর্ষের একটি সম্পূর্ণ ভৌগোলিক মূর্তি আছে)। The ‘totality’ of India that begins from the east and spreads up to the west, or one that starts from the Himalayas in the north and reaches down to Kanyakumari in the south creates a picture that was attempted to be internalized as a whole even in ancient times, especially in the epic Mahabharata that tried collecting whatever lay scattered in so many parts and spread over such a long time. The other way of knowing this complete India lay in its tradition of ‘Pilgrimage’. Ordinary people tried covering the entire spread of the space by moving from one religious place to another, as if to bind the whole region by a network of ‘*bhakti*’ or devotion. In fact, India was so large an entity that it was not possible to internalize it as a whole.” What today’s surveys and cartographies could do to bring in a geographical idea of India was not easily available in earlier days. Tagore thought that in one sense that was good, because anything gained easily never leaves a great impression in our mind. So all the difficulties one had to bear in conducting a pilgrimage was rewarding because only in that way one could get to know the totality of India.

Then Tagore laments and says that we were so trapped in the regionalist trends and tendencies that it required someone like Mahatma Gandhi, along with Ranade, Surendranath (Banerjee) and (Gopalkrishna) Gokhale to appear in the public sphere to take our penance or to take India forward or to know her in a great fashion. He thinks that insertion or interpolation of the text of ‘*Gita*’ in the middle of Mahabharata and situating this philosophical theoretical text in the middle of a battleground believed that in a great argumentative country such as ours shows that “কুরুক্ষেত্রের কেন্দ্রস্থলে এই-যে খানিকটা দার্শনিক ভাবে আলোচনা, এটাকে কাব্যের দিক থেকে অসংগত বলা যেতে পারে; এমনও বলা যেতে পারে যে, মূল মহাভারতে এটা ছিল না। পরে যিনি বসিয়েছেন

তিনি জানতেন যে, উদার কাব্যপরিধির মধ্যে, ভারতের চিত্তভূমির মাঝখানে এই তত্ত্বকথার অবতারণা করার প্রয়োজন ছিল।” This interpolation acted as a binding force then.

But as time went by, our belief-system and culture became infested with divisionism and narrowness. We forgot to regard or accept great heroes with all their positive and negative features – something that our epics had taught us. In fact, that was also the reason that these texts assumed a crucial place in our religious practices. When the external force and alien culture tore our fabric of unity apart and penetrated into our homes, it was like a flood that would sweep us away. Our kingdoms and principalities tried putting up resistance in a piecemeal basis, resulting in hopeless defeats. We lived together but we could never get united in this country – “আমরা একত্র ছিলাম, অথচ এক হই নি।” It required many centuries to learn our lessons, and meanwhile, the battle-cry never subsided in Bengal, Maratha and Rajputana regions. “যত বড়ো দেশ ঠিক তত বড়ো ঐক্য হল না; দুর্ভাগ্যের ভিতর দিয়ে আমরা অভিজ্ঞতা লাভ করলেম বহু শতাব্দী পরে।” One after another came the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British. We began to give away our own collections and riches to the foreign powers. And whatever little remained with us were grabbed by the band of greedy Mahanth and Pandas. Many decided to escape in the name of looking for their personal salvation as hermitages and *Sanyasis* who would never like to do anything for the common folk as the latter thought they were consuming the opium of this ordinary worldly life almost like ‘possessed’ or মোহগ্রস্ত people.

Meanwhile, there had begun in Europe a move to establish one’s own political and cultural identity, thanks to Mazzini and Garibaldi in Italy, who taught us what independence could achieve for a culture. Even in the American soil, the independence movement had its own achievements. Many have sacrificed their lives to bring in this liberty and to protest against the dividing tactics of the alien rulers: “বিভাগ সৃষ্টি করে পরস্পরকে যে অপমান করা হয়, সেটার বিরুদ্ধে পাশ্চাত্যে আজও বিদ্রোহ চলছে।” In India, we have learned the value of independence from the western contemporary history. This is where Mahatma Gandhi played an important role in binding the whole nation together. He was not among those who would think that one could achieve anything politically by appeasing the alien rulers or by falsely posing themselves against the external forces. It was in this context that Tagore made that comment on the ‘tribe’ of Politicians. The petty party politics, mixed

with the false claims of 'Patriotism' added to a blob of prevarication – all these were contributed by others in public life when Gandhi emerged as a leader with a great difference. Firstly, he was against the strategy of using 'untruth' for political gains. He thought Mahatma was adorable because he had the foresightedness and patience to experiment with Truth. When the history of the world is dominated by bloodshed in the countries and communities that sought independence, how freedom and liberty could be achieved by the masses without violence was a great experiment that defined Gandhi. He said: “পৃথিবীতে স্বাধীনতা এবং স্বাতন্ত্র্য লাভের ইতিহাস রক্তধারায় পঙ্কিল, অপহরণ ও দস্যুবৃত্তির দ্বারা কলঙ্কিত। কিন্তু পরস্পরকে হনন না করে, হত্যাকাণ্ডের আশ্রয় না নিয়েও যে স্বাধীনতা লাভ করা যেতে পারে, তিনি তার পথ দেখিয়েছেন।”

Tagore raised this issue of how politicians and statesmen were performing various sorts of vicious and sadistic activities in the name of national interest. He believed people do not even hesitate to plunder or kill and even employ their sciences to perpetrate violence. But the generals do not make a nation; it is the culture and tradition of the people that define them. One does not remember such politicians as much as those like the Mahatma who worked to uplift the downtrodden. Even in the so-called 'Holy war' (ধর্মযুদ্ধ) or 'Moral war' (নৈতিক যুদ্ধ) there is terrible 'cruelty' (নিষ্ঠুরতা). There is an education even in these experiments, based on which the Christian theology taught us to clothe the most deprived people, and feed the most hungry people (যে সকলের চেয়ে দরিদ্র তাকে বস্ত্র দিতে হবে, যে নিরন্ন তাকে অন্ন দিতে হবে). Tagore thought (and he said) that Mahatma-ji was able to meet up with a European sage, and a devout Christian, Leo Tolstoy from whom he had picked up this lesson of Non-violence. Tolstoy strove to explain to all who matter that the human rights must be protected at any cost (নিয়ত প্রচেষ্টা ছিল মানবের ন্যায় অধিকারকে বাধামুক্ত করা). Gandhiji did not have to learn about this doctrine from any missionary or religious practitioner but from a great author and a sensitive mind. Even from the medieval Muslim saints we had received this gift because Dadu, Kabir and Rajjab had propagated this idea that whatever is pure and free, and is the best gift of one's soul, that belongs to the entire mankind, and not to a close-door religious establishment (যা নির্মল, যা মুক্ত, যা আত্মার শ্রেষ্ঠ সামগ্রী, তা রুদ্ধদ্বার মন্দিরে কৃত্রিম অধিকারী-বিশেষের জন্যে পাহারা-দেওয়া নয়; তা নির্বিচারে সর্ব মানবেরই সম্পদ).

In every age that is what happens because those Noblemen or 'Mahatman' who are ready to learn from all religions, history of all regions and from ethics as the

best gifts of nature – and Mahatma Gandhi was no exception. Tagore, therefore, concluded in this biographical sketch by saying:

মহাত্মা নন্দ্র অহিংসনীতি গ্রহণ করেছেন, আর চতুর্দিকে তাঁর জয় বিস্তীর্ণ হচ্ছে। তিনি যে নীতি তাঁর সমস্ত জীবন দিয়ে প্রমাণ করেছেন, সম্পূর্ণ পারি বা না পারি, সে নীতি আমাদের স্বীকার করতেই হবে। আমাদের অন্তরে ও আচরণে রিপু ও পাপের সংগ্রাম আছে, তা সত্ত্বেও পুণের তপস্যার দীক্ষা নিতে হবে সত্যব্রত মহাত্মার নিকটো... (শান্তিনিকেতন, ১৬ আশ্বিন ১৩৪৩)

(In rough translation, “Mahatma has adopted the gentle principle of Non-violence, and one can see that this has contributed to his all-around success everywhere. The principle which he has stuck to by devoting his whole life, we must accept it, whether we could take it and implement completely or not. In our own heart and in behavior, there is a constant battle of natural instincts and indulgence. And yet, we have to take the lesson of virtue by following the doctrine of Mahatma Gandhi.”)

In another sketch of Gandhi written and published in the October of 1937 (অগ্রহায়ণ ১৩৪৪), also called ‘গান্ধীজি’ Tagore comments that the whole Ashrama in Santiniketan would celebrate Gandhiji’s birthday when the stirrings it created did not allow to forget what it was the Ashrama was commemorating. There are those men who are rarely born and therefore, they do not belong to any particular time, and Gandhi was one such rare and eternal personality. If one wants to understand him only in the context of present age, he would have to be looked at in a diminutive manner. But that would force us to overlook his personality that have the traits of eternity. (ক্ষণজন্মা লোক যাঁরা তাঁরা শুধু বর্তমান কালের নন। বর্তমানের ভূমিকার মধ্যে ধরাতে গেলে তাঁদের অনেকখানি ছোটো করে আনতে হয়, এমনি করে বৃহৎকালের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে যে শাস্বত মূর্তি প্রকাশ পায় তাকে খর্ব করি।)

We often look at great men or their greatness only in so much as he or she could meet our immediate demands and expectations (আশু প্রয়োজন). But when we consider such people on a bigger canvas, the inner contradictions and indeterminacies they may have within themselves is wiped off by the divinity. What is accidental and temporary is never highlighted. In fact, that is the justification of seeing and celebrating our great living legends. He said that in the future times, there might not be the ‘national contradictions’ and the condition of strife that

existed then and perhaps the popular demands would have been met with. And yet, even after the liberty that India might achieve soon, it would be important to see as to which historical emergence and whose self-expression would survive in the national memory. We would not look at Gandhiji as an instrument of achievement of political sovereignty. We would rather try to appreciate the firm mental power of the man and his resolve that aroused the inner strength and consciousness of a whole nation. The huge boulder (জগদ্দল পাথর) that lay on our heart and mind has been knocked off by his astute move, and as if there has been a rejuvenation of our political selves. It was like gaining a new life for us all. All fear, hesitation, and attempts to seek benevolence of the rulers, and the lack of confidence are all vanished – as if, with his magic wand.

The whole nation had accepted subservience for long. It was an “accepted” truth, as if, that the foreign rulers were superior in knowledge, governance structure and physical prowess. But how their apparent shine could be dimmed by our inner strength, internal understanding, or by our own knowledge, tradition and dedication to service was demonstrated by Gandhi. The ordinary folk was as if mesmerized by the British who were considered superior in culture, education, knowledge and politics. A few political leaders like Lokamanya Tilak had attempted to prove this wrong by arousing the self-esteem among our people but success that Gandhiji had in making us arisen and awake in our daily lives and in our respective fields of work was unparalleled. He made us realize that we had ourselves written the destiny of our defeat by showing our weaknesses. The business empire of the British was built on our lack of courage and acumen, and we became a mere peg in their huge network of commerce and trade. Mahatma showed the ills of this “self-defeating” tendency (আত্মকৃত পরাভব).

All the recent move of the British rulers to come to terms with the political leadership in India resulted from the massive uprising that Gandhiji led in the most unconventional manner. It was due to his vision that we could now demand our rightful place on the world stage. Whether it was his sharp argumentative skills in the round table conferences here or in England, or his symbolic protestations by using ‘Spinning wheels’ (চরকা) or the indigenous cloth manufacturing (খদর), or in promoting the non-conventional energy sources, or alternative medicine – all these were strategies that unnerved the western powers with an evil eye

towards India (Tagore 1937, 1938). Tagore knew that there could be a scope for disagreement or debate on what Gandhi said or did in these matters, and that he himself had admitted his mistakes on so many occasions but what one must admire is his courage and conviction. In yet another essay penned by Tagore (1931a), he had commented on Mahatma's frequent use of 'Fasting' as a moral and political instrument in the following manner: তাঁর উপবাস, সে তো অনুষ্ঠান নয়, সে একটি বাণী, চরম ভাষার বাণী। ("His fast is not an event, it is a statement – in a language of the ultima!") His experience in visiting Gandhiji in Yerawada prison in Pune (in September 1932) to ensure that he agreed to break his fast to join back in normal life is worth reading in a long sketch Tagore had vividly presented elsewhere (Tagore, 1932b). The telegraphic messages exchanged by the two are also worth looking at (*Rabindra Rachanabali*, Vol. ; Pages 834-35).

The indefatigable spirit (অপরাজেয় সংকল্পশক্তি) must be a thing to admire. The way he was able to stay calm even in the wave of nation-wide maddening stirrings is a thing to admire. It is the foundation of his huge personal strength that one must admire, thought Tagore. Lastly, Gandhiji had also taught us not to blindly follow the old tradition where they hurt a large section of humanity or living world. His fight against the blind faith that had deprived a large section eternally assumed a different meaning in his life-time. This is because he knew that our real freedom would come when we would not be servile to our intolerant and negative traditions – “জাতিভেদ, ধর্মবিরোধ, মূঢ় সংস্কারের আবর্তে যত দিন আমরা চালিত হতে থাকব ততদিন কার সাধ্য আমাদের মুক্তি দেয়া” It would be more important to fight and win over our internal enemy, and not only wage a war against the external forces.

REFERENCES

- Alam, Fakrul & Radha Chakravarty, eds. (2011) *The Essential Tagore*. Visva-Bharati & Harvard University Press.
- Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi, ed & Comp. (1997) *The Mahatma and the Poet : Letters and Debates between Gandhi and Tagore 1915-1941*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.
- Carson, Claybourne, ed. (2001) *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Grand Central Publishing.
- Das Gupta, Uma, ed & Tr. (2006). *Rabindranath Tagore: My Life in My Words*. New Delhi: Penguin/Viking.

Gandhi, M.K. (1927) *The Story of My Experiments with Truth, Vol 1* (Tr from Gujarati by Mahadev Desai, સત્યના પ્રયોગો અથવા આત્મકથા). London: penguin Books; Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House.

Kripalani, Krishna K. (1980) *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati.

Tagore, Rabindranath. (1912). *Jibansmriti (My Reminiscences, Tr by Surendranath Tagore, MacMillan, 1917)*. Kolkata.

----- (1931a). 'ChauTha Ashwin' (Santiniketan, 4th Ashwin, 1338 Bangabda), *Bichitra*, Kartik, 1339b

----- (1931b). 'Rashiyar Chithi: To Surendranath Kar' (Moscow, 25th baishakh, 1338 b).

----- (1932a). 'Mahatma-jir Punyabrata' (Santiniketan, Kartik, 1339 Bangabda) , *Prabasi*.

----- (1932b). 'Brata Udjapan' (Santiniketan, Kartik, 1339 Bangabda)

----- (1932c). 'Mahatma-jir Anashan' (Lecture, Santiniketan, 20th May).

----- (1937). 'Mahatma Gandhi' (Santiniketan, 16th Ashwin, 1343 Bangabda), *Prabasi*.

----- (1938). 'Gandhiji' (Santiniketan, Agrahayan, 1344 Bangabda) , *Prabasi*.

----- (1940a). Chhelebelā (Boyhood Days). Kolkata.

----- (1940b) 'Gandhi Maharaj'. *Prabasi*, Phalgun, 1340 b.

----- (1943) *Atmaparichay (Self-Recognition)*. Kolkata.

----- (1947) *Mahatma Gandhi* (A collection of all biographical sketches and comments of tagore on Gandhi published in different literary magazines and newspapers). 29th Magh, 1354 bangabda, Kolkata.

Gandhi and Bose

Nikhil Katara

Readings in the Shed
nikhilktr@yahoo.co.in

Abstract:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a lawyer and freedom fighter who employed non-violent means to fight the British during the freedom struggle. Subhas Chandra Bose was an Indian Nationalist who used military means to attain India's freedom from British rule. They are important freedom fighters that worked in India's freedom struggle and they are often cited, quoted and referenced in the course of India's struggle against colonialism. But due to their differences in approach to achieve the same, namely Gandhi's non-violent means to fight for freedom, and Bose's militaristic means, they are often considered as adversaries in all domains. The paper considers their relationship through correspondences between the said historical figures, speeches, conversations with their living family members and other historical information to evaluate if their ideologies had a meeting ground and whether their differences are exaggerated.

The relationship between Gandhi & Bose is an important one for various reasons. The two are often quoted, and remembered for their support towards the cause of the Indian freedom struggle, though they are also accepted to be different from each other as far as ideological principles are concerned. Gandhi, with an interest in fighting for freedom through non-violent means is often considered to be at odds with Subhas Chandra Bose, who was willing to adopt military means

to fight for India's freedom struggle. The conversation regarding Bose and Gandhi has been appropriated, and misappropriated in the course of India's history multiple times, and the reasons for the same have been many, but what would be a good starting point for this argument for us to endeavour on, would be to explore the ideologies of Bose and Gandhi individually first.

Subhas Chandra Bose was a radical thinker, but to form a vision towards the national goal, he needed time to reflect. That time was offered to him by the Behrampore and Mandalay jails, where he put down his observations in the form of reflections in a jail notebook.

On a National movement he wrote that Bengal needed a real national movement which is neither political, nor jingoistic. He meant a movement that affected many spheres of social and political lives and many sections of the community. He laid specific focus on the creative spirit and laid emphasis on the fields of poetry, music, painting, sculpture, and other fields of religious and commercial life. He wanted to remove inequality from society as such. His idealism extended towards the business community as well. Culturally he wanted to generate poets, historians, philosophers and economist who had the creative spirit to make India stand up and have an identity for itself in the fields of science & culture. (Bose 2016, 42)

In his jail reflections Bose developed a new ethical code for India. It drew up on a nine point code which gave emphasis on honour and self respect, love for the country, thoughts on sannyasa, importance of Brahmacharya and the ethical value of people's lives based on civic and national duty. He gave importance to the nature of truth in this code and equated it to beauty. (Bose 2016, 53)

Mohandas Gandhi on the other hand was an ardent believer in the use of ahimsa as the basis of his search for truth. He explains it in his autobiography, *The Experiments with Truth*. "I am realising every day that the search is in vain unless it is founded on ahimsa as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and 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.” (Gandhi, n.d.)

The nature of truth, he considered to be a matter of consideration, and he ruminated it initially to be “God is Truth” and later revised it to be “Truth is God”. In *The Experiments with Truth* Gandhi explains that his uniform experience convinced him that there is no other God than Truth. He emphasised on the fact that truth can only be attained by a complete realisation of Ahimsa and by no other means. (Gandhi, n.d.)

It can be observed that both Bose and Gandhi were principled men who spent time ruminating their philosophy that fuelled their fight for the national freedom struggle. For Gandhi ‘Ahimsa’ became the primary political tool to attain this, but for Bose the same was one among many tools. This was one of the points on which they disagreed. In ‘*The National Struggle*’ Bose noted that a single incident at Chauri Chaura was used to strangle a national movement. He criticised Gandhi to not consult representatives from different provinces before calling off the civil disobedience movement. (Bose 2016, 64)

Gandhi, in a letter to Sarat Chandra Bose, on 9th April 1926, wrote “I know there is an alternative to the Charkha and that is rowdyism, but I am useless at it and what is more, I have no faith in it. And as a practical man, I know that our rowdyism is nothing compared to the rowdyism of the government. I have therefore burnt my boats and staked my all on the Charkha. I invite you and all who are troubled by the knowledge of the many woes of the nation to join me in the effort. Believe me it requires all the skill, all the discipline, all the organising power that we can summon to its aid.” (Bose 2016, 70)

While these were points on which they disagreed on, they did have a healthy respect for each other. In a broadcast by Subhas Chandra Bose on 16th July 1945, Subhas was noted to say that he was no outsider to congress and that he had always given the congress his best. He classified congress as an integral component of himself and he only spoke out against it when he observed gross errors in the conduct of the congress working committee. (Prasad 2008, 77)

Maulana Azad, in his autobiography *India Wins Freedom* observed that Bose's escape to Germany had an impression on Gandhi. There were various actions of Bose that Gandhi didn't agree with, but Gandhi admired Subhas Bose for the way in which he escaped from India. (Bose 2016, 150)

In a telephonic interview with Madhuri Bose, grand-niece of Subhas Chandra Bose, she was noted as saying "Both Netaji and Mahatma Gandhi firmly believed that all the people of India, irrespective of caste, religion and gender should be able to live together in peace and harmony." Meanwhile Sugata Bose, who is a historian & grand-nephew of Subhas Chandra Bose mentioned that many differences between Gandhi and Bose are highly exaggerated and he notes that their relationship was marked by mutual appreciation and a sense of admiration for each other. (Jha 2019)

This echoes from the fact that it was Bose who gave Gandhi the title Father of the Nation. In his last radio address from Burma in 1944 Subhas Chandra Bose said, "Father of our Nation! In this holy war for India's liberation, we ask for your blessings and good wishes." And so it can be concluded, that while there were differences in the approach of how Bose and Gandhi would have liked to fight for India's freedom, they both respected each other, and wanted a secular - free India - free from British control. (Dutta 2020)

References

Bose, Madhuri. 2016. "The Road to Mandalay." In *The Bose Brothers and Indian Independence An Insider's Account*, 36-61. New Delhi: Sage Publications

Bose, Madhuri. 2016. "Bose Brothers and Gandhi." In *The Bose Brothers and Indian Independence An Insider's Account*, 116-154. New Delhi: Sage Publications

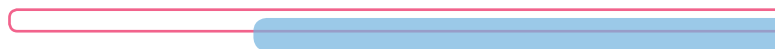
Bose, Madhuri. 2016. "Swaraj Beckons, Swaraj Denied." In *The Bose Brothers and Indian Independence An Insider's Account*, 62-115. New Delhi: Sage Publications

Gandhi, Mohandas. n.d. "The Story of My Experiments With Truth." Accessed November 5, 2020. <https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/An-Autobiography.pdf>

Jha, Satish. 2019. "Differences between Gandhi & Bose highly exaggerated." *Deccan Herald*, October 01, 2019 <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/differences-between-gandhi-bose-highly-exaggerated-754950.html>

Dutta, Prabhakar. 2020. "Subhas Chandra Bose, Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru: Admirers or adversaries? A myth buster" India Today, January 23, 2020 <https://www.indiatoday.in/news-analysis/story/subhas-chandra-bose-mahatma-gandhi-nehru-admirers-or-adversaries-myth-buster-1639417-2020-01-23>

Prasad, Bimal, ed. 2008. Towards Freedom : Documents on the Movement for Independence in India 1945. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.



M.K.Gandhi through Western
Lenses: Romain Rolland's
Mahatma Gandhi: *The Man
Who Became One With the
Universal Being*

Madhavi Nikam

Department of English,
Ramchand Kimatram Talreja College, Ulhasnagar
madhavinikam22@gmail.com

Abstract:

Gandhi, an Orientalist could find a sublime place in the heart and history of the Westerners with the literary initiative of a French Nobel Laureate Romain Rolland. Rolland was a French writer, art historian and mystic who bagged Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915. Rolland's pioneering biography (in the West) on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi published in 1924, not only made him popular overnight but also restructured the Indian figure in the minds of people. Since the publication of his biography, number of biographies on Gandhi appeared in the market from various corners of the world. Rolland himself being a pacifist was impressed with Gandhi, a man with different life style and unique modus operandi. Pacifism has greatly benefited from the biographical and historiographical revival by contribution of such great authors. Gandhi's firm belief in the democratic and four fundamental principles of Truth (Satya), non-violence (Ahimsa), welfare of all (Sarvodaya) and peaceful protest (Satyagraha) left an indelible impact on the writer which helped him to express his resentment at imperialism in his later works. The paper would attempt to reassess Gandhi as a philosopher, and revolutionary in the context with Romain Rolland's correspondence with Gandhi written in 1923-24. The paper will be a sincere effort to explore Rolland's first but lasting impression of Gandhi who offered attractive regenerative possibilities for Europe after the great war.

Keywords: Oriental, imperialism, Historiography, biography, Sarvodaya, Satyagraha, Pacifism.

Indian political psychologist, social theorist, and critic Ashis Nandy in his *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (1983) says that “All interpretations of India are ultimately autobiographical” (80). There are several readings of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, including every dimension of his personality. From Joseph J. Doke, a Christian missionary in South Africa who wrote first biography of Gandhi in 1909, there are several incisive readings and inquiries into his life from various perspectives and philosophical standpoints. Gandhi’s personal image that led to the titles of Mahatma, Bapu, father of the nation, half-naked fakir, and the like; his political life and leadership that played a major role in India’s independence from British rule. In the existing literature on Gandhi, there is a prevalent sense that most of these elements are necessary for understanding Gandhi. It is no wonder, then, that much of the prominent contemporary literature on the phenomenon of Gandhi continues to be largely anecdotal, historical, and biographical in character

Romain Rolland (1866 –1944), a French writer, art historian and mystic was a recipient of Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915. Rolland, who had a pacifist bent of mind, was a great admirer of Gandhi. Influenced by Gandhi’s philosophy of non-violence, his ideology and political acumen, he wrote a book on Gandhi in 1924 without ever having met him. The book turned out to be crucial for both Rolland himself and for Gandhi’s reputation in Europe. Rolland happened to personally meet M.K Gandhi in 1931 when the latter was in London for the Round Table Conference. Throughout his life Rolland maintained his interest in India and Indian spirituality. Rolland is also the first to clear a kind of reconciliation between Gandhi and Indian Communists which was otherwise doubted by many thinkers and philosophers. He exhibits his impact of Stalin and Lenin while analyzing Gandhi through his biography. He accepts in his letter (Romain Rolland and Gandhi Correspondence) to Surendranath Tagore in 1933, that it is the need of the hour to combine Gandhian philosophy and Lenin’s communism for the betterment of the society, so that the two may come together at this hour to overthrow the old world and found a new order.

Rolland expressed his desire of approximating two personalities together several times during his writings in the same communication he observes a planned non-violence and well-organized radical violence should be associated armies.

Coordination of the both should act against the common foes of humanity, such as war, totalitarianism, imperialism etc. Rolland, the visionary, must have had felt the need of bringing two ideologies together with view of protecting weaker section of the society. And it was the philosophy of combining two extreme opposite forces of non-violence (Ahimsa) and violence for bringing positive results in the society. That way Rolland was trying to incorporate new order into the old one. Rolland had first heard of Gandhi through his friend D.K. Roy who mentioned Gandhi as a 'magnetic lawyer' who was influenced by Tolstoy in his diary on 23rd August 1920. It was also written that Gandhi "...preaches passive resistance to them and turns them away from violence" (Rolland, 3). Rolland had believed that non-resistance would be detrimental to his own nation, given the the politically unstable climate of Europe then. He argued in favour of pacifism since Europe was then moving into a stage of great insecurity. His work was a cudgel against fascism, and the passivity of the Vichy government. Rolland describes Gandhi in his book *Romain Rolland and Gandhi correspondence: Letters, diary extracts, articles, etc* (1975) as follow:

Gandhi, is small, insignificant-looking, except when he begins to speak, and of unruffled patience. There is nothing severe in his manners; he laughs like a child and adores children. His asceticism is extreme...Gandhi's principle is that life is a preparation for suffering martyrdom and death, and the results he has obtained in Bengal are surprising. (13)

Rolland writes that his book on Gandhi ruffled feathers of the Orientalists who have been fretting that someone outsider to their circle has something to say. However, Gandhi approved and appreciated Rolland's perspective on his life and work. Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's associate, quotes Gandhi as he writes: "Romain Rolland is at this point not only a poet he is a seer with the vision of the truth" (ibid18).

Before Rolland promoted Gandhi by mixing anti-imperialism, the pacific ideology, and the saintliness of his life—Gandhi was merely an Indian lawyer, known in Europe or America. Rolland's critique of expansionism and Europe's destructive propensities during the Great War, and in the colonized regions of Asia and

Africa was an ambitious task. Rolland writes: "Under the mask of civilization, or of a brutal national idealism, the politics of the great States methodically practice fraud and violence, theft and degradation (rather, extermination) of the so-called inferior peoples (Fisher 15). Throughout the period of war, Rolland protested Europe's imperialism. He predicted that Europe's imperialistic aggression would be confronted with the anti-imperialistic antagonism. Rolland recommended the intermediary between the imperialistic and anti-imperialistic forces of East and West. Progressive intellectuals of Europe and developing countries may have a dialogue using their hearts and geniuses to work towards amicable and peaceful solutions to imperialistic perpetration. Gandhi's political ideology offered one humane solution to the development of imperialist and anti-imperialist aggression. The Gandhian path moved toward international cooperation, redress of the grievances of colonized nations, and a negotiating mechanism to satisfy the mutual needs of the imperialist powers and the countries seeking liberation. Rolland's anti-imperialism was thoroughly Gandhian. His condemnation of imperialism was often harsh but the remedies he suggested always left the possibilities open for negotiation between East and West. Rolland's intention was to bypass the massive disturbances and random violence of struggles of national liberation and the efforts to suppress them. The real work of forming a durable society could begin only after the struggles subsided.

Rolland was fully aware of the different ways of Gandhi and the Communists but he thought that it is the only way of bringing change in Indian society. He knows the enmity and abhorrence of the communists for Gandhi which he recounts too in his diary in Jan. 1928 that the Moscow communists or those who follow their line are showing two faces. On the one hand they treat Gandhi as an enemy and proclaim the bankruptcy of non-violence in India, on the other they disguise Gandhi as a Bolshevik and put about unlikely rumors of an imminent visit to Moscow. He believes that the concept of exploitation free society can only be realized by the acceptance of communist violence in Indian context and therefore he stresses on the need of unifying Gandhian ideology and communist philosophy for the establishment of utopian society in the country like India.

The Marxist and Leninist theoreticians raise their eye-brows on the flexible attitude of Rolland towards communist violence and Gandhian non-violence as

they believe that the world history records major changes in society have often brought with violent activities and not by non-violent means. Hiren Mukherjee in his book *Gandhi: A Study* observes,

“It would be so much more welcome if non-violence could work, but historical change, of the basic sort especially, does not come as wish-fulfillment, however ardent and largely shared that wish might be. More often than not, if history is our guide, such change involves violence. (34)

He, therefore, requested Gandhi to add up communist violence to his ideology of non-violence so that the results will come quick and permanent. Stating number of examples of the past he tried to convince Gandhi that the European people, like that of majority of Indians, are not of religious mentality to follow the path of non-violence and non-co-operation rather they believe in bravery a sort of violence in almost everything. Therefore, he thought that Gandhi cannot force to follow non-violence against the wishes of the people, he only can be pursuant in convincing them. To quote him from his book *Romain Rolland Gandhi Correspondence* in this regard:

The violence of the Communists in Russia was due to the armed intervention of great powers and he also refused to label Russian Communist ideology as materialist, since it had given rise to the most heroic of sacrifices, even though it did not imply non-violence. (170)

For Gandhi ‘Swaraj’ in itself was not an end. ‘Hind Swaraj’ (1909) was a book written by Gandhi during his return from England, after discussing with the British liberal intellectuals and Indian freedom fighters operating from London with radical means. He expressed the idea of ‘Swaraj’ in his afore-stated book. For Gandhi ‘Swaraj’ is a mental state, not physical or political emancipation from England. He believed that if Indians have to nurse the materialistic goals of the Western Civilization, modes of production and production relations for the sake of independence, then there is no reason for political independence in the first place. He states that such independence can be attained even under the British regime.

Gandhi hailed from an orthodox Hindu family and hence entailed the philosophical roots of the religion he belonged to. He devoutly followed these tenets in his own behavior. However, as a mass leader, he had to tone down his principles a bit for the sake of his followers. He was often titled 'a saint and a politician,' but there was nothing scriptural or otherworldly about his main political ethics. He mainly learned this not from religion, but from observing his father Karamchand Uttamchand Gandhi in his work as Diwan of Porbandar, Rajkot, and Wankaner. Famous Indian writer Munshi Premchand shares striking similarity with Mahatma Gandhi especially on the grounds of their humanism. Both Gandhi and Premchand have had high ideals in their life. Their precept of love for truth and simple living, back to villages, co-operation in place of class-struggle, communal harmony, sympathy for the Dalit, gender equality, fearlessness, morality, non-violent non-co-operation is common. Both are against the formula 'Art for art's sake'. Gandhi and Premchand tried to this from the perspectives of the common man and tried to think as he thought, shared his feeling, in key with his hopes, fears, dreams and aspirations. Both in all their thoughts and emotions, their identity, their oneness with the common man was complete. Both Gandhi and Premchand were the models of the masses of India. Perhaps this is the key of their immense appeal.

Mahatma Gandhi was deeply influenced by Henry David Thoreau's preaching about non-violent resistance. To resist things that were wrong, to resist immoral government action by simply refusing to cooperate was Gandhian way based on Thoreau's ideology. Thoreau's thoughts in developing his concept of Satyagraha (non-cooperation), or Truth Force was also adopted by Gandhi. Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King adapted Gandhi's idea of civil disobedience to the civil rights movement in the United States. Martin Luther King drew inspiration from Gandhi's preaching of non-violence. King was inspired by the teachings and philosophy of the Mahatma. United States has a number of statues, busts and memorials of Mahatma Gandhi. According to Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi was the first person in the world to elevate the love ethic of Jesus beyond just interaction between individuals to a massive social force. While describing his interpretation of the nonviolence that seeks to win over an adversary to friendship, rather than to demean or defeat him. King asserts that he developed the method for his social reform keeping Gandhian principles as model. King says when he visited India in 1959 that he might go other countries as a tourist but to India he goes as a pilgrim.

Throughout his correspondence with Gandhi he never thought that Gandhi for second also moved from his firm stand of non-violence. He was stubborn and firm for his ideology of non-violence; he convinced Rolland in turn that his method of non-violence is more permanent and enduring than the violent means of the communists. His various explanations to convince Gandhi to his point of view proved futile as he mentions at one point in his correspondence that “there are many things in the universe which I am forced to accept without approving them - starting perhaps with life itself, since destiny forces us to live by killing other forms of life” (443).

Conclusively, Rolland brings to the notice of the communists that Gandhi was a very stubborn person, a shrewd political activist who was always confirm about his views and ideas and was always ready to experiment things to the test of truth. While talking about Gandhi’s views on modern technology Rolland writes:

Gandhi... in no way condemns machinery and industrial techniques, in so far as they bring help and relief to humanity, his quarrel is merely with their murderous excesses and the morbid myth of economic over-production. When you look at India, you find a very special situation (Rolland 459-60).

Political philosophy of Gandhi seems to be the only solution to the imperialism and imperialist aggression of interwar period in East and West. He genuinely feels that that the democratic and conciliatory ways of fighting were more suitable for Soviet model. He, therefore, propagates the philosophy of non-violence as the only way to break the iron net of imperialism. Gandhian way is a way of co-operation, redressing agonies of the colonized nations and facilitating a dialogue to cater to their mutual needs of the imperialist powers and countries seeking liberation. Rolland seems to fail on all grounds in convincing him for armed resistance for bringing change in the situation. Through his correspondence with Gandhi in the book, Rolland seems neither convincible of communism nor disapproves non-violence of Gandhi completely. Finally, Rolland comes to conclusion that the ideas and philosophy of Gandhi is long contemplated and time tested not to be changed by anything because Gandhi shows great belief in bringing about economic equality by the means of non-violence.

References:

Brown, Judith Margaret. *Gandhi: Prisoner of hope*. Yale University Press, 1991.

Chadha, Yogesh. *Rediscovering Gandhi*. Random House (UK), 1997.

Doke, Joseph J. *Gandhi A Patriot in South Africa*. Publications Division Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 2005.

Fisher, David. *Romain Rolland and the Politics of the Intellectual Engagement*. Routledge, 2017.

Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. *Autobiography Of My Experiments With Truth*. Navajivan Publishing House; Ahmedabad, 1927.

Haksar, Vinit. *Gandhi and Liberalism: Satyagraha and the Conquest of Evil*. Taylor & Francis, 2017.

King, Martin Luther. *Pilgrimage to nonviolence*. Fellowship Publications, 1960

Lindley, Mark, Y. P. Anand, and Humanist Chaplaincy. *Gandhi and Humanism*. Humanist Chaplaincy, Harvard University, 1995.

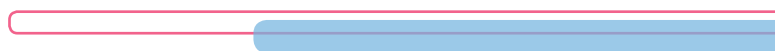
Marcin, Raymond B. "Gandhi and Justice." *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 7.3 (2004): 17-30.

Mukerjee, Hirendranath. *Gandhiji: a study*. People's publishing house, 1979.

Nanda, Bal Ram. *Mahatma Gandhi*. Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1958.

Nandy, Ashis. *Intimate enemy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Rolland, Romain, and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. "Romain Rolland and Gandhi Correspondence." (1976).



मेरे जीवन में गांधी जी (इन्दुप्रकाश पाण्डेय)

Gandhiji in My Life

Indu Prakash Pandey

(Translated by Bhagyashree S Varma)
(formerly) South Asia Institute, Heidelberg, Germany
pandey@web.de

From the very early times I recall of my childhood and the age of learning the lessons of life, I remember five great personalities that influenced the shaping and growth of my mind. Raja Ji, (Rajagopalachari), who was a pure intellectual with the futuristic vision, Azad (Maulana Abul Kalam Azad), who had a great impact on me through his impartial and firm stance, and who also created profound faith in me. Jawaharlal Nehru's handsome and attractive face with his ever-expressive enthusiasm, Subhash Babu (Subhash Chandra Bose) whose magnificent visage with round spectacles that were always the glance of thoughtful eyes inviting excitement and cheer by his quest for freedom. And Gandhiji, whose idealism in ethics, spiritual conscience, simplicity in lifestyle and endless zeal for action that inspired my mind always to do something, by which Gandhiji had haunted all thinking minds. In those times, it was impossible to think indifferently.

Gandhiji had included all dimensions of life in his activities in such a way that he was completely dedicated to the rise of our nation. This very whole hearted dedication of his life was spreading hopes and faith among all. Many others who had followed Gandhiji, with the sense of togetherness were struggling in the mission to liberate our nation. He had such great impact even on the minds of the illiterate, poor and helpless farmers from remote villages, that his decision of not paying the tax was doubtlessly supported by all the farmers. His impact was thus, so magical on the minds of the educated as well as the illiterate masses. I was not meant to be escaping the same. I learnt the lesson of Swaraj from him, and I

could create self reliance to some extent in my life. In 1937, Subhash Babu on his tour in UP during elections, had come to Raebareli. His speech on the station was attended by a huge crowd including me.

His miraculous personality had so deep influence on my mind exciting my patriotic spirit, that I was tempted to join him at that very moment and move onward with him. But I was just a boy studying in seventh standard at that time. Pure white loosely tied dhoti of Khadi, similar loose kurta, round glasses, and high, crossed Gandhi cap on his head made Subhash Babu look so handsome and grand. In the mission of freedom fighters, my mind was intensely excited by the very sight of this man. In 1931, at Kasganj, even otherwise, while we moved around the centre streets of the town, shouting slogans like “तोडी बच्चा हाय-हाय, लाल पगड़ी हाय-हाय”, which meant the open hatred toward the slayers of Bhagat Singh, and we were so highly burning for the cause at that time that our place Kasganj itself looked like Bhagat Singh assassination spot.

There was this building of Tilak Bhavan opposite of our primary school in Kasganj, that the leaders of Kasganj used to visit often. I had seen a person there in Khadi dress as a frequent visitor. He walked with his head held high towards the skies. I tried to mimic his walking style once in pride, and got my foot wounded in the stony bumpy road. I was feeling wounded even mentally. I was under the impression that Mohanlal Gandhiji was our classmate when he had refused to correct the error in his notebook. It was the influence of that Gandhi-bound ethos that my mother had started weaving cotton on the spinning wheel.

She had been weaving the carpet and rug at home. I used to help her with the same tasks. So, the whole inside and outside of our home was occupied by Gandhi. In the winters of 1939-40, I participated for the first time in that procession of Mohanlal Ganj exhibition. My friend, the elder brother of Vindhyeshwari Prasad Singh, was elected as the Satyagrahi, (Truth-Insistence) leader of Congress, to individually display our opposition to the government. Gandhiji had started the opposition to British government, with Vinoba Bhave at the same time. The British had not taken into consideration any national leader's opinions while including India in the Second World War. The only party leading the nation at that time was Congress. Gandhiji took it as the insult of the nation and started his Satyagraha to

oppose the government. In this Satyagraha, he did not call any common masses but selected specific leading workers and planned their rebellious lectures on particular dates as fixed by him. Each leader who followed this, had to inform the government about where and when will he arrange his rebellious lecture.

The stages were prepared, the roads were opened, and like the Satyagrahi the information leaking individuals too used to reach there with the police and they used to arrest the speaker as soon as he started his speech. The common people also would gather to shout slogans, "Bharat Mata ki Jai, Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai. Inqilab Zindabad" which meant "Hail the Revolution", along with "hail Mother India, Hail Mahatma Gandhiji, Hail the Revolution! "

The police walked ahead with the arrested leaders while the masses followed then up to the police station loudly shouting the slogans and then return wearily to their homes. We too went on the crowded path when Bhaisahab was arrested and chatting about the possibilities, slept late at night. I started wearing the clothes of Khadi at that time. I started using khadi kurta and dhoti or pyjama. When Gandhi haunted my mind like this, I threw away my earlier clothes and shoes. Now, I got a pair of shoes made by the cobbler of our area, from dead lamb's skin just in one and half rupee. We too were the followers of Swaraj now. The Swaraj was grounded in our minds like an obvious mission. As an effect of the same, I started visiting the central building in the city, Tilak Bhavan. Many leaders used to meet us there. I was much younger than them. I was a child indeed. I was not happy with this kind of impression. My discipline had its own demands.

The first was I will not fall short in my studies, and I will not accept any hindrance in my routine of exercise or even my sports. My leadership did not help me change my routine. That is how I remained three in one, a student, a sportsman and a follower of Swaraj. The leaders arrested in individual Satyagraha Revolt were gradually released from the jail's and returned till 1942. Gandhiji was engaged in creative work even at that point of time. For freedom, Gandhiji had created two major fronts in fighting with the British.

One was the straight war of non-violence and the second, when no direct action was followed, multiple social actions to be creatively executed like adult education,

Hindu Muslim unity, the annihilation of untouchability, rural development and so on. Approximately, the volunteers were working on 16 different plans. This whole work was done inside and outside of the ashrams. These were all the works of social reformation. In absence of anything else, the work of weaving on the spinning wheel and preparing cloth was permanently pending. Much was yet undone in the area of rural development. But finally, Gandhiji decided to confront the British directly through war to gain freedom, how long we can remain to be cheated by them! At that time, the Congress declared Quit India movement at Bombay in Gandhiji's leadership, on 8th August 1942. The government urgently arrested all the leaders at night, before the next morning. Consequently, there was a havoc in the whole country and we all marched forward in the battlefield prompted by Gandhiji's slogan "Do or Die". I left my studies and joined the battleground.

This was the last year of my high school. I was studying in Sir Raja Rampal Singh Hindu High school at Raebareli in UP, and was staying in the hostel with my two younger brothers since my sixth class. This was the fifth and the last year for me. In these five years, I had created a lot of pressure in school and the city. Mostly in my fame as football, volleyball and hockey player and in the last two years as a leader too. The leadership had made the secret police keep watch on me. Crisp mission has failed and returned. Gandhiji had rejected the proposal of that mission as "a post-dated cheque on a defunct bank". In 1935, the Act of provincial autonomy declared the victory of Congress in the elections of seven states. The Muslim league had been defeated badly and was not included in making of the new government. The Muslim minorities were hurt by this failure and their anger had taken the form of revolt. The fights were visibly confronted. Sikandar Hayat tried the making of mix government in Punjab. But these governments did not work properly due to the reluctance between Hindus and Muslims. The Congress was bound to its struggle for complete autonomy. The British government had stated that autonomous power cannot be granted till all the communities come together unanimously. One third of Muslims were not ready for this. How will the kings and emperors be ready? Hence the Muslim league and communist party too was reluctant. Hitler Stalin Pact was finalized at that time and the communist party was supporting the fascist which made the fascist war the battle of people.

So, when the revolt of Quit India was beginning, the Muslim league, communist party and the nominated kings did not participate in that. And I did observe that all my Muslim friends were staying out of the march. The communist party was not functional in our all town. A few landlords and owners of estates were trying to participate, yet it was a huge surprise for me how the fourteen-year-old young son of director of Defence India Rule, was helping me in legalities during my arrest. And he was a Musalman. After the pact between Hitler and Stalin was done, the communist party was supporting the fascist followers. That was the time when the fascist battle seemingly turned into the battle of the people.

The procession of revolutionaries was moving forward across the court with slogans of hailing Gandhiji. Reaching near the government high school we were inviting the schoolboys to join us. Not a single child from that school came to us was really shocking. The message of Gandhiji remained limited to our private schools. But we were not to be discouraged. We moved ahead towards the city till further on the way, a group walking with the police inspector stopped and warned us to withdraw and return from there. They threatened us raiding their sticks, and scared us with the threat to be arrested but we were charged with such passion that such threats did not affect us at all.

So, the four leader type boys in front were tied with a rope, except me Shrikant Singh, Radha Raman, and Mahesh Dutt. The police started pushing them towards the court. The noise increased. The crowd in procession raised their slogans to higher volume. We were sent in the vehicle to the court and then they locked us in a room. The room was so suffocating. We were feeling choked in heat of the closed room. I tried to console my friends with the couplet, "this is only a beginning, of the passion you love, in place of crying, just watch what is yet to come...! Yet to come whatever, we have to pay some price for freedom. At that very moment, the Muslim guy entered there like a breeze. If you need anything tell me, he said, asked for cold water and signalled us to go. We tried to sympathise in a thought if he would fall in some trouble because of us, his father may struggle to free him, but we did not know what was the scene outside as we were closed in custody. The same evening, we were brought out and the police vehicle took us to be dropped at some unknown destination...!

That destination was R Central Jail. They took whatever little money we had in our pockets and deposited that in the office of the jailor. What tough treatments my companions were given, I do not know, but I was taken to a small closet like bathroom and was locked there in that. No furniture, no rug, not even a rag! It was utterly vacant. Within few minutes my head started feeling giddy because of the stinky smell from urinals around'. Standing or sitting was impossible. My breath was choking and my feet were aching due to standing for long, I sat down on the dirty half-cemented floor and my mind was so upset that I could not even think what to do. How was this nation going to get its freedom, where are my companions, are they also locked in dungeons like me, what they must be thinking ...I had no answers. There was no way to get any answers. My mind was anxious and my head was heavy. Those narrow walls had brought my breath to lifeless state and my heart was trying its best to keep beating in this damage of my freedom witnessed for the sake of national freedom. How to entertain myself, how to keep the mind engaged, I asked myself and recalled a doha which conveyed " do not lose your mind keep offering prayer". To find some solace I also uttered the lines my mother used to often teach me, "Say Ram, do your work, don't be afraid, you are in alien town, ", but my mind was not calmed. I was not really afraid yet my eyes filled with years, regretful of how I am trapped and took more people with me, they may be cursing me, I thought. It's quite possible that they will prove braver than me.

The darkness increased and the night fell around. Where shall they sleep, will they provide food or not, In that gloomy moment someone opened the lock like an angel, one was the policeman and the other was a jailed person who looked like a criminal. The confidential prisoners of Pakka jail become pakka in few years and they are called pakka. He said, "you are lucky man, now they will close you in another B class. And they took is in a huge open yard, and closed up all of us there. There was a big hall, two rows of cemented benches and the rugs were placed on those. "Now you enjoy", said pukka, moving away with the guard. In the same manner, the other prisoners were brought gradually one after the other.

The sparrow twitters too much while she is building her nest, in the same way, we all were creating noise. No end of talking. As if we had gained freedom. The food was ready and we were so hungry. The kitchen was large where I lay my rug and

sat on that. The other prisoners of the jail were assigned to serve the A and B class. They were all working here for something or the other. The cook served food in a brass plate with neat and clean hands. They had given daal, one with gravy and one dry veggie, rice and chapatis. Even the ghee, prepared in jail, was added to daal. The food was so good that I forgot my issues of the whole day. The good food we relished was so tasty that we forgot all issues of the day. And receiving one full glass of milk at bedtime we also forgot that we are in jail. We were not actually getting this much even at home. Later I came to know that 17 rupees were spent on, for 17 aana per person's meals, while we gave 5 rupees for the whole month's food, at the hostel and in a day the jail was spending 2 rupees on us per person.

So, we were really lucky. A class people also got fruits and flowers. That was the time when in the same yard we had also got good rooms with bathrooms. We were getting old books to read from the library of the jail. All the things were accessible to us except newspapers. No news from the outside world could reach us. The empty space in this yard was too large. That was the beginning of August. The monsoon had already commenced. "Naag Panchami" a festival of worshipping snakes, was nearing. We made a yard to play and the joy was immediately shared by playing there. Sometimes we met Laalsaheb, the king of Semary, Kedarnath Pandey from Laalganj and a Maulana with long beard, whose name I don't remember, used to sit together and chat for hours. We argued on various matters. The main point recurringly discussed was leaving school after the primary education, everyone should join the activism in politics. Except me everyone agreed that we have plunged in this battle for freedom on the basis of calls by Gandhiji and we can return to education afterwards when we get our freedom. The free country will certainly need educated citizens.

The country needs to be educated to move ahead. In the illiterate masses, who will do the work for country. In the matter of education, I was firmly decided. But presently we were in lock up. Sometimes we used to shout slogans and hail Gandhiji. Who knows when shall we get free? Even Gandhiji was imprisoned with thousands of leaders. Sometimes we got a few rumours. The gunshots, people dying, army spreading the terror all over, the masses in pity, and so on. The good food too on that day would taste bitter. We used to keep fasting to console our own sense of guilt. Our impotence was closed in the fists closed and teeth rubbed

in silence. Around three months passed like that and one fine morning there came an order saying leave all youngsters. Yes, we were youngsters only. Returning all our stuff and money they drove us out of the jail. Where shall we go? What to do? The uncertainty took us toward the city. Nobody knew we were released from the jail. No one would come to receive us, obviously. Who will talk about welcome by flowers or garlands? If you don't understand anything go to Pratap cinema. In Raibareli, I had stayed in the hostel so we went there. The next day we went to the school and met the headmaster. He said, your rustication orders are prepared and sent to us. If you apologize to commissioner, he may allow you to come back to school any time. I tried to make you understand that these movements are not for you. But you were haunted by ghost of Gandhiji at that time. I had not imagined this state. He liked me so much. He loved me in fact. He used to invite me to his place. Mentally he approved of me even more as I had taken part in the freedom fighting movement.

After I left the school, he gave me a very good character certificate which still lies with me preserved. My friends tried to apologize and got scolding's from him. How shameless you are, you don't feel ashamed to apologise. You and your revolution have taken the lives of so many people. Many lost their homes. Now you go and educate yourself to become a good human being. I had already told the head master now I will not apologize even if Gandhiji comes to tell me to say sorry. Now I did not feel the need to contact the commissioner. The case was taken a few days to the court but we all declined when the question of forgiving was raised. We were charged ten rupees each and those who could not pay will be put in jail. Someone paid that fine for us at that time. We were released. There was a lot of hush hush outside the court. And when we came out, the skies were filled with the slogans of the crowd, "Gandhiji ki Jai"! We entered the school. A few months were left for the final exams of the high school. Somehow, I could prepare and appear for the exams but missed my first class by four marks.

I was a sportsperson as well as a very bright student. The headmaster expected a lot from me but those hopes were nothing in comparison to the need of our country. After being released from the jail I remembered where should my younger brothers have been, All these days. Did they return to our village, but they had no money? I don't know till now. Those were the days of extreme madness. We

had no sense of being conscious. The headmaster called My father by sending a letter. He took us back forcefully like the ones captured. In the night to Lalganj on camel ride, and ahead of it, nearly 10 miles we kept walking towards Shivpuri.

The vehicles anyway had no access to our village. There was utter silence everywhere and the atmosphere was sensational. We too did not talk for long time. Afterwards at home we were equally quiet. At home pushing me towards mother, he said, see here is your great son. Take him. And I don't know how and when, much later, my mother told me, you are getting married on 14th June. I jumped, out of shock, cried, shouted, kept showing my reluctance saying no. When father will come back from the camp, show the same drama to him she said. We used to speak Awadhi. I could not utter a single word when father came. I kept crying and telling my chacha to stop it. He could not do anything. Marriage was already fixed when I was in prison. All the family members thought that the only way to tie me was to the pole of marriage. I felt like my hands were tied with handcuffs earlier but now even my feet were chained. In this way, I was imprisoned for lifetime.

A drum was hanged in my neck. I play or not, nobody will hear. This imprisonment was not to be helped even by Gandhiji. The father of my intimate friend, Trambakeshwar Prasad, who was a landlord and the honorary magistrate, advised me that I should run away from home. My twin questions were, where shall I go if I run away, and what will happen to this innocent, unknown, illiterate girl who is tied to me. How does she know that her marriage was performed with a revolutionary rebellious youth; she must have believed dreamily that her father has found a suitable groom for her. Her father might have tried to find such a groom from his point of view. I was lost in thinking seriously. What a trap indeed. She must be dreaming of happy home, handsome groom, in laws, the unknown and unseen house of in-laws...! And I was thinking how to earn bread, how to provide her with basic needs of clothes and shelter, where shall we stay...! I was already away from Gandhiji's frenzy and was chained in the web of married life. Sweet were the fruits of desire. So now I had to walk like that cow whose neck bears the burden of living. If I walk faster, my feet will ache, no other way to find out. I could not see any other option. My feet heavy with chains of marriage and my hands tied to the mission of Gandhiji. This country got freedom but what about my freedom...did I get one...?

I lost my first child who would have been 75 today, if survived. This country is independent for 72 years, and I am turning 95, but the question of what is right and what is not right keeps haunting me even now. What is good and how long ...are all the good works right? And are all right things good? How to understand this dichotomy? Is there a way out? Two years went by. I continued my education firmly. Parents have married me off so they have to look after I thought. Hence, I stayed with parents in Kanpur for two years. My mother often called my wife from her maternal home. She wanted to trap me in temptation. I was trapped for a while. Staying in Kanpur I could not do any task of Gandhiji.

I read a lot of books and studied a lot in those two years. I studied the whole literature of saints, by reading all the books like those of Vivekanand, Swami Ramteerth, Dayanand and whatever books were available. How much I could perceive only God knows. In Bengal the masses were dying of the drought at that time. The reports mentioned that around 3 lac million people died. Calcutta was attacked by the Japanese forces. What Gandhiji said was hard to believe now. He had said that we shall be able to protect ourselves after the British leave our country. My mind was not at rest. I tried to express my impotent anger in the outbursts of fruitless poetic writing. Fruitless as no periodical preferred to print my poems. I was restless and wandering from village to village to do Gandhiji's work. Nobody was listening to my talks and the people who heard me were not doing anything. I was so frustrated that I tried to practice some spirituality. All the leaders and Gandhiji were imprisoned. Subhashbabu was hidden somewhere and was preparing the Azad Hind Sena while the battle was going on up to the borders of Imphal.

The British government had started training sessions for the lessons of Air Raid Precaution. They had built around two meters high brick-walls on both sides of the roads. The factories were cheerfully working to prepare the weapons for the army forces. Even at that time our leaders were all imprisoned. The communist party and Muslim League were working with loud tone while Jinnah Saheb was adamantly terrifying the nation by forwarding his demand of Pakistan. The communist party was supporting them and they were also helping the British in the war. Even Before Raja ji they were keenly opposing the Quit India movement. He had also brought up a formula to emphasise his demand of Pakistan. 1941 to

1942 was such a worse time that all the things were happening in the opposition of Congress and Gandhiji.

In 1942, the train tracks, bridges and poles were being destroyed. It was all chaos around. Some people also visited me with ropes and axes but I refused to team up with them and tried fruitlessly to convince them to follow the lessons of non-violence. They argued with me saying that Gandhiji is quoting this chaos as spread by the British but we are okay with it if it is a chaos. In 1940 Jinnah had already convinced the president of the league to accept his proposal of Pakistan. There were protests exhibited in all places for Pakistan. In 1945 when Gandhiji was released from the jail, he conducted multiple meetings with Jinnah and tried to convert him, to allow this country not be divided. But Jinnah Saheb did not change an inch. And Gandhiji also did not move from his firm standing on the principles of Hindu Muslim unity and till his last breath he kept fighting for the same goal. He endangered his own life again and again to protect his ideal of Hindu Muslim Unity.

I often wonder about the relationship of Jinnah and Gandhiji and the question that comes to my mind is how is it possible that Jinnah who as the secretary of Congress, in 1916 convinced the Muslim league, to sign on the pact of Hindu Muslim Unity, (Lucknow Pact) and the same Jinnah was not ready to listen to a single word of Gandhiji now. Gandhiji talked to Jinnah as per the formula of Rajaji and directs that the Muslim inhabited zones may be taken to plebiscite in the western regions and more such matters which Gandhiji actually did not approve of. In fact, Jinnah Saheb was envious of Gandhiji and his populist politics and his grip on the masses. After his return from the south Africa Gandhiji had attained huge popularity in his Kheda and Champaran protest (1918). He had influenced the Congress to the extent of his domination in it and up to 1922-23 it was dissolved.

The whole power was now in the hands of Gandhiji. One has to notice that Jinnah was already a well-established lawyer at that time. He was well known and very impressed by the parliamentary membership of Dadabhai Naoroji. He was ambitious about gaining fame also in the area of politics. He was also successful in his ambition despite his father's lack of support to him. After the entry of Gandhiji's in Congress, he had been reduced to just a member. He was a very important

lawyer and impactful and rich man at that time. I guess he was disappointed and lost his space because of Gandhiji's presence.

So, with a sense of defeat, he became an opponent of Gandhiji. Once he even escaped to London for a while and isolated himself from the politics of India. It was in 1930 that Liyaqat Ali Khan somehow convinced him to return as a member of Muslim League. He accepted to come back on the condition that the League would accept his plan of Pakistan and obey his commands. He was also offered the award of qayad-e-azam which meant the king of law. So, it was impossible for him now to accept any kind of defeat at the hands of Gandhiji. Thus in 1940 and again in 1942 at the procession in Lahore he announced the formation of Pakistan. The British and the communists supported him. At that time, Gandhiji and the leaders of our freedom struggle, were all imprisoned and reading or writing books in the jail. I think Jinnah had taken this revenge on Gandhiji. This is totally my observation, may be a wild guess.

The fourth decade of the last century was the most terrifying and painful time for our nation. If the time of gaining independence was the greatest triumph and victory for our nation, it was also the huge penance and the toughest time of ordeal for Gandhiji. Cruelty was on its peak reflecting itself in mass-riots, assassinations of innocent people and unsettling the millions of people in the country. How ironical the time was, on one hand the celebrations of our freedom, were enjoyed like festivals by crackers, spreading lights and on the other hand, Gandhiji was the only man trying to console the lost people by his compassion.

He was fasting in Calcutta. In the times of election for the minister of Sohravardi thousands of people were being killed, and Gandhiji was still crowning Sohravardi. He returned from Bihar, after his efforts to quieten the chaotic conditions there, and within six months three gunshots of Godse sent him to divinity. How and when all this happened, we all know very well. It is not easy to talk about it as we take pride in the 15th August 1947, the Independence Day. I was fasting in my room on that day, as I had often kept fast on Sunday with my mother and later, following Gandhiji, I added speech fasting on Sundays. So, I kept Maun Vrata till 12 o'clock in the noon. Every day, I also used to spend at least an hour in weaving on the spinning wheel. I could weave around 300 meter of cloth in an hour on

Yervadachakra, and by practice I could produce 40-50 count thin cotton easily. It was not that easy to weave the clothes so by adding the cover to objects I used to make dolls and after collecting many a doll, I offered those to the Khadi Bhandar in exchange of some more cotton to weave, or a puny readymade, as the room was too small to make a puny.

I could weave enough cloth as to make a couple of pyjamas, two shirts and two pull over wears. In my neighbourhood, there was a student named Katariya. He too was under the influence of Gandhiji. Even Gopinath, the next-door one, was of the same thought flow so we three used to read Gandhiji's books and writings together and used to discuss freely. Narayan Dutt Tiwari also used to stay in the same hostel with Vimal Mehrotra. Both of them were followers of socialist thinking. With them as well the interactions about Gandhiji were discussed frequently. I had established a creative congregation which met every Sunday at 2 in the noon in the union hall. One hour was spent in weaving the cloth on the spinning wheel and half an hour was further spent by us in the discussion about the current political updates and movements. In these discussions, Sadik bhai, Shankar Rao Dev, Kaka Kripalani, Prof. Mahesh Dutt Mishra and many such people who intellectually participated.

I went to the Prof. of Physics from the Kashi University, Prof. Uddhav Asrani to get some lessons on the method of working and I tried to understand the ways of activism from him. He was propagating the Gandhian thoughts there in Kashi in the Nandkishor lodge. I tried a lot to run such an organization in Allahabad but this was not granted to me as I was merely a student. To work on the principles of Gandhiji, I also stayed in the Sevapuri Gandhi Ashram for many months and learnt all those works which I was intending to do further in my life. I stayed in the wise company of people like Karna Bhai, Vichitra Bhai, Bhai Mazumdar, (Ude). I learnt the political philosophy of Gandhiji from Prof. Dhawan and Gandhian Economics from J. C. Kumarappa. I roamed around in the villages to spread the adult education as a part of my social experience.

I used to grind nearly two kgs flour each morning by getting up early. In the Ashram, I used to wash the utensils including mine and of other people. I also visited the popular leaders of Allahabad Vishwambharnath Pandey and Purushottamdas

Tandon. The son of Tandonji who was a professor of Chemistry used stay at the very back yard of our hostel. Some good books, prepared on these very thoughts, brought to us to discuss as very useful stuff to turn the younger generation towards the thoughts of Gandhiji. I was only a student and such activities I thought were not good for me. Yet I had been walking on this road, not taken, with some promises to fulfil. But I got very less time for my studies. So, I used to get up at midnight and write my notes. During the day, I used to attend classes like all, and used to make extensive notes like those of the lecturers. Now all the playing was stopped but I was still the captain of my hostel volleyball team. In 1945 when the prisoners of 1942, were released for the Quit India movement, one of those prisoners, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna, after 3 years of his jail life, came to me. He started staying with me in my room. He had not enough clothes too for himself. He was a student of Allahabad University. So where should he go. Before finding a right place to go, he came to me initially. I could not even today know why did he come to me while he could have gone to anyone.

He went also but that was much later. He was a politician and I was only a Gandhian worker. He was not like Narayan Dutt Tiwari, an open-minded person. He was a very efficient orator and a very sociable, impactful and brilliant person. Both these persons came like a breeze in my life and disappeared too like the same. Yet he was not out of my sight. Sometimes by chance we used to meet and greet each other warmly. Their activities too were controversial. All know how many traumas were spread in India during 1945 to 1950. Great Calcutta killing happened in the Hindu Muslim riots massacre wherein, open assassination in Sohrawardi, Hindu Muslim riots in Bihar, on 16th August 1946, the direct action of Jinnah. In our building, ground floor famous as the great Calcutta killing named also for Hindu Muslim communities along with the public massacre in Calcutta the state of Sohrawardi.

Hindu Muslim riots in Bihar, the violence on 16th August, on 6th August the direct action for Jinnah. And the riots and massacre in the whole nation, the absurd transactions of British missions coming here and going, finally the partition of India and independent to Pakistan was granted on 14th August and to India on 15th August. And at that time the huge massacre that happened was never seen nor heard so far. Gandhiji kept trying on his behalf till his last breath. To stop this

painful accident and trauma he told Nehru and Patel that Jinnah should be made the prime minister of the country and with his cooperation the indivisible India can survive as it is. At that moment both the great leaders were taken aback and questioned him, Bapu what are you saying...? And despite all reluctance of Bapu, this nation was partitioned. The nation was divided in partition and Nehru became the prime minister of the independent India, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel became his home minister. This time Gandhiji felt list by his own people. Anyone who does not get defeated by enemy can be defeated always by his own people. Gandhiji continued to firmly extend his faith in the Hindu Muslim unity. A brother may separate in anger but does not become an enemy. We are like an elder brother.

With love a younger brother can be convinced. Gandhiji recommended and availed 55 crore rupees to Pakistan for restructuring the mosques that were destroyed. For this he did a fasting strike till death. Nehru and Patel, all had to do the same although later only Gandhiji was blamed for this often and again. (In Bombay the speech that was delivered by Patel) because if all these reasons the masses in the nation were weary of Gandhiji. His popularity was much declined despite people being still respectful and affectionate to him. (one story by Vishnu Prabhakar ---) And they were weary of his love for Muslims. On this my respect for Gandhiji mounted higher. But I was not his worshipper. I was never able to worship any hero. Even then I was prepared to accompany those few Gandhi-followers to convince Muslims to bring them back to India. Kripalaniji, Karmaveer Bhai Sunderlal, (British Raj in India) and many other disciples of Gandhian thought had the mission of going to Pakistan and returning to India. Sunderlalji also had gone but he had to return. Kashmir matter was hot on the plate. Even six months had not passed and a young man called Nathuram Godse assassinated Gandhiji, shooting him by gun. What an irony! Horrifying tragedy! This news unsettled the whole country. The natives may be weary of Gandhiji's Hindu Muslim unity approach but they really loved him.

This sorrowful accident disturbed me thoroughly. And that very moment Gadre ji came to My room and started crying sitting near me. He wept more intensely for making me see how he was a Brahmin from the Rigid area of Sadashivpeth in Pune, opposing Gandhi always yet he never wanted Gandhiji to be assassinated.

That too at the hands of some so-called sacred Brahmin person. He wanted to lessen his sense of guilt by lamenting with me. Whatever the sense, he was always with me and remained my lifetime friend. The third day the carrier of Gandhiji arrived with all small and big leaders.

The slowly marching procession moved from Allahabad station and reached the Sangam, the fusion point, around two o'clock in the noon, via civil lines road with all respectful pace. Ramdhun was played as the tune of Song of Ram. In the big military tank, the body was covered with flowers and they carried it in the depth till they disappeared in January fogs. From the station I kept running across the fusion point of Ganga. A huge frenzy was haunting my mind. After returning, I kept brooding in my room with my mind crying on the riotous and woeful conditions in our country. MA previous exams were nearing by a couple of months.

So once again my studies were stopped and my examination was escaped on account of Gandhiji. Had I been a superstitious one, I would have thought that Gandhiji is not in favour of my waste of time in education in place of using that time for our nation. But I truly believed only educated people can work and help the nation progress and carry our life forward. With the same intention I started concentrating on my studies again. In 1948-49 for the academic year, I was elected unanimously as the president of hostel union.

At that time, I had invited Lal Bahadur Shastri for a speech in the union and Karmaveer Bhai Sunderlal ji also came to address our union. He used to speak a lot, and while speaking his eyes would fill with tears. In Hindi he used such tiny phrases while speaking softly in the stylized conversation, that the deep impact was created on the minds of his listeners. That was actually his own style. All the students listened to his speech carefully. In the same period Jinnah Saheb died of tuberculosis in September. Before his death he had started sending his Kashmiri Kabalies to protect his army and he wanted to merge Kashmir in Pakistan. That did not happen but he passed away. Being a Gandhi-disciple I called the union meeting to express our condolences to Jinnah Saheb. All came but when I was trying to express the condolences proposal, they started chit chatting, I was so disturbed that I declared my reluctance to continue the membership of such a union wherein people cannot even sympathise with a dead person at least to

send a formal letter of condolences. And I resigned from that president's post forever. O. P. Bhatnagar, the superintendent of hostel, used to like me a lot. He in fact was very affectionate to me. He came to my room and tried to convince me that I should withdraw my resignation. But I refused to agree with him. Not even an insistence that I would withdraw my resignation letter if the condolences proposal is revised and forwarded again. Then I left everything except my habit of spinning wheel. Such a sacrificial sense occupied my mind deeply that everything else seemed absurd. At the same time my two and a half years old son suddenly passed away. I had not known till now how is the feeling of becoming the father. My mind was lost in speechlessness. When the bad news was received by my wife she started lamenting loudly. I was watching it with my wife open eyes. In place of Gandhiji's work, now only his spinning wheel and his thoughts were my companions. When I left India, in June 1963, the spinning wheel too was left behind in Indian soil and in place of Khadi, the English dressing came with me.

Now the remaining factors were me the restless one, and the memories of the martyr, the disappointed Gandhi. They passed away and became martyrs. I was left behind with my body like a living corpse. Whatever happens, we have to be there, so we are, witnessing what and how. The camera does not know anything nor dies it understand anything about you or anyone else. Watching with wide open eyes. Where Gandhiji and where am I...

We did not ever meet and he did not even know me. The basic differences existed between us, as usual. He was firm in his creed and faith in God. And I had always been a disbeliever. I could never ground my faith in such a god that does all good to His worshippers. Yet I admired the innocent worshippers. I liked the devotional engagement of the worshippers in worshipping God. That devotion is admirable indeed. Even if I was willing, I could never be a worshipper. That is why I adore them. Gandhiji was a radical activist. He used to confront on any matter anytime for the sake of truth. I was too scared to call a thief a thief. He regarded non violence as his religion. Non violence for him, in fact was the only path to arrive at the truth. Non violence was the only religion he believed in. Love thy enemy. I may like to follow him on this point but my nonviolence I without any courage. Out of gear though, I am a true follower of the non violence. In today's violent world I am also a propagator of non violence.

I was afraid of Gandhiji's moral rigidity. In any way I never dared to go near him. I went to his ashram only when he was absent. I visited Sabarmati and Sewagram like a pilgrimage destination with all others. I also visited the ashram of Vinobaji, and had the pleasure of his sight but he was on speech fasting. I had adored him greatly on his land donation movement. Even then I could not gather courage to walk with him on his mission of Journey on Foot. Dada Dharmadhikari always used to tell Gandhiji that your words are an order for us Bapu, you need not explain. So, we even today can narrate the miraculous stories of Gandhiji's courage and soul power. And whatever was expected to happen was actually gone with Gandhiji.


Anna Hazare had come ahead but was caught in the Lokpal bill. I was willing to participate in his mission, leaving all, but not merely for the Lokpal bill. Had he started the protest activism of masses in opposition to the all occupying corruption. Not only a few officials and ministers are corrupt in our government, but the whole society around is corrupt. We have to reform the society in our nation. But they soon became the compromising communities. Life is to be lived finally, how much we go on fighting and with how many people how many times. They disappointed me more. One possibility then is kindled through Gandhiji. One infinite possibility.

To some extent like Gandhiji, by being aware and awakened all the time and living with a sense of fearless generation so that we will never be exploited. Each generation has to bring its own revolution and carry the cross of its own progress.

For Peace and Truth, the only path is that of non violence which Gandhiji had proved to us by his martyrdom. In this simple way I made life easier: Asked for apologies from the one and offered forgiveness to the other..... (Apologised to some and forgave some).

This escapism of Ghalib may make life easier, but is not justified, and the unjustified cannot reach the truth. For the real attainment of Truth and Peace constant working with non-violence is essential.





Transforming Adversity Into Prosperity – Application Of Gandhian Thought To Higher Education

Sybil Thomas

Department of Education,
University of Mumbai,
sybilayesha@gmail.com

Abstract

In the midst of the pandemic, we would all agree that world leaders and all of humankind are trying to engage with ways of rebuilding the society from the grassroots after the unprecedented change that COVID 19 has brought on the society. In these uncertain times, the values of freedom, equality, justice and brotherhood would serve to give a strong direction to the construction of a new social order/a new society. Lessons from our history could show us the way forward in this reconstruction as these times are similar in many ways to the times of reconstruction of society post-independence.

As a new democratic society was established post-independence, our founders of the constitution looked to education as an instrument of social transformation and to make democratic values a reality for every individual. Mahatma Gandhi was one such philosopher who believed in education as an instrument of social transformation. However, the question that we often ask ourselves is; whether these thoughts and philosophies are relevant even today in a neoliberal, post-colonial era after 73 years of independence? The paper looks at the relevance of the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi in the field of Higher Education. The paper briefly looks at the mission of Higher Education and then attempts to address the question of the relevance of Gandhiji's philosophy in the areas of Conceptions of knowledge, Concept of Curriculum and Teacher and Learner in Higher Education.

This will be done by highlighting contemporary discourses in these areas and seeing how Mahatma Gandhi's Philosophy informs praxis in our times.

Introduction

The UN General Secretary António Guterres (@antonioguterres) tweeted at 6:00 AM on Sun, Jul 19, 2020 :

#COVID19 has been likened to an x-ray, revealing fractures in the fragile skeleton of the societies we have built.

It has reinforced the need for solidarity more strongly than ever.

We belong to each other.

We stand together, or we fall apart.

Worldwide leaders, as well as common men and women alike, are trying to make sense of ways in which the world is trying to rebuild itself from the grassroots after the unprecedented change that COVID 19 has brought on the society. In the midst of this pandemic, we would all agree that there is a need for the reconstruction of society based on reflection. A new society that is built on values of freedom, equality, justice and brotherhood is struggling to be born. These times are similar in many ways to the times of reconstruction of society post-independence. As a new democratic society was established, our founding fathers looked to education as an instrument of social transformation and an instrument to make democratic values a reality for every individual. Education, as we see today, owes much to the thoughts and philosophy of great thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Tilak and many more. The question that we often ask ourselves is whether these thoughts, philosophies of these great thinkers are relevant even today in a neoliberal, post-colonial era after 73 years of independence and in the times when the world is ravaged by a pandemic which has affected all facets of the society?

For this discourse, we will look at the thoughts and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, our Father of the Nation and see how this is relevant for us in Higher Education. The reason for situating the discourse in the space of higher education is that

the Universities have been conceived as the "*sanctuaries of the inner life of the nation.*" by its role and functions.

Dr. Radhakrishnan, philosopher-scholar, produced the first Report on Higher Education in free India in 1948 . Excerpts from the report in sections of University says that; "*The academic problem has assumed new shapes. We have now a wider conception of the duties and responsibilities of universities. They have to provide leadership in politics and administration, the professions, industry and commerce. They have to meet the increasing demand for every type of higher education, literary and scientific, technical and professional.*"

If India is to confront the confusion of our time, she must turn for guidance, not to those who are lost in the mere exigencies of the passing hour, but to her men of letters, and men of science, to her poets and artists, to her discoverers and inventors. These intellectual pioneers of civilization are to be found and trained in the universities, which are the sanctuaries of the inner life of the nation."

Mahatma Gandhiji's vision on education was for the individual and the betterment of society, country and the world. His experience of South-Africa not only changed his world view but also challenged him to commit his life to transform India and the world at large. Situating Higher Education in this context, it is all of us, the privileged, who are a part of the 26.3% of the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education have the greater responsibility to allow this education that we have received to be self-transformative and in turn transforming societies that we are a part of.

After looking at the mission that we are involved within the sector of higher education, we would now attempt to address the question of relevance in the areas of

- Conceptions of knowledge
- Concept of Curriculum
- Teacher and Learner in Higher Education

Conceptions of Knowledge

The ultimate objective of education as envisioned by Gandhiji is not only a for a balanced and harmonious individual (Head, Heart and Hand) but also a balanced and harmonious society – a just society where nothing divides the haves and have-nots and everybody is assured of getting their basic needs satisfied and the right to Freedom. This provides the basis for understanding the concept of knowledge, according to Gandhiji. Knowledge evolved from the activity of the child in society. That was the basis of the Nai Talim and the Wardha scheme of education. Children learn by doing, and in doing, their educational and economic needs are fulfilled. When children learn based on craft and societal engagement, education does not alienate the individual. But gives worth and value to every child, the village child and the urban child alike.

For Gandhiji, Education, meant an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit. For fulfilling this aim, literacy was a means and not the end of education. He went on to say that literacy in itself is no education at all. He recommended that a child's education should begin with teaching of handicrafts. (Harijan,1937)

Therefore, Knowledge for Gandhiji was not limited to declarative knowledge, which is factual information but the knowledge that is valuable, the knowledge that can be connected to the students' experience in order to be remembered and used. He recommended procedural knowledge; that is, information about how to perform a task related to day to day life and, most importantly, conditional knowledge of "when," "why," and "under what conditions" declarative and procedural knowledge should be used. A knowledge that is anchored on this type of thinking will contribute to an individual being more reliant, relevant to its society and being able to solve/deal with any situation with confidence. It is this kind of knowledge that even prepares the individual to face ambiguity and uncertainty with confidence. This was reflected in his ideas of basic education. Today we see that this kind of knowledge is what the contemporary thinkers opine. The model of students' intellectual progression, as advocated by Entwistle, Noel. (2007) as shown in the diagram below, it is a reflection of an understanding of how University students progress to reach the sophisticated concept of knowledge. It

also brings out the need for inculcating a commitment to relativist conceptions of knowledge, which was what Gandhiji visualized.

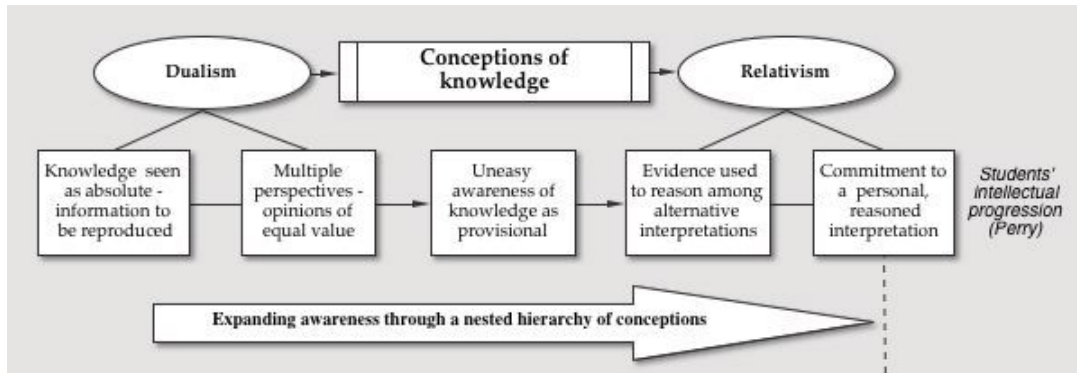


Fig. 1: Conception of Knowledge

This is an example of the potential of the philosophy of education and more specifically, the philosophy of Education of Mahatma Gandhi. It has mobilized thoughts and attempts of educationists to find answers to questions about what is worth teaching and learning? What is knowable, and what should an individual do with education? Attempting to answer these questions has been the concern of educationalists who have tried to find ways to reach the ideals of philosophers. Our National Curriculum Framework 2005, too, envisioned education using procedural and conditional knowledge as propagated by Gandhiji.

The National Curriculum Framework 2005 of the Government of India opines that it is the child's community and local environment that are significant spaces where learning takes place. It is in this space that the child interacts with the environment and derives meaning for his/her existence which is nothing but knowledge generation. Therefore, the policy urges education to blur these boundaries between the space of education and the schools. It goes on to build on the notion that strengthening and capitalising on students' knowledge which they pick up by relating to the world is what will give them the meaningful learning experiences. This kind of knowledge that is gained by doing activities is nothing but building the procedural and conditional knowledge that is lasting and pragmatic. Education has been called to strive to focus and celebrate this kind of knowledge.

Pandemic times have forced us to rethink and revisit our ways of living and thinking. Mere declarative knowledge is no longer enough, for adapting and thriving in the New Normal, higher education would need to emphasise on procedural and conditional knowledge to equip learners to create a new social order.

Concept of Curriculum

Generally speaking, the term 'curriculum' refers to a variety of things. A simplistic summarization of the term curriculum is; the vision of the capabilities and values that every individual must have; and a socio-political and cultural vision for the society. In curriculum studies, the moral, political and ideological aims behind the various conceptualizations of curriculum have been studied for decades. The curriculum relates to the knowledge, skills and understanding that are to be mastered (rather than to rules of conduct within the school, for example) and the sequence in which they are to be taught. In addition, it is related to the whole phase of education rather than to individual lessons or even group lessons. The curriculum could then be defined as the prescribed content of knowledge, understanding and skill that fulfils the aims of education. Winch, C. (1996).

Therefore, the curriculum is the vision of society for its young. It is formed based on a process of negotiations. In this section, the focus will be on the model for approaches to curriculum studies and discuss how the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi informs and challenges us to look at curriculum more holistically. The researches in the area of curriculum studies reflect this notion of different approaches to understanding curriculum. It is against this model that we would see how Gandhiji had positioned his conceptualization of the curriculum.

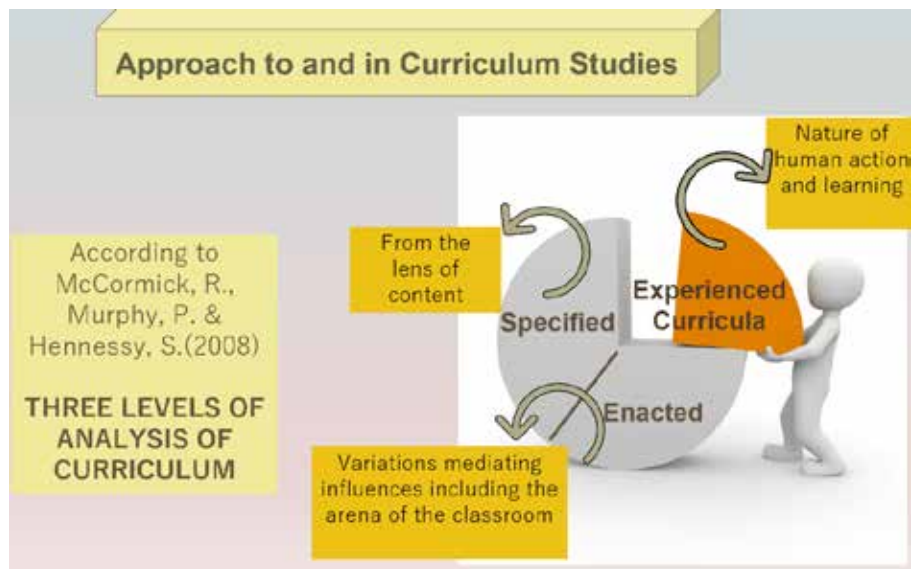


Fig. 2. Approach to and in Curriculum Studies

For Gandhiji, the curriculum was not restricted to content alone. Curriculum as equal to syllabus and content was a narrow understanding of what schooling should provide. This approach of looking at curriculum as content in Mc Cromik's approach (2008) to understanding the curriculum is termed as the specified curriculum. At the specified curriculum level, Gandhiji's philosophy gives much thought for the principles guiding the choice of basic craft, art and health. On the other hand, the enacted curriculum relates to the way in which the prescribed curriculum is actualised in classroom practices. He then moved on to recommend that experiences should be provided that would be rich in educational possibilities and have scope for cooperative activity. That is the domain of content transactions in classroom spaces. He also emphasized that a proper place must be given to the planning and evaluation of every undertaking; there must be room for initiative; children must learn to take personal responsibility for their progress. These aspects of his thoughts are related to the experienced curriculum domain. It is here that curriculum should not only be concerned with what and how content is transacted but also with the experiences of students and teachers. These experiences should be captured and evaluated.

As time went on, there was a growing consensus that craft which best met these requirements were those most closely concerned with the basic needs of

human life, the production and preparation of food and clothing, the use of clay and wood to provide both shelter and the tools and utensils of daily living. So even today, we see that if this concept of craft is accepted, there is a growing demand not only in the academic circles but also from the stakeholders that the curriculum should be closely related to the needs of society and the ownership of the curriculum should rest with the teachers and students. It calls for autonomy and distinctness in approach to curriculum construction. It is only when students of higher education are equipped with critical skills of thinking that arises from the procedural and conditional knowledge or relative conceptions of knowledge that they will be empowered enough to take ownership and be involved in their own curricula. This is a challenge in a society that is, on one hand, striving to bring in homogeneity on one hand and an over-emphasis on individualism, on the other hand.

This relationship between the notions of conceptions of knowledge and ownership within the space of curriculum and has been put diagrammatically in the figure given below.

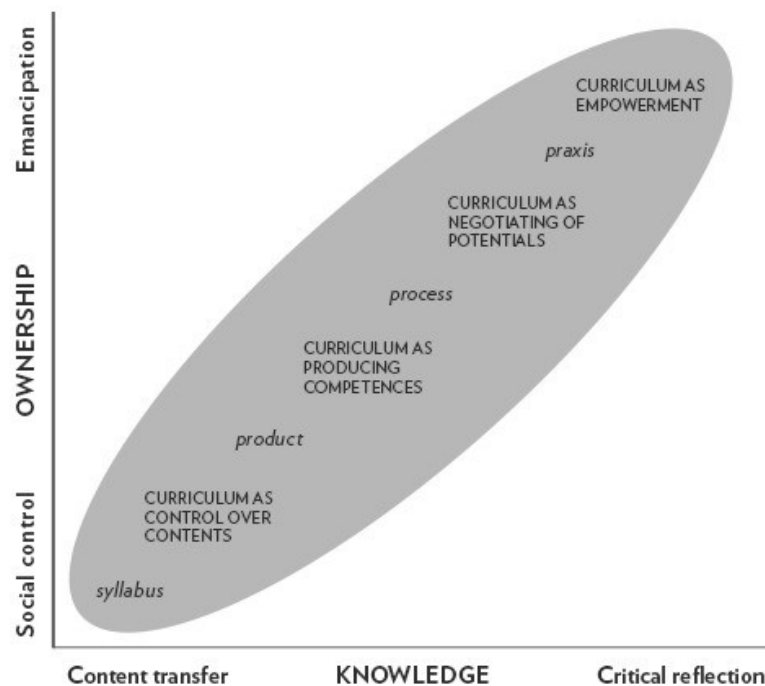


Figure 10.1 Framework for conceptualising curriculum approaches.

Fig.3: Framework of Conceptualising Curriculum Approaches

Relating Gandhiji's thoughts to conceptualizing the frameworks of curriculum approaches, we see that his thoughts on curriculum are spread into the domains of the enacted and the experienced curriculum as well. He encouraged a lot of evaluation, initiation and experiences that would build the praxis aspect of the teaching-learning process. Gandhiji's philosophy even today implores us as educationalists in Higher Education to reflectively look at ways in which the prescribed, enacted and experienced curriculum could be made emancipating, liberating and transforming. A curriculum which is experienced and dynamically rooted in the needs of the society would be flexible to accommodate the radical changes needed in the present times to help our youth overcome the economic, intellectual and emotional challenges posed by the COVID and post COVID world.

Teacher and Learner in Higher Education

Every individual is precious, and every learner is precious, every teacher is precious is the message that is communicated to those delve deeper into Gandhiji's writings. For him, education should help, prepare, nurture and lead the learner towards realising the only purpose of life, which is to realize the Atman. It is when the person is able to realise the presence of God not only in self but in everything around, this according to Gandhiji is the spiritual realization, the self-realization, which is the primary aim of life. Education is called to prepare the learner for this self-realization which is liberation (moksha). He emphasized the ancient Indian wisdom - *Sa vidya ya vimuktaya* (that which liberates knowledge) which should be the aim of education.

For this self-realization to be achieved which leads to liberation, Mahatma Gandhi laid down some rules for students. Morality and righteousness always have to be considered as an essential and undifferentiable part of education. He said that on one hand, students should gain education under the strict regimen of high morals, self-control and right thinking. On the other, they would also be expected to provide service to the society in general. According to Gandhiji, the purpose of education was not to teach a particular profession or occupation to the children, but to develop the 'full man/women' through teaching an occupation. This

includes their respect towards parent, teachers and elders and admiration of the young. It also includes following social traditions and constant cognizance of duties and responsibilities. Moral action, values and spiritualism were some of the critical features of Gandhiji's vision for the individual and society. This, for Gandhiji, comes through engagement with craft and working together in the community and for the community. It is through work that the learner learns self-discipline and values required for community living. This has been emphasized in the vision of the UGC and other statutory bodies that emphasize community engagements and internships. Like never before, there has been a growing consensus in need of these programs in University Education not only in India but around the globe. However, the challenge lies in enriching and equipping teachers and students to commit themselves to the philosophy and in the enacted and experienced curriculum space. One sees how Gandhian philosophy is seen in the understanding of learning through the lens of the constructivist and situated cognition view to learning. Rogoff (1995) identifies three interrelated perspectives on learning associated with three planes of analysis. The three planes are 'community,' 'interpersonal' and 'personal'; the view of the learning process associated with each of these is apprenticeship (where an individual participates in activities with others), guided participation (participation with others through observation and hands-on involvement) and participatory appropriation (refers to how individuals change through their involvement in or the other activity. It is about becoming rather than acquisition). This, too, is a testimony to how philosophical thoughts have guided different understandings and praxis.

For him, education was an instrument to bring equality in society, and he wanted every individual to be a part of this process. Rich or poor, every child deserved to be a part of this liberating process. As we go through the various writings of Gandhiji, we see that he constantly underscores the importance of education for the upliftment of the oppressed of the society, for the growth and development of the community as a whole, and thereby the building of the nation. This voice for 'Education for All' finally culminated in the Right to Education Act (2009).

How could this be attained? It could be attained only with a person of strong moral character who has experienced true education himself will be able to lead the students through the liberating experience called education. It will be attained

when a person who is aware of the teaching methodologies that support the emancipatory approaches to learning and teaching in higher education, as summarised in the diagram below. Therefore, the teacher should also be aware of different ways of leading the student through a liberating process and using student-centred approaches. Given below is the diagram of Entwistle, Noel (2007), who shows how the different approaches to teaching in higher education can lead a student to make movements in learning.

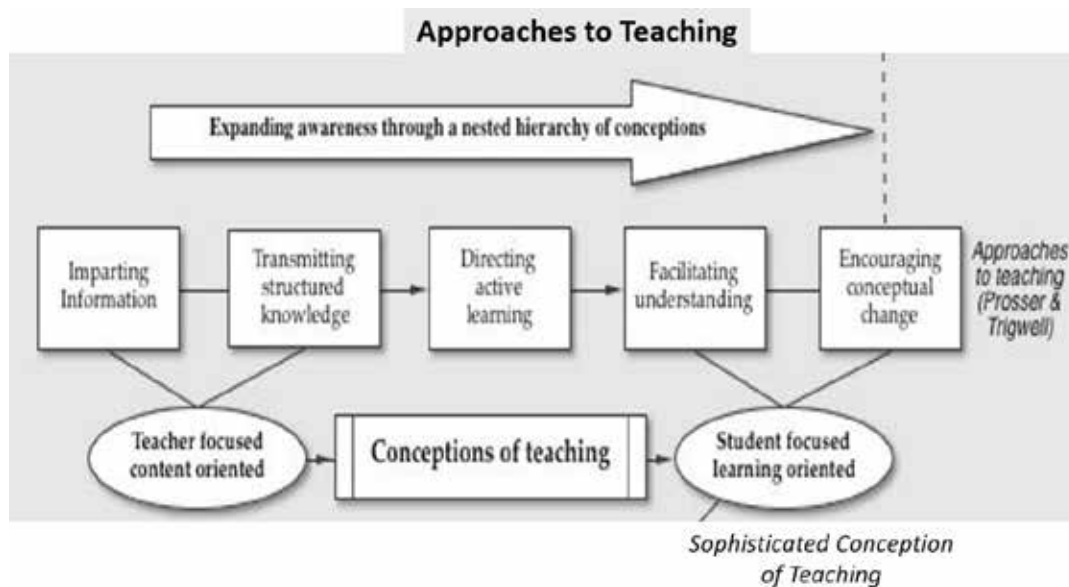


Fig. 4: Approaches to Teaching

During the present times of great uncertainty, conception of education as a process where a teacher is herself emancipated and leads her learners to liberation through education would help both teachers and learners find a direction to work towards and would help them to use education as a powerful enabler to tide over the times of crisis.

Conclusion

As the world leaders, as well as common men and women alike, are trying to make sense of ways in which the world is trying to rebuild itself from the grassroots after the unprecedented change that COVID 19 has brought on society, we would all agree that like never before, Gandhiji's vision of New Education based on values

of freedom, equality, justice and brotherhood is relevant and necessary. There is a loud cry for universities to create knowledge and train minds who would bring together material and human resources. The National Education Policy 2020 also reiterates the evolution of pedagogy towards education centred around experience, meaningful engagement and leading to gainful employment.

“While learning by rote can be beneficial in specific contexts, pedagogy must evolve to make education more experiential, holistic, integrated, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible, and, of course, enjoyable” (NEP, 2020).

They too reiterate that the curriculum must include basic arts, crafts, humanities, games, sports and fitness, languages, literature, culture, and values. These subjects are in addition to science and mathematics, to ensure the all-round development of the learners as well as to ensure that the process of education is fulfilling to the learner.

Finally, the watchwords are Education for character building, education for developing the ethical, rational individuals, Education for compassion, and care, while catering to the need for equipping them with the knowledge and skills for employment are what we are called to strive for ourselves and the ones that we are entrusted with.

Reiterating the words of The UN General Secretary António Guterres that we need solidarity more than ever. We belong to each other. We stand together, or we fall apart. These times are similar in many ways to the times of reconstruction of society post-independence. Great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, who were inspired by 'education,' were willing to give all that it takes to help the nation realize that freedom, equality, justice, and brotherhood are possible ideals through education. They believed that adversity is the prosperity of the educated.

Through this exercise of going back and forth in time, we see how education has built on the vision of the great thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi and we need to be assured of the fact that, these ideals **are there – can be found and used** as a

beacon as we reconstruct society based on togetherness in the COVID and post COVID world.

References:

Radhakrishnan, S. (2017). Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission Report on Higher Education. NMIMS Journal Of Economics And Public Policy, II, II.

Sanchayan Bhattacharjee. (n.d.). Increasing enrolment in higher education: A quantitative and qualitative challenge | ORF. Retrieved September 4, 2020, from <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/increasing-enrolment-in-higher-education-a-quantitative-and-qualitative-challenge-55883/>

Gandhi MK. Basic Education, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Gandhi. 1937.

Entwistle, Noel. (2007). 1 - Research into student learning and university teaching. BJEP Monograph Series II, Number 4 - Student Learning and University Teaching. 1. 1-18.

National Curriculum Framework 2005. (n.d.). The National Council of Educational Research and Training. Retrieved September 4, 2020, from <https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/nc-framework/nf2005-english.pdf>

Winch, Christopher, "Constructing Worthwhile Curriculum," *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 30(No. 1,1996), 45-56.

Robert McCormick and Patricia Murphy (2000). Curriculum The case for a focus on learning found in Ben-Peretz, M. (Ed.), Brown, S. (Ed.), Moon, B. (Ed.). (2000). *Routledge International Companion to Education*. London: Routledge, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203639061>

Annala, J., Lindén, J. & Mäkinen, M. (2016) Curriculum in higher education research. In J. Case & J. Huisman (Eds.) *Researching Higher Education. International perspectives on theory, policy and practice*. SHRE Society for Research into Higher Education & Routledge, 171-189. <https://doi:10.4324/9781315675404>

Rogoff, B. 1993. Observing sociocultural activity on three planes. In *Sociocultural studies of mind*, eds. J. V. Wertsch, P. del Río, and A. Alvarez, 139-163. New York: Cambridge University Press.

National Education Policy (2020). (n.d.) Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. Retrieved September 6, 2020, from https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

Book Review

Gandhi and Philosophy: On Theological Anti-Politics

edited by Shaj Mohan and Divya Dwivedi,
published by Bloomsbury Academic, NY, 2019

Amita Valmiki

Dept. of Philosophy,

Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Autonomous), Mumbai

amitavalmiki@gmail.com

“If Gandhi’s enormously powerful and successful strategy of non-violent resistance had met with a different enemy – Stalin’s Russia, Hitler’s Germany, even prewar Japan, instead of England, the outcome would not have been decolonization but massacre and submission.” – Hannah Arendt in her essay *On Violence* (Gangeya 2016, 79)

The book in *Introduction* (that carries on in the following chapter 1, *Hypophysics*) seems to be a dialogue between philosophers on Gandhi, mainly Western – Kant, Maurice Blanchot, Hannah Arendt (though in her brief remark on Gandhi in her essay *On Violence*), Deleuze, Derrida, Balibar, Badiou, Žižek and many others with regard to Gandhi. These thinkers have categorically and critically approached Gandhi’s reasonings on Non-violence, *Satyagraha* and *Swaraj*. But the seeming paradox in fact ennoble Gandhi’s stature to the readers. Gandhi was counter to speed; but, was in fact, perpetually dynamic in his thoughts. He had a persuasive weapon of non-violence and therefore Gandhi authenticated the law of *hypophysics*. As mentioned by the author(s), “Gandhi’s engagement with speed as the measure of value is outside the ambit of metaphysics, and yet, it is all around us in the talk about technological rapidity and disengagement with roots, and about the speed of production and violence.” (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 03-04) The concept of *hypophysics* in relation to violence, “For him (Gandhi), non-violence is indestructible and is heterogeneous to violence.” (Mohan and Dwivedi

2019, 05) So, was Gandhi anti-technology? Indeed, not in the sense of Heidegger's or Deleuze's anti mechanic approach; as Gandhi needed 'speed' for his thoughts to transfer as soon as possible towards imperialists and the masses. Therefore, Gandhi countering parliamentary democracy; never had systematized text of his thoughts as for him systematization is colonial in temperament. So where does the *hypophysics* fit in here? As the book mentions, "Gandhi wished to be a bridge between the occident and orient without belonging to either, and leading both to a new horizon, '*Hind Swaraj*' as World." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 11)

In *Hypophysics* the theological becomes pragmatic but without losing its authenticity and authority; this is with regard to the 'Law-Maker' (and therefore theological). Though physics is incorporated and is intrinsic part of *hypophysics*, it is still derived. Therefore, physics seems to be an aberration derived from hyper-aberration. (Is this what the author(s) mean?). Gandhi is clear; values are intrinsically right, de facto they need no evaluation; but the 'scalable' values need evaluation. Subsequently they remain mundane. This is reflected in Kant's transcendentalism. The chapter reflects on ancient Greek philosophies to substantiate this point. Gandhi also referenced to Greek philosophies. As Gandhi notes, "The law is itself the nature that it governs, 'an unalterable Law governing everything and every being that exists or lives.'" (*Young India*, 11 Oct. 1928, 340) Akeel Bilgrami's view on this upholds Gandhi's concept of 'work'; and further emphasizes Gandhi should not be taken to mean as harsh but is saturated with 'values'. Wherefore it is mentioned in the book, "In Gandhian *hypophysics*, the difference in nature is not of the quantities of the good but of the quantities of speed, the quantity according to which nature is distributed." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 25) Here the gamut of philosophers is taken into consideration. The question is what made Gandhi to overtake the West with the subcontinental thought? For this we move to the second chapter or chapter 2.

In *Scalology: Speed* (chapter 2) Gandhi ventures into distinguishing between 'nature' and 'values' to accredit the supremacy of the former though composed of the later. Departure of values from nature has led human being go astray. This turbulation has to be erased and we need to bring nature's togetherness with values. For Gandhi, human beings scale values in nature; construing a blunder

as the scaling is materialized, it makes human beings land up in a whirlpool. Compared to Charles Bonnet's *scala naturae*, human beings remains on top of the ladder, scaling from outside remaining intact within nature. De facto, "The Gandhian scalology is not a hierarchy such as that of the *scala naturae*." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 34) Aristotle and Kant (in *Critique of Pure Reason*) substantiate this notion by relating the scalology with two hypophysical terms, namely speed and place (not space or *aakasha*). But to get access to Gandhian ubiety, the Maker is 'nature', wherein movement is intrinsic within motionless Maker; hence speed-less; and 'all' is to be measured in speed. Gandhi is exceptional to resisting speed (than others who resisted speed). Taylor's *The Fallacy of Speed* validated Gandhian concept of *Hind Swaraj*. For Gandhi, in relation to speed and the Maker, "The good lies in the divine inertia." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 41). Speed also entered into politics and defined the segregating families as 'slow' and 'impatient' political parties. Therefore, he felt the need for 'trusteeship'. This is quite apparent in Gandhi-Nehru divide. In Gandhi's scalology, speed has to be curbed but not in moral realm as that is the realm of the Maker.

In chapter 3, *The Faculties I: Body*, Gandhi's theological anti-politics is furthered. For him, the body, mind and soul trio are parts of his *hypophysics*. And precisely this was depleted under British rule. This claim is substantiated by either in contradiction to or in cooperation to thinkers and poets alike. He accepted body as machine (to which he was anti); but then his question was, "can machines worship?" (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 55) Therefore, a metamorphosis is needed. As mentioned by him (in 'Key to Health', Complete Works of Mahatma Gandhi, 77, p. 2), "The human soul is a part of the universal spirit of God. When all our activity is directed towards the realization of this link, the body becomes a temple worthy for the spirit to live in." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 56) Therefore, Gandhi's *Nishkamakarma* is *Anasaktiyoga*, that where the body has to strive for purity by controlling bodily desires. The machine in control; purity transfers to the ascending ladder to unity. His adventures by experimenting *Satyagraha* and *Hind Swaraj* through individual body to corpus of body - that is ultimately the hypophysical state of soul, he termed it 'moksha'. In this chapter Gandhi's concept of aesthetics is explored which has been interpreted in terms of *hypophysics*. (Rodin, Michaelangelo or Sophocles' plays exploring *hypophysics* through body.)

So, “Individual essences cannot be obtained by abstracted predicates, but they are expressed only by individual internal milieus.” (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 69)

Chapter 4, moves from body to *The Faculties II: Mind and Soul* and arrives at the axiom that body and mind need to be controlled for realizing the potentials of the soul. Gandhi was quite enlightened for not being enlightened in relation to the extensive theories of mind in scriptures. Therefore, the industrial approach extracts a particular memory essence of an event in a conservative manner that denies flaunting the essence in the real hypophysical sense. “This industrial experience of essence is how we have come to gain our exhortations such as ‘Essentialism is violence,’” (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 73) which becomes the tag line in his quintessence of understanding mind; not an extraction but is incorporated in that which ‘is’. Therefore, Parel indicates Gandhi’s non-violence and satyagraha as part and parcel of the wider spectrum of *Purusharthas* (the goals of life). So, Gandhi talks of organic whole rather than geometric divide. Gandhi wrote (in *Gandhi’s Health Guide*, p. 16), ‘There is nothing closely connected with us as our body, but there is also nothing perhaps of which our ignorance is so profound or our indifference so complete.’ (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 76). From polynomia we enter in homology that is fairness to “the others”, those who are in fact not distinct from oneself. The idea of homology is translated in Gandhi’s ideas on education. As he noted in *Young India* (1928), “Among the many evils of foreign rule this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest.” (Kothari 2003, 83). The dialogical communication in Jaspers’ (Miron 2012, 118) sense has to be – between the body, mind and the soul; this keeps the individuality intact in relation to others. The resultant effect is ‘correlationism’. Gandhi’s idea of soul transgresses regional boundaries and brings about the various scriptural hermeneutics together to understand the concept of soul, be it Greek, Christian or Indian. In this case Ramanujacharya’s philosophy of Atman as part of Brahman with *swagat bheda* (internal distinctions) is reflected with double force. (Hiriyanna 2005, 175–201). As mentioned in the book, “The soul is the inner voice and the inner voice is derivative of the split within.” (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 86) And moves towards silencing the mind.

Coming to chapter 5, Dynamics: Active and Passive, the idea of *Übermensch* (Superman) from Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1893-5) in connection to history is expounded; Gandhi the history brings severance from the realm of nature that accommodates values governed by passivity, authoring history active initiating a walkout of values from human life engraving manifestation of violence. History does not dare to define nature per se; but the jugglery of active departure is the noteworthy aspect of history. In fact, "Gandhi opposed the two forces – active and passive – in the region of politics and of psychology." (Mohan and Dwivedi, 2019, pp. 91) Therefore, the pace of speed has to be slowed down especially in the matter of *Khadi/Swadeshi* as it is an anti-speed procedure to arrive to this material. Though Glyn Richards affirms that Gandhi drew from history the passive facet to move from violence to establish non-violence in the time that is through Truth (*Satya*). Speed finds correlation in action but Gandhi's "action" was an abstraction of passivity of history; therefore Nishkamakarma. This passivity is also the demand of politics of purity. Here language plays a pivotal role with its different connotations. While reading this part of the book, I wasn't surprised as to why Gandhi was so influenced by Jaina theory of *Syadavada* (the doctrine that all judgments are 'contextually speaking' and therefore 'conditional') and Jaina metaphysics in relation to matter; that actions can associate itself to intrinsically 'righteousness nature' or can go antagonistic to it. Thus, homology has to be perpetuated. Thence keeping in mind, the distinction between the active and passive force, an individual has to move in the realm where s/he 'belongs'. "The ideal passive resister will travel to all locations by foot, for such a journey, irrespective of the location, would be pilgrimage. The passive resister is the pilgrim of the zero." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 110).

In chapter 6, *The Law of the Maker*, Gandhi strongly upheld the 'law of the Maker'; but found the lawyer's profession despicable. As in lawyer's profession, law is interpreted in two ways, one the law of sanity and other the law by itself. There are multitudes of laws, broadly divided into two, law of human beings and law of the Maker which he himself cannot break. Again, the passivity in scalology of values permits to disobey man-made laws as one has mastered the art of obedience to the law. The parallel can be drawn in Kant's philosophy. Accordingly, a 'rule' has to be distinguished from the 'law'. The corpus of law for Gandhi is much wider

than thought of; the laws of science, machines, *hypophysics*, humanities, private/individual law or the Maker's – it is wide spectrum. Consequently, the need for 'passive resister' who complies with the laws of the Maker and therefore becomes worthwhile. "Gandhi's compass, astrolabe, and the sextant are obedient to the spiritual or hypophysical laws, which are opposed to the purely physical." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, pp. 123) So manmade laws have to be attuned with the Maker's law as the laws of the Maker are justified rationally on theological forefront. The uniqueness in Gandhi with regard to law was to synthesize the teleology and deontology; broadly termed as 'calypsology'. The chapter ends with: "In order to understand the supreme law expressed in a proportional articulation – that is in proportion to the means there will be ends – which ultimately concerns the relation between Truth as end and non-violence as means, we need to attend to Gandhi's Truth." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 134).

Chapter 7, Truth and Will, 'truth' is translated in various walks of human life; that finds manifestation in Gandhi's "My Experiments with Truth". Truth finds expression in the concept of calypsology. The chapter draws parallels between Gandhi's truth with Socrates' or Kierkegaard's, (where I strongly missed Jaina exposition of 'truth') as suffering. And 'truth' and 'will' as one find in Gandhi is also with Nietzsche and Alan Badiou. And the concept of 'subjectivity as expounded by them in relation to 'truth' and 'will' remain almost same. For Gandhi taking somewhat different stance than Nietzsche, "The many rules of truth form the single nexus of Sovereign Truth." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 140). Gandhi tried to create a balance between the governs of head with heart; this is a platitude with regard to his stand in Congress party from which Nehru deviated, especially with Gandhi's idea of Hind Swaraj and *Rama Rajya*. The author(s) write Truth means end; I reiterate what I said prior to this chapter, Gandhi's teleos is deontology. If this is an advantage in Gandhi, it is equally a deterioration when the same ideology gives him allowance to accept caste and racial discrimination. "For Gandhi, the actions through which men move away from their family obligations, clan rules, and social codes are measures taken by men against the Maker, who had set the speeds and occupations for each man." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 148-9) But to sum up the chapter the author(s) regard 'truth' and 'will' combo seek the resultant effect in action as non-violence.

Chapter 8, *Violence and Resistance* is in continuation with the former chapter. Comparing with Foucault, Gandhi's *non-violence and resistance* is not outside the domain of political structure. Resistance is not without 'force'. Resistance is always in relation or multiplication to resistance. (*Hypophysics* intended here). So, repression is in correlation with resistance and vice versa. For Gandhi resistance is tenacious action antinomy to any event. Therefore, passive resistance can be translated into non-violent resistance and active resistance its opposite as it is against the Maker's law. Courage is understood by Gandhi in Platonic sense that plays a vital role in resistance. Gandhi's non-violent resistance is distinct from others as he remains in and out of politics holding himself responsible for his actions, completely cloaked in Platonic virtue of 'temperance' and 'courage'. Therefore, even in non-violent resistance Gandhi displays *hypophysics* and therefore, calypsology. The views of Foucault, Benjamin and Arendt are taken in comparative version. The march towards zero continues.

In chapter 9, *Critical Nation*, the author(s) mention, "Gandhi's critical nation is the final home of the most anti-political project, which for Arendt is death...." (Mohan and Dwivedi 2019, 187). Things of any kind and any being have to be in conformity with the law of nature to be called healthy. Thence, the passive resister needs to be awakened all the time for means and end (in calypsology) to materialize. As for Maurice Blanchot, it is in dissolution of the self to zero through practice of nonviolence. Again, the teleos which for Gandhi remains, is to establish a non-violent ontological status for all, everywhere. And since Gandhi was all for the Maker's law, he was not outspoken to eradicate certain Western ideas of social evil in India as he considered the Maker's law designed to befit a certain region; may be this made him reject inter-dinning or cultural racism as things are structured in nature which one need not violate. Hence Gandhi's was a radical politics. The paradoxes in Gandhi are inseparable, and still neither of the fallacies committed – contradiction or tautology. He confessed he is not a politician but in the domain of politics with which he struggles he would like to be left alone. The author(s) elaborates Gandhi's non-political politics with Pierre Clastres, an anthropologist and an anarchist.

The *Salt March* is an example of Gandhi's violating act in the domain of non-violence.

Therefore, primitive societies synchronize with Gandhi's 'critical nation' concept. Gandhi's theological non-politics is now challenging all manmade laws, and this is what the Maker's Law demands. Anthony Parel redefines celibacy as an important element of *Purusharthas* from Gandhian perspective. Gandhi's Satyagraha is not political movement but a passive movement of penance and baptism. But the movement is always marked as political movement. De facto reassessment is must.

The last chapter 10, *Conclusion: Anastasis*, in Gandhian epoch, in the twentieth century, is the epoch of criticalization. (I intentionally did not mention about the forward written for this book by Jean-Luc Nancy as it seemed to me meaningful now). As Nancy speaks of the ambiguity of words, their meaning in West need to be reinterpreted in the Indian sub-continent through the kaleidoscope of hermeneutics. For instance, the word: 'humanism'. The frantic speed that needed to be curbed probably was overlooked by West; that need to be revisited through Gandhian lenses as the West is feeling now. So, the need for *hypophysics* is felt seriously. The era of criticism continues as it is part of nature.

So, the process of *anastasis* continues.

The book brings Gandhi in proximity to physics, consequently taking him to a primordial level. By way of physics and a level higher, *hypophysics*, Gandhi is found to be all pervasive. The distinct ingredient of the book remained – Gandhi in constant conversation with Western thinkers; where the precept and praxis demarcation is overcome; and throughout the book he is in dialogical communication, not just at local or national level, but at global level. Thereupon Gandhi is established as a philosopher through rigorous dialogue.

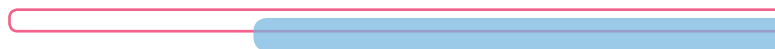
References:

Hiriyanna, M. 2005. *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, New Delhi

Kothari, Rita. 2003. *Translating India*. Routledge, NY

Miron, Ronny. 2012. *Karl Jaspers. From Selfhood to Being*. Rodopi, Netherlands

Mukherji, Gangeya. 2016. *Gandhi and Tagore: Politics, Truth and Conscience*. Routledge, NY



CONTRIBUTORS' BIONOTES

Contributors

Nikhil Katara is the founder and artistic director of the Readings in the Shed. He has co-written and directed the play *The Bose Legacy Inked Through Letters*. As a writer he started his journey in 2011, with his own production titled “The Unveiling”, a science fiction drama. It won much appreciation for its scientific engagement and philosophical themes. To strengthen his critical thinking, he did his Masters in Arts in Philosophy at the University of Mumbai. He conducts a reading club where writers, philosophers and directors in the city of Mumbai critique literature on a weekly basis. He has written book reviews and opinion articles in the *One India One People* magazine and the *Free Press Journal*. He wrote the play, *Yatagarasu* which opened at the Prithvi theatre in June 2018. He has directed twenty performances at Readings in the Shed.

Kirti Nakhare is Assistant Professor in English, heading the Department of Business Communication, S.I.W.S. College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai. She completed her doctoral research from the Department of English, University of Mumbai in December 2019. Her areas of interest include, analysis of traditional versions of the epics, subaltern theory and comparative mythology. Her interest in comparative mythology spurred her on to pursue and successfully complete the post graduate diploma in Comparative Mythology offered by the Department of Sanskrit, University of Mumbai. She successfully pursued and completed the online course on Epics offered by the Oxford Centre of Hindu Studies. She has several publications to her credit and has presented papers at national and international conferences. Besides this, she participated in the OER project of University of Mumbai in association with Common Wealth Asia to create content on soft skills in 2010. She received the University of Mumbai’s research grant for working on a Minor Research Project for the year 2010-11, a comparison between African and Indian Children’s Literature was undertaken as part of the project. She created content for the African Literature Module of the UGC’S E-PG Pathshala project. She is member of The Asiatic Society, Mumbai. Along with teaching, she is interested in travelling and is trained in Hindustani Classical Music.

Madhavi Nikam is Associate Professor at the PG Department of English, R. K. Talreja College, Ulhasnagar, Thane, Mumbai. She is a recognized research guide for Ph.D in English, University of Mumbai and Nine (09) of her students have been successfully awarded with the Ph.D degree. Apart from being a member of the Senate of the University of Mumbai (from 2010–2015), she has been actively involved into the academics and administration as well. Presently, as a member of the Academic Council (2017– 2022) of the University of Mumbai, she is representing the teaching fraternity. Dr. Nikam was the editor of two international Journals, *Literary Insight* and *Contemporary Discourse*. Her contribution to research continues as the Secretary of Higher Education & Research Society, Navi Mumbai. She has organised many international and national conferences and seminars till date. Her work has been recognised with awards and accolades. She has published many research articles at national and international levels.

Indu Prakash Pandey is based in Schwalbach, Germany since 1967, regularly spends several months in India. Born 1924 in Uttar Pradesh, he was jailed during 'Quit India' movement 1942. He completed his M.A. (Hindi) from the University of Allahabad and D.Lit. at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands. After serving as the Head of the Hindi department at Elphinstone College Mumbai for 14 years, he taught Hindi, Hindi Literature, Indian Culture and Philosophy at South Asia Institute, Heidelberg (Germany) and the University of California, Berkeley (USA). Thereafter, he was sent on deputation by the Cultural Ministry of India for two years to teach Hindi at the University of Bucharest (Romania). He also held guest lectures on Hindi language and literature at the University of Beijing (China). He taught at Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University Frankfurt (Germany) for 22 years. He has been a former member of the Indian Central Board of Film Censor and the committee selecting the best film for the President's Award. He founded the Indian Cultural Institute Frankfurt and was the long-serving head of the same. Dr. Pandey has published about 25 books in Hindi, English and German as well as translations from Hindi into German; Wrote a Hindi textbook for Romanian students and many books on Hindi Literature and Folklore.

Arushi Sharma is Assistant Professor in the department of English, University of Mumbai. She is a guest faculty in the department of English, IDOL, University of Mumbai. She also works as a trainer for functional proficiency and professional proficiency courses conducted by the department of English, University of Mumbai. She has completed her M.Phil., from the department of English, University

of Jammu, J & K. She is a Doctoral Scholar in the department of English, University of Mumbai. Her research is on Native Americans as a post-colonial subject. She explores various aspects of sensitivity of their lives and the saga of their turmoil's after the invasion of Europeans. She has presented papers at national and international conferences and has publications to her credit. She has participated in National Webinar as a resource person conducted by Ratnagiri sub center, University of Mumbai. She was invited as a resource person in International Students' Conference organised by department of English, University of Mumbai. She has contributed in creating study material on American literature for SYBA students, IDOL, University of Mumbai. In addition to this, she is a poet too.

Uday Narayana Singh is an expert in Linguistics, Culture Studies, Translation and Creative Writing. He is currently the Dean, Faculty of Arts, Amity University Haryana and a Chair-Professor. He was the Director of CIL, Mysore and Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. Singh had set up the National Translation Mission and the Linguistic Data Consortium for Govt of India at Mysore and Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies (CALTS) at Hyderabad. He taught at Hyderabad (1987-2000), Visva-Bharati (2000-2009), University of Delhi (1985-87), South Gujarat (1981-85) and in the MSU-Baroda (1979-81). With seven collections of poems in Maithili and Bangla, six books of literary essay, besides twelve plays in Maithili – he had translated/edited 16 books and published 250 research papers. He also designed and created 545 documentaries on language, literature and culture of Bangla, Tamil, Kannada and Marathi. A poet-invitee at the Frankfurt Book Fair (2006), London Book Fair (2009), and Leader of Cultural Delegation of Writers to China (2007), he visited and lectured in Australia, Andorra, Bangladesh, Belgium, Caribbean Islands, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, UK and USA, and received several grants, awards and honors. He received many awards and honors, including the coveted Sahitya Akademi Award 2017 for poetry.

Sybil Thomas is Professor, Department of Education, University of Mumbai has been in the field of teacher education for over 20 years with a short stint of administrative experience as Principal of the St. Xavier's Institute of Education. She began her career in Higher Education by working with the Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension, University of Mumbai. Then she worked with KJ Somaiya College of Education Training and Research for 9 years

and then Joined the Department of Education University of Mumbai in 2009. She is passionate about seeing how teacher education evolves to fulfil the objectives of Higher Education. Using mixed method as an approach to research, she would like to see how teachers and students alike take part in the process of knowledge generation for the service and transformation of society. Her recent research project is Understanding the Concept of Teaching and Learning in Teacher Education Institutions in Mumbai as a co investigator with a faculty from TISS funded by the Azim Premji Foundation University

Bhagyashree Varma is the Associate Professor in the Department of English, University of Mumbai. Her doctorate thesis was on “Autobiographies’ by Women Writers”. She is a creative writer, a translator and has a book of poems published in Marathi along with a few translations in short fiction, from Marathi to English. Varma has published few books which include Amrita Pritam – Life as Literature and Woman and Self. Her publications include research papers on women authors like Kamala Das, Mahesweta Devi, Taslima Nasreen, Meena Kandaswamy and the writers like Mohan Rakesh, Harivanshrai Bachchan and Mahesh Dattani. Recently Varma has been translating the writings of Deepti Naval and has published an interview with the actress poet in Muse Indian Online.

Amita Valmiki is Associate Professor and Head, Department of Philosophy, Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Autonomous) and Visiting Faculty at Department of Philosophy, University of Mumbai. She was member of Board of Studies in Logic and Philosophy, University of Mumbai. Her Ph.D. thesis was on ‘Man, Religion and Society’ (with special reference to mysticism). She has presented papers at various conferences, seminars and colloquiums at national and international level. She has been awarded twice post-doctoral research fellowship at International Centre for Philosophy, Bonn University and has delivered lectures at Department of Philosophy and Religious Theories at Bonn University, Germany. She has authored a book titled Mystical Worlds: Social, Spiritual and Secular (2019) and co-edited a book on 100 Years of Indian Cinema: Issues and Challenges in Retrospection. She has published more than 50 articles in various books and in national and international journals. She has co-organized national and international conferences and colloquia. Her special areas of interest include ethics, theistic existentialism, philosophy of religion, mysticism and philosophy of film.

Style Guide

Citation Style: Author-Date Referencing System of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chapter 15, 17th edition)

Authors should adopt the in-text parenthetical Author-Date citation system from Chapter 15 of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (17th edition).

Some examples are listed below

1) BOOKS

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

Book references should be listed at the end of the paper as “Works Cited” in alphabetical order.

Single Author

Carson, Rachel. 2002. *Silent Spring*. New York: HMH Books.

Dual Authors

Adorno, Theodor, and Max Horkheimer. 1997. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. London: Verso.

Multiple Authors

Berkman, Alexander, Henry Bauer, and Carl Nold. 2011. *Prison Blossoms: Anarchist Voices from the American Past*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Anthologies

Petra Ramet, Sabrina, ed. 1993. *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*. New York: Cambridge University Press

IN-TEXT CITATION:

References to the specific pages of the books should be made in parenthesis within the text as follows:

(Carson 2002, 15)

(Adorno and Horkheimer 1997, 23)

(Berkman, Bauer, and Nold 2011, 100-102)

(Sabrina 1993, 122-135)

Please refer to 15.40–45 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further details.

2) CHAPTERS FROM ANTHOLOGIES

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

Chapters should be listed in “Works Cited” in alphabetical order as follows:

Single Author

Dunstan, John. 1993. “Soviet schools, atheism and religion.” In *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*, edited by Sabrina Petra Ramet, 158–86. New York: Cambridge University Press

Multiple Authors

Kinlger, Samuel A., and Paul H. De Vries. 1993. “The Ten Commandments as values in Soviet people’s consciousness.” In *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*, edited by Sabrina Petra Ramet, 187–205. New York: Cambridge University Press

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Dunstan 1993, 158–86)

(Kingler and De Vries 1993, 190)

Please see 15.36 and 15.42 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further details.

3) E-BOOK

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

List should follow alphabetical order. The URL or the name of the database should be included in the reference list. Titles of chapters can be used instead of page numbers.

Borel, Brooke. 2016. *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ProQuest Ebrary.

Hodgkin, Thomas. 1897. *Theodoric the Goth: The Barbarian Champion of Civilisation*. New York: Knickerbocker Press. Project Gutenberg.
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/20063/20063-h/20063-h.htm>

Maalouf, Amin. 1991. *The Gardens of Light*. Hachette Digital. Kindle.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Borel 2016, 92)

(Hodgkin 1897, chap. 7)

(Maalouf 1991, chap. 3)

4) JOURNAL ARTICLE**REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:**

List should follow alphabetical order and mention the page range of the published article. The URL or name of the database should be included for online articles referenced.

Anheier, Helmut K., Jurgen Gerhards, and Frank P. Romo. 1995. "Forms of Capital and Social Structure in Cultural Fields: Examining Bourdieu's Social Topography." *American Journal of Sociology* 100, no. 4 (January): 859–903.

Ayers, Lewis. 2000. "John Caputo and the 'Faith' of Soft-Postmodernism." *Irish Theological Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (March): 13–31.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/002114000006500102>

Dawson, Doyne. 2002. "The Marriage of Marx and Darwin?" *History and Theory* 41, no. 1 (February): 43–59.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

Specific page numbers must be included for the parenthetical references within texts
(Anheier, Gerhards, and Romo 1995, 864)
(Ayers 2000, 25-31)
(Dawson 2002, 47-57)

For further details please see 15.46–49 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

5) NEWS OR MAGAZINE ARTICLE**REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:**

List should follow alphabetical order and need not mention the page numbers or range. The URL or name of the database should be included for online articles referenced.

Hitchens, Christopher. 1996. "Steal This Article." *Vanity Fair*, May 13, 1996
<https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/1996/05/christopher-hitchens-plagiarism-musings>

Khan, Saeed. 2020. "1918 Spanish Flu cure ordered by doctors was contraindicated in Gandhiji's Principles". *Times of India*, April 14, 2020.

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/75130706.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

Klein, Ezra. 2020. "Elizabeth Warren has a plan for this too." *Vox*, April 6, 2020.
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/4/6/21207338/elizabeth-warren-coronavirus-covid-19-recession-depression-presidency-trump>.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Hitchens 1996)

(Khan 2020)

(Klein 2020)

See 15.49 (newspapers and magazines) and 15.51 (blogs) in *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further details

6) BOOK REVIEW

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

Methven, Steven. 2019. "Parricide: On Irad Kimhi's Thinking and Being." Review of *Thinking and Being*, by Irad Kimhi. *The Point Magazine*, October 8, 2019

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Methven 2019)

7) INTERVIEW

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

West, Cornel. 2019. "Cornel West on Bernie, Trump, and Racism." Interview by Mehdi Hassan. *Deconstructed*, The Intercept, March 7, 2019.
<https://theintercept.com/2019/03/07/cornel-west-on-bernie-trump-and-racism/>

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(West 2019)

8) THESIS AND DISSERTATION

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

Rustom, Mohammed. 2009. "Quranic Exegesis in Later Islamic Philosophy: Mulla Sadra's *Tafsir Surat al-Fatiha*." PhD diss., University of Toronto.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Rustom 2009, 68-85)

9) WEBSITE CONTENT

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

Website content can be restricted to in-text citation as follows: “As of May 1, 2017, Yale’s home page listed . . .”. But it can also be listed in the reference list alphabetically as follows. The date of access can be mentioned if the date of publication is not available.

Anthony Appiah, Kwame. 2014. “Is Religion Good or Bad?” Filmed May 2014 at TEDSalon, New York.

https://www.ted.com/talks/kwame_anthony_appiah_is_religion_good_or_bad_this_is_a_trick_question

Yale University. n.d. “About Yale: Yale Facts.” Accessed May 1, 2017.

<https://www.yale.edu/about-yale/yale-facts>.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Anthony Appiah 2014)

(Yale University, n.d.)

For more examples, see 15.50–52 in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. For multimedia, including live performances, see 15.57.

9) SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

Social media content can be restricted to in-text citation without being mentioned in the reference list as follows:

Conan O’Brien’s tweet was characteristically deadpan: “In honor of Earth Day, I’m recycling my tweets” (@ConanOBrien, April 22, 2015).

It could also be cited formally by being included in the reference list as follows:

Chicago Manual of Style. 2015. “Is the world ready for singular they? We thought so back in 1993.” Facebook, April 17, 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoManual/posts/10152906193679151>.

Souza, Pete (@petesouza). 2016. “President Obama bids farewell to President Xi of China at the conclusion of the Nuclear Security Summit.” Instagram photo, April 1, 2016.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BDrmfXTtNCt/>.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Chicago Manual of Style 2015)

(Souza 2016)

9) PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

REFERENCE LIST ENTRY:

The expression “personal communication” covers email, phone text messages and social media (such as Facebook and WhatsApp) messages. These are typically cited in parenthetical in-text citation and are not mentioned in the reference list.

IN-TEXT CITATION:

(Sam Gomez, Facebook message to author, August 1, 2017)

Notes should preferably be listed as endnotes, followed by a works cited/references column.

Office of the Dean of Humanities, University of
Mumbai, Ambedkar Bhavan, Kalina Campus,
Vidyanagari, Mumbai-400098

© No part of Sambhāṣan / संभाषण a
free open access peer-reviewed
bilingual interdisciplinary journal
can be reproduced without prior
permission.

All contributions should be electronically sent to the following emails:
editor.sambhashan@mu.ac.in with a cc to **coeditor.sambhashan@mu.ac.in**