

GANDHI AND CONTEMPORARY IDEOLOGIES

Feminism : Rise and Development of the Concept

Feminists of the second wave adopted as their motto “the personal is political”. In so being, they challenged women’s exclusion from the public world of politics and economics, while reintroducing the personal experience of being female into the political discourse of the day (Evans, 1997, p.120). These feminists, in effect, disrupted the public/private dichotomy, a long held notion in western political thought that politics is the purview of a public male sphere. While “the personal is political” may have been the best known adage of second wave feminism, it was not the only major dualistic arrangement these feminists challenged as underlying sexual hierarchy in western thought. The culture/nature dichotomy, for example, was challenged also, albeit by fewer feminists. They recognized that this dualism, too, played a major role in constructing gender in a way so as to distort or exclude women.

Today many feminists believe they are constructing a third wave of feminism. This iteration of feminism, having the advantage of second wave’s theories, is developing a broader conceptual framework with certain important characteristics in common. Primary among third wave characteristics is the deconstruction of the notion of duality itself (Arneil 1999, Plumwood 1992). Further, unlike the general tendency among many, especially early second wave feminists who, while having different theories or explanations for women’s oppression, tended to work within foundational western political theories such as liberalism or socialism (Jaggar and Rothenberg, 1984), the perspective of third wave feminism “begins with women’s point of view, notably the diversity and difference in perspectives

among women". In reestablishing embodiment, third wave feminism, generally, begins to reweave the specific duality between nature and culture.

In the nature/culture dualism man was seen as representing culture, and needing to be unconstrained by and to have domination over natural processes, both of a nonhuman nature and of human embodiment. Men were identified with disembodied characteristics such as order, freedom, light, and reason, which were seen as better than, and in opposition to, women's allegedly more "natural" and embodied characteristics such as disorder, physical necessity, The use of the term "man" cannot be construed as generic here. The subtext is the association of women with nature, as women's embodiment generally, given its reproductive capacity, is harder to deny than men's. Early modern philosophers developing classical liberalism (e.g., Hobbes and Locke) continued the association of men with culture and women with nature. Further, in concurrence with the then new and highly proclaimed scientific method, early modern philosophers broadened the concept of culture to include an even more enlarged (Arneil 1999). This period was also marked by the rise of capitalism and rapidly increasing colonization in which the view of the colonized and enslaved people as "other" begins to intersect more thoroughly with the perceived "otherness" of women and nature. Man's (i.e., white, western and middle or upper class men) freedom and happiness, in both these ancient and modern western viewpoints, depended on an ongoing process of emancipation from nature, both human embodiment and the natural environment. The assumption by third wave feminism that the understandings of the relative importance of things in feminism should usually begin with women's situated and embodied points of view (Arneil 1999, Stone-Mediator 1998), begins to reweave the culture/nature duality, whose political philosophy in the west is largely based on notions of disembodiment.

Significant among the feminisms considered third wave today are generational/youth feminism, post-colonial feminism and eco-feminism. The patten of working to reweave culture and nature is woven throughout these feminisms. Youth or generational feminists, using each other's personal experiences as young women in a gendered society as resources, focuses on how young women's lives, from a multiplicity of social locations, interact with feminism today (Findlen 1995; Walker 1995). Post-colonial feminists regard the continuing ill effects of our colonial history as a focus for contemporary feminism (Norayan and Harding 1998). Still others consider eco-feminism important which, in addition to developing theory from the embodied perspectives of its participants, extends its values of diversity and interconnectedness to other species and the natural world, as integral to feminism today (Diamond and Orenstein 1990, Plumwood 1992).

Two of the feminisms discussed e.g. post-colonial feminism and eco-feminism, have roots in second wave feminism, illustrating how the movement between second and third wave feminism is an uneven one. In post-colonial feminism, earlier works by scholars such as Gloria Anzaldua (1987) and Chjandra Talpade Mohanty (1986), for example, called for the recognition of what feminism meant to women in non-Western cultures. Today, however, the inter-relationship of the local and the global, particularly the negative effects of the increasing globalization of capital on women and their children, is more evident in post-colonial feminism (O'Connell et 1995).

Eco-feminism, in the United States, originated during the second wave of feminism as (mostly) women in the peace movement began to perceive the inter-relationships of militarism, sexism, racism, classis and environmental damage (Sturgeon,1997, p.27). The theorizing of how this environmental damage was related to women's oppression and the oppression of other people, together with theorizing from the perspectives of the women involved, including

women in the so-called developing world (e.g., Diamond and Orenstein 1990 and Shiva 1989), became evident during the time period seen as the emergence of third wave feminism, the late 1980's and the 1990's (Arneil 1998). These approaches, however, were also taken earlier by Leonie Caldecott and Stephanie Leland (1983).

The evolution to a Third Wave Feminism:-

Second wave feminism has had considerable impact on women's lives, due, in no small part, to the various public policies these feminists brought about. While the public/private dichotomy was significant to the political analysis of earlier second wave feminists, these feminists, with the exception of radical feminists, most often developed their explanation from well established western political theories such as liberalism, Marxism, Socialism and Psychoanalytical theory. Each of these different forms of feminism tended to develop its own ideas about how to break through the oppression of women in the private sphere. Their analysis was done both by using and critiquing their perspective foundational theory.

The feminist theories prominent in the earlier second wave also tended to assume a universalization of their experiences as "women's" experience (Malson et al. 1989, Plumwood 1992). For example, liberal and socialist feminists, in making the argument that women needed to be accorded the same legal or economic treatment in society that men are accorded, were arguing that there is no difference between women and men, other than the superficial one of having been treated differently. Radical feminists, seeing women's nature as different from (and usually better than) men's, argued that women are essentially different from men and that women's differences needed to be accommodated in society just as men's had been. Nevertheless, in both of these arguments, the notion of a unified subject is implicit, in the first as a universal human nature and in the second as a universal female nature.

As the second wave of feminism progressed, however, lesbians, women of color, and third world women began asserting their voices into the debate, arguing that their social locations provided them with different vantage points and different conceptions of themselves other than those being articulated by white, middle class feminists (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990, p.33). In this regard some women of color authors, such as Gloria Anzaldua (1981) and Bell Hooks (1984), are also examples, of theorizing from embodiment, during this period, to call attention to the intersectionalist of racism and heterocism with sexism, further illustrating the unevenness in the movement of second wave feminism into third wave feminism.

Demands from women color and/or third-world women that the differences among women occupying different social locations be acknowledged, facilitated recognizing the universalism inherent in both the feminist arguments for equality and for difference (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990). As a result, feminists became more likely to address the inter-sectionalist of various "isms" with sexism. As feminists increasingly took account of the differences that exist among women, many feminists also moved from the tenets of modernism with its notion of a unified subject, that is, a universal (female) nature, to several post-modern tenets, especially the notion of a multiple and socially construed subject (Malson, 1989). Third wave feminism emerged in the late 1980s and 1990s with the development of new considerations and emphases in feminism (Arneil, 1999). In addition to the recognition of the diversity of the subject women and their differing, often inter-related oppressions, feminists recognized other concerns and as a result, developed new emphases. Among these features is the tendency to move away from foundational theoretical schools, often accompanied by a loss of faith in the ability of established socio-political theories to account for women's situations. Third wave feminism, instead, thoughtfully selects from among the tenets of different foundational theories while expanding on an emphasis developed in the second wave of adding women's

perspectives to establish explanations. Like some authors in later second wave feminism, the third wave feminists work to make women's situated embodied perspectives "the" explanations while embracing the diversity and differences in perspectives among women. Third wave feminism, in particular, refutes dualistic thinking in general --- thinking that divides the world into hierarchical dichotomies with one aspect regarded as superior and the "other" regarded inferior, recognizing instead the existence of multiplicities. Today feminists commonly speak to the inter-sectionalist of various "isms" with sexism (Cohn et al 1997), recognize the social constructedness of categories (Malson et. al. 1989), question the related notions of dualism and hierarchy (Plumwood 1992), and work to further develop theories from women's situated and embodied perspectives (Arneil 1999).

Third wave is seen as an evolution, albeit a less than even one, in feminist thought generally, not a break from the past. While second wave worked for the need to include women in the public sphere, together with the need to recognize the private concerns merited public attention and later second wave began to work for a general recognition of the interrelatedness of class, race and heterosexism with sexism, third wave responds to additional concerns, some significant to its historical times. Among these problems is the fundamentalist backlash to the women's movement, the so-called "post-feminist" feminism, cultural sexualization of girls, traditional sex and gender categorization, an increasingly globalizing economy, with its accompanying "mal-development" projects, particularly their disproportionate effects on women and children, and increasingly precarious environmental problems. To no small extent, the higher educational opportunities allowed to women by second wave feminists' policymaking and the subsequent theorizing many of these women undertook, together with the significant contribution of women of color and/or third-world women's challenges, have contributed to the

expansion of feminist theory, enabling third-wave feminists' awareness of the concerns they respond to.

Three examples of feminism... generational feminism, post-colonial feminism and eco-feminism... in their present form, these feminisms illustrate many of the current expressions of third-wave feminism, particularly the reweaving of the nature/culture duality by theorizing from embodiment.

Western feminism generally has become increasingly interested in post colonial feminism. In the United States, this can be seen in the occurrence of several special issues of feminist journals featuring postcolonial feminism”(Hypatia,1995,1998,2001). Further examples can be seen in events such as the recent formation, by an international group of women's studies journal editors, of a “Feminist Knowledge Network to facilitate communication, including the printing of articles from one another's journals (Hall, 2003, p.132). The roots of postcolonial feminism extend back into second wave feminism. Gloria Anzaldua, bell hooks, Chandra Talpade Mohanty are examples of women calling for the recognition of the differing meanings for feminism in non western cultures, in the past.

Post colonial feminism today also operates more extensively across geographical and intellectual borders. Intellectually, it unsettles familiar and often comfortable frame works (Narayan, 1998, Pp.1-6). Paralleling the postmodern critique of universal knowledge claims , it criticizes the western scientific paradigm for its assertions of universality, arguing that its knowledge claims are simply knowledge's that have been developed by one group of people at one historical time”(Harding,1998,pp.146-167).

Theoretically, post colonial feminism works to extend the analysis of the intersection of Sexism and multicultural identity formation, to include the negative effects of Western Colonialism that still exist today (Scutte,1998, p.65).

Communication and Feminist Theory in North South Contexts, Part III, p. 65. The “Post” in Post colonialism, does not indicate that colonialism is over but, rather, that colonial legacies continue to exist. More recent phenomena the capitalist global economy, development projects in the southern Hemisphere, and events such as environmental racism in the United States, are viewed, in the post colonial discourse, as neocolonial. They can be seen as “a continuation of the European expansion begun in 1492” (Harding, 1998, p.154).The capitalist global economy and its impacts are now of crucial importance to postcolonial feminists. These feminists alert us to the fact that in the so called developing world, women and their children, in particular, are severely affected by insufficient food, the rising cost of living, declining services, and eroding economic and environmental conditions. These adverse neocolonial impacts often spawn protests by third-world women (Rocheleau, 1996). Some of the more familiar examples are in environmental and ecological movements.

Mahatma Gandhi and Feminism:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was one of the few in his generation who recognized the central role of women in society. Gandhi perceived women as playing a distinct but nevertheless a complementary role to men. While he argued against stereotyping them as weak and inferior and while he condemned child marriage, dowry and the observance of Purdah (Seclusion), he also believed that women were duty-bound to serve their husbands, families and country in that order.

Mumbai based Tushar Gandhi, the great grandson of the Father of the Nation, puts it this ways: - “I would say that Bapu was a champion of gender equality. But the moral strength that he imputes to women has an almost in born, genetic complexion to it, which bears little or no relation to the exploitation, humiliation and hardship that has been women’s lot, historically speaking. Bapu remained fixed on

the symbolism of the mother. He was a passive picture of womanhood, of a person who undoubtedly possessed freedom but functioned within narrow parameters and defined boundaries” (Gandhi, 1956).

Views on Sexuality:-

As for sexual relations between men and women, Gandhiji was orthodox in his beliefs, according to Tushar:

“A Strong believer in monogamy, sex to him was only meant to be an act for procreation. Early in his married life he had trouble in accepting his own sexuality and this seems to have determined his general view of sex”, he observes.

In fact, when Margaret Sanger, the ardent advocate of contraceptive rights for women, met Gandhiji when she was touring India the Thirties, he is quoted as having told her, “It becomes a lustful thing when you take love for your own satisfaction. It is just the same with food. If food is taken only for pleasure it is lust. You do not take chocolate for the sake of your physical need. You take it for pleasure and then ask the doctor for an antidote. Perhaps you tell the doctor that whisky befogs your brain and he gives you an antidote. Would it not be better not to take the chocolate or whisky?”

Sanger went back from her meeting with Gandhiji, a disappointed woman.

“Terming sex a carnal desire of man, Gandhiji apparently did not think of women’s own sexual desires other than their desire for motherhood,” observes Sonal Shukla, Director, Vacha women’s Resource Centre, Mumbai. She adds, “Perhaps this was because he regarded the sexual act as an imposition women. He actually supported women taking the Satyagraha (truthful insistence) strategy into their bedrooms in order to resist intercourse. It is not surprising; therefore, that celibacy was one of the 11 vows that Gandhiji’s staunch followers were required to observe. Many inmates of his ashram --- his chosen ones --- would end up breaking this vow and

would have to own of to this when their wives became pregnant. They then had to pledge to be celibates all over again.” Daniel Mazgaonkar, 75, an activist associated with the Land – Gift Mission initiated by Vinoba Bhave, a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, does not believe that Gandhiji was against the reproductive rights of women.

A benevolent Patriarch:

“He believed in Stree-Purush Sahajeevan (man-woman togetherness). Bapu himself evolved from a stereotypical Indian man to a benevolent patriarch to being a gender sensitive social activist. He was surrounded by strong, articulate and fitted women who continuously challenged him”.

Gandhiji is believed to have made no compromises when it came to his wife. For instance, while he had no objection in Kasturba taking a lead against child marriage, he was strongly opposed to any attempt to make her the President of the All India Women’s Conference, observing with cruel candor that as an unlettered women she was being nominated to the post not because of her individual capability but because she was married to M. K. Gandhi.

But Mazgaonkar believes that Gandhiji’s relationship with Kasturba got transformed over time. “From being an authoritarian husband, he became a true friend to Kasturba”, he said.

Incidentally, Mazgaonkar still remembers his meeting with Bapu at Mumbai’s Juhu Chowpatty. He was all of eight, but he recalls the words Gandhiji pronounced on that occasion, mere liye gareeb ka ek rupaiya, ameeron k eek lakh se kahin zyada payar hai (I value a single rupee of a poor person more than a lakh of rupees from a rich person).

Believing in mutual respect:

According to Mazgaonkar, Gandhiji believed that society could not progress when there was a mutually respectful partnership between men and women and he definitely discouraged the practice of making women subservient to men.

During the worst of the communal riots in Noakhali and West Punjab, Gandhiji made it a point to depute women as peacemakers. He sent Jayaprakash Narayan's wife to run a refugee camp in Noakhali and he dispatched Mridula Sarabhai to administer a refugee camp in West Pakistan after telling her to be prepared to die rather than allow any of her wards, whether male or female, to suffer any atrocity. Ammu Abraham, well known feminist and women's activist, while acknowledging that Gandhiji did not sufficiently highlight the issue of gender injustice, is full of admiration for his vision and commitment to a pluralistic India (Abraham, 2008).

Gandhi a feminist?

Says Abraham, "His advocacy of non-violence has impacted the world, one can subject such historical personages to critical evaluation. After all, they too were products of their time and a deeper perspective on patriarchy was yet to emerge in that era. So was Gandhi a feminist? I do not think so. But one does not reject all past figures because they were not feminists, surely. Feminism is also a historical and evolving ideology".

But Abraham still finds it difficult to accept Gandhiji's early treatment of his wife, Kasturba. "I was shocked by the story about him having been violent towards Kasturba, allegedly because of her refusal to clean out the toilet of a Dalit. That Gandhiji should have flung his wife out on the road for this is a real sticking point for me even today".

The fact is that the Gandhian legacy vis-à-vis women are a mixed one. Here was a figure, which recognized and publicly spoke about the strength and contribution of women.

Yet, when he crowned the Indian women as the incarnation of ahimsa (non-violence) and lauded her incredible power to endure, as her greatest strength, he ended up glorifying the self-effacing, long-suffering Indian women, who was herself the pitiful product of a deeply patriarchal culture (Balil, 2009).

Gandhi wanted build a society based on justice, peace and equality. In order to achieve these three coordinal principles it was very essential to grant equality to the two builders of the society, men and women. This gender equality is a prerequisite for peace and development of the nation. Gandhi addressed women are glorifying terms, “women are the noblest of God’s creation”, “She is any way superior to in her religious devotion”, and she is “an incarnation of ahimsa.

Gandhi talks a lot about his mother in his writings and speeches. His mother and sister impressed him. His first lessons in Satyagraha were taught by his mother. After marriage, his wife Kasturba influenced him as did other women in the ashrama, especially Meeraben and Amrit Kaur, whose sincerity and commitment impressed him deeply (Jolly, 2006, p.233). According to Barbara Southard, Gandhian feminism stands two major pillars ... “gender equality in all respects at every level and gender specific role – differentiation” (Southard, 1981, p.403). Gandhi once said, “The man should look to the maintenance of the family, the woman to household management, and the two thus supplementing and complementing each other’s labours. Gandhian Philosophy on gender emphasizes that social expectations from men and women differ and in turn their responses and responsibilities in the public and private sphere are also different from each other. Commenting on gender equality, he quotes widely from Hindu Shastras (texts) and asks that if every soul originates from Braham, then where do differences between men and women arise? He stresses that it is not the gender, but the individual’s soul that matters. Commenting on the ole of scriptures, Gandhi said that all written in Smritis is not divine as there are false interpolations (Harijan, 1936).

If religion and religious scriptures teach unethical codes then they ought to be disobeyed. Gandhi went on to say, “Hinduism leaves the individual absolutely free to do what he or she likes for the sake of

self-realization or which and which alone he or she is born” (Young India, 1929). Gandhi rightly observed that the degenerated position of women resulted from historical circumstances and said, “The soul in both is the same. Each is a complement of the other ... But somehow or other man has dominated women from ages past, and women has developed an inferiority complex. She has believed in the truth of man’s interested teaching that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognized her equal status”. There is no difference in the basic mental faculties of man and woman, and woman also deserves the same liberty and freedom (Harijan, 1940). As early as 1921, writing in “Young India”, Gandhi said, “of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex.” Discerning the cause of the inequalities and injustice to women in general, he firmly believed that, “if I were born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretension on the part of the man (Young India, 1927). As far as men and women’s sphere of activity is concerned, Gandhi advocates the theory of separate spheres, while on the one hand the man is the bread winner, on the other the woman is responsible for tending to home and children. Gandhi’s vision of women was one of nurturance and he believed that “woman is essentially the mistress of the house ... She is the keeper and distributor of the bread ... the art of bringing up the infants of the race is her special and role prerogative. Without her care, the race must become extinct.” He did not regard marriage as an absolute essential for women (Harijan, 1940).

Even though he does not advocate an “active role” for women in the public sphere, however when the issue of women’s suffrage was first raised in 1921, Gandhi supported it and even felt that the success of the Satyagraha Movement and the Dandi March was inextricably linked with the active participation of women. Picketing liquor shops and sellers of foreign cloth were activities, which were predominantly undertaken by women. By 1939, Gandhi was

thoroughly convinced that if the national movement had to be escalated to the level of a mass movement. Then women would definitely have to be included as active participants. He said, "I would love to find that my future army contained a vast preponderance of women over men. If the fight came, I should then face it with grater confidence, then if men predominated. I would dread the latter's violence. Women should be my guarantee against such an outbreak" (Harijan, 1939). According to Southard, Gandhi did not see his advocacy of women's participation in non-violent resistance campaigns as contradictory to his basic concept of women as nurturer and caretaker of the home. On the contrary, the participation of women in Satyagraha was seen as an extension of her special mission as the caretaker of humanity (Southard, 1981, p.405). Gandhi often observed that religion could be safeguarded only in the hands of women and not in those of men or religious Brahmins. He saw religion as a way of life and as an indicator of one's character or true nature. Addressing a women's meeting in Kaithal, Gandhi said, "the foundation of which society rests is the home and dharma is cultivated in the home. The fragrance in the home will spread all over the society" (Gandhi, 1921, p.63). He stressed that a women's real ornaments were her noble qualities, talents, her purity and chastity and therefore it was the soul that was important and should be the focus of self-improvement, rather than external beauty, which is skin-deep.

Today the world speaks of pure love, one family, and one husband and wife in a monogamous and faithful relationship, thus echoing Gandhi's teachings concerning the family. He considers the cohesive family to be the building block of a healthy society. Gandhi said that providing healthy, intelligent and well brought up children to the country is in itself a great service rendered by women. He also believed that the Hindu Law of Inheritance required changes and improvement. Women must be given equal rights where family property is concerned because the disinheritance of women from

family property is responsible for male dominance and women's subordination. Gandhi opined that women should not suffer from any legal disability. He said "I should treat daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality" (Young India, 1929). The All India Women's Conference made a declaration to this effect in 1931, "This conference places on record its opinion that there should be complete equality between the sexes in the matter of inheritance and property" (All India Women's Conference, 1931). Purdah, another evil which still affects women's lives in certain section of society, has also been decried by Gandhi with the help of historical examples. Giving the evidence of ancient Indian history, he writes that women's lives during that period were less secluded and insular. They participated in public debates and discourses and lives were much fuller and less restricted when Purdah was unknown. Gandhi denounced Purdah as a "laborious customs" which had incurred incalculable harm to the country. In 1928 the All India Women's Social Conference that met in Calcutta passed a resolution against Purdah. Like other social reformer, Gandhi was against the custom of forcing a marriage without the consent of the boy and girl. He also opposed child marriage and when the children's Protection Act was brought up, Gandhi supported it whole-heartedly. In 1925 he said that the issue was not just rising the marriageable age for girl from 14 to 16, but rather not forcing marriage on any individual without their prior consent. Being a strong supporter of widow remarriage, he wrote, "I have repeatedly said that every widow has as much right to remarry as every widower. Voluntary widowhood is a priceless boon in Hinduism, enforced widowhood is a curse" (Harijan, 1935). Hence Gandhi's belief in equality and justice guided his stance on widow remarriage. Addressing people from various communities, he wrote, "If any child widow wants to remarry do not despise or outcast them" (Gandhi, 1919).

One of Gandhi's most interpretations of Swaraj or Self-rule concerned his regard for women and their emancipation. Commenting

on prostitution, one of the most derogatory conditions of women's existence and in the words of Gandhi, "a social disease", he often said that women are forced to sell their body due to sexual and economic exploitation and because of men this problem will continue to persist. Similarly, speaking against the devadasi tradition, Gandhi said that while "it is good to swim in the waters of tradition but to sink in them is suicide". Labeling the devadasi tradition as "moral leprosy", and "an insult to god", Gandhi was trying to break the decadent socio-cultural customs and rituals that had held women in a subordinate position for centuries. Dowry system has been another social evil, which has plagued the lives of women in India. Gandhi saw this as a hateful practice and termed marriage involving dowry as "marriage by purchase". He wrote that in marriage where wives and daughters-in-law are purchased there couldn't be any harmonious relationship. In 1929 Gandhi astounded his contemporary society by saying that, "if I had a girl under my charge, I would rather keep her a maiden all her life than give her away to one who expected a single pie for taking her for his wife"(Young India.1929). Gandhi advised people to boycott young men who expected dowry from their prospective bride's family. He saw inter-caste and inter-community marriage as a solution to this social evil.

In 1923-33, the All India Women's Conference passed a resolution that centres for dispensing information on birth control measures should be opened at the municipal and local levels. This resolution was passed by a thundering majority of 99 votes as opposed to just 7 votes against it. Although Gandhi expressed his admiration for this resolution and the feeling behind it, but he strongly believed that self-control is the only legitimate means of birth control. Gandhi did not like the use of contraceptives or other artificial means of birth control ((Harijan, 1936). According to him, "birth control by contraceptives no-doubt regulates to a certain extent, the number of newcomers, and enables persons of moderate means to keep the wolf from the door. But the moral harm it does to the

individual and society is incalculable. For one thing, the outlook upon life of those to satisfy the sexual appetite for the sake of it is wholly changed. Marriage ceases to be a sacrament for them” (Harijan, 1936). Gandhi believed that women had more self restraint and therefore he gave the responsibility of birth control through abstinence to women.

Gandhi supported education for both boys and girls. In his Basic National Education Scheme, in 1937, Gandhi proposed free and compulsory education for children of both from ages 7 to 14. As far as the curriculum of the syllabus was concerned, in his early years, in 1918 Gandhi had different ideas about girls’ education and he suggested that girls’ education programme should be planned in a such way so as to meet the special need of girls in order to prepare them to be mothers and home makers. However, by 1937, his views had undergone a change and he proposed that till the 4th or 5th standard girls and boys ought to have the same curriculum and then 6th standard onwards girls should also be taught courses such as domestic or home science (Patel, 1953, p.109). Gandhi believed that economic freedom could indirectly play a vital role in the empowerment of women. In the course of his speeches and writings, he was inspiring and motivating women to spin yarn and weaving cloth. Addressing women at Nadiad in 1919, he emphasized, “You have two or three hours when you do nothing. You spend them in temples. Telling the beads in the temple is dharma, but at the present time real bhakti consists in this work for cloth... women in rich families should spin two or three hours everyday and pass it on to the store here or gift it... Anyone who spins for money will get 3 annas a pound (of yarn) every pie earned is useful. With the money so earned you can buy your needs. The more you earn the more you gain. This is an excellent means of earning (Joshi, 1988, pp.30-31). In fact, Gandhi realized that the success of the Swadeshi Movement was possible only if women spun yarn and wove cloth in large numbers, at the same time. He also saw that this would enable them to be economically independent. He writes in “Young India” that while

spinning yarn can add to the resources of the middle class, it can infect become a major source, sometimes even the sole source of subsistence for lower class families (Young India,1929).It is very interesting to see how Gandhi viewed women as victims of social and cultural exploitation and at the same time he also saw them as instigators of social change at grass root levels as mothers, wives, teachers and activists picketing at liquor and foreign cloth stores. He was an astute observer of women's social role in the family and society and vested in them the responsibility to change lives at the level of the family and that of the nation by placing them at the vanguard of the Swadeshi Movement as the producers of precious home spun yarn and cloth which was an essential prerequisite for the boycott of foreign cloth. His programmes of Swadheshi and Non-cooperation Movement are both inspired by women's traditional roles and attitudes. Historically speaking, women have universally been responsible for spinning and weaving cloth for household use and their main forms of protest in a male dominated world have been silent and non-violent. Amazingly, Gandhi adopted these two traits integral to women's culture and transferred the arena of activity from the family to the nation where metaphorically speaking Indians took on the female person and the British colonial rulers took on the male person and these two main female responsibilities and attributes were transferred on to the nationalist struggle. He thus gave importance to the so-called "women's work and labour", which usually went unseen and made it an important tool of the Indian National Movement.

Communitarianism : Ideals

Communitarianism, Social and Political Philosophy that is emphasizes the importance of community in the functioning of political life, in the analysis and evaluation of political institutions, and in understanding human identity and well being. It arose in the 1980s as a critique of two prominent philosophical schools --- contemporary liberalism, which seeks to protect and enhance

personal autonomy and individual rights in part through the activity of government, and libertarianism, a form liberalism (sometimes called “classical liberalism”) that aims to protect individual rights – especially the rights to liberty and property – through strict limits on governmental power.

There are strong communitarian elements in many modern and historical political and religious belief systems – e.g., in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and the Christian New Testament (“Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and Soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common”) in the early Islamic concept of Shura (Consultation), in Confucianism, in Roman Catholic Social Thought (the papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), in moderate conservatism (“to be attached to the subdivision, to love the little Platoon we belong to in society, in the first principle ... of public affection”...Edmund Burke) and in social democracy especially Fabianism. Communitarian ideas have also played a significant role in public life through their incorporation into the electoral platforms and policies of western political leaders on the late 20th and early 21st centuries, including British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, and U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.

Varieties of Communitarianism:-

The term communitarian was coined in 1841 by John Goodwyn Barmby, a leader of British Chartist movement, who used it to refer to Utopian Socialists and others who experimented with unusual communal life styles. It was not until the 1980s that the term gained currency through its association with the work of a small group of mostly American Political Philosophers who argued for the importance of the common good in opposition to contemporary liberals and libertarians, who emphasized the good for individuals, particularly including personal autonomy and individual rights. The Canadian

Philosophers Charles Taylor and the American Political Theorists Michael Sandel were among the most prominent scholars of this brand of communitarians. Other political theorists and philosophers who were often cited as communitarians in this sense, or whose work exhibited elements of such communitarian thinking, included Shlomo Avineri, Seyla Benhabib, Avner de-Shalit, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Amitai Etzioni, William A. Galston, Alasdair MacIntyre, Philip Selznick and Michael Walzer.

During the same p[eriod, students of East Asian Politics and Society used communitarianism to describe the social thinking within authoritarian societies such as China, Singapore and Malaysia which extolled social obligations and the importance of the common good and accorded much less weight to autonomy and rights. Indeed, these societies viewed individuals as more or less interchangeable cells who find meaning in their contribution to the social whole rather than as free agents. Scholars of this kind of communitarianism included the American political theorist Russell A. Fox and the Singaporean diplomat Bilahari Kausikan.

In 1990 Etzioni and Galston founded a third school, known as 'responsive' communitarianism. Its members formulated a platform based on their shared political principles, and the ideas in it were eventually elaborated in academic and popular books and periodicals, gaining thereby a measure of political currency, mainly in the west. The thesis of responsive communitarianism is that people face two major sources of normatively, that of the common good and that of autonomy of rights, neither of which in principle should take precedence over the other (Etzioni, 1990).

Indian Communitarianism:-

A communitarian and anti-individualist perspective has emerged in writings on Indian Society and Politics in recent decades. Social analysts like Ashish Nandy, Partha Chatterjee, Sudipto Kaviraj, T., N. Madan, and others have not only mounted a strong critique of

what they consider have been the dangerous consequences of trying to understand Indian Society and Politics through the lens of alien and individualist categories. The revival and strengthening of community has been put forward as a way of coping with the increasing alienation and violence of social life in India, and as a way of bringing us back into relationship with our cultural traditions. Charles Taylor would include a critical attitude towards western modernity and caution regarding the values of the western enlightenment which include liberal and secular values. Where Indian communitarians might differ from western communitarians however, would be in their insistence that colonialism and imperialism and racialism also were constitutive of modernity. Much of the power of communitarian critiques of colonial modernity and of the middle classes which became the bearers of modernist values comes from the way in which they have framed their critique. The role of the westernized middle classes has been much debated by historians of Colonial India and there is some continuity between those debates and the writings of social scientists like Partha Chatterjee and Sudipto Kaviraj (Michelguglielmo, 1990). Partha Chatterjee has argued that anti-colonial struggles did leave some space for the articulation of difference even while they fought for equal citizenship in the public sphere established by colonial state. There was an attempt to protect a sphere of indigenous culture from the influence of western modernity and in this sphere collective consciousness was organized around communities. It was in communities that the authentic indigenous culture was preserved. He has made a plea for the political recognition of community today (Chatterjee, 1994). Communitarians, whatever might be their other differences, have made a link between community consciousness and indigenous culture and this has supported their political project of reviving communities as political actor today. Although Indian Communitarians have been somewhat reluctant to offer concrete proposals for the restructuring of Indian Society they do offer hints about the possible shape of an alternative and better society. The

hints we get are about the need to build on the enduring civilization values of the society, and to try and restore some of the practices of the past.

Although it is possibly on account of shared concerns that some social scientists may have appropriated concepts and theories developed in the west to analyze Indian society but they have also defended this on the grounds that they provide better insights into Indian society that is possible within the modernist paradigm. It is in relation to such claims therefore that they can be assessed. For instance, responding to criticisms made to such appropriations Dipesh Chakraborty has defended the critique of enlightenment rationalism made from post modern perspectives (Chakraborty, 1995, Pp.751-60). The issue of communities and community consciousness is central to communitarian critique of modernity. Caste has also been implicitly defended as an indigenous form of community by others.

Community is presented by communitarians like Partha Chatterjee as an area of freedom, freedom as he puts it, to express oneself not in terms of rights and legal safeguards but through the rhetoric of love, and kinship and duty. A codified sense of community often had the effect of subverting the collective consciousness based on bonds of solidarity generated by the everyday practices of the pre-colonial period. But the sense of codified community links also contradicted the legal equality and constitutional relationships upheld by the colonial state in the public sphere. It is the earlier sense of social solidarity which communitarians would like to revive today. For Ashish Nandy fuzzy identities formed the basis of the tolerance which existed between local communities in the past and which might still exist for ordinary people in contrast to the impersonal and self-directed individualism of modern society (Nandy, 1988). Class is a term which finds little place in communitarian writings. Moreover, on undifferentiated identity of subaltern seems to make little sense today in the face of the humorous divisions which have emerged within

subaltern movements. Communitarian writings are in any event, not addressed to the subaltern thought they claim to speak for them.

All communitarians seem to be agreed that secularism has failed in India, citing increased communal antagonism and violence as evidence, as also the political manipulation of religion. But certain questions can be raised regarding this analysis. Social violence indeed have increased but one needs to ask whether it is secularism only which has failed or whether the increase of inter group violence should not also be understood in the context of wider social changes taking place in the society, not all of which could be traced back to the influence of modernity. Perhaps there is need to support secular policies of the state with the concern for related values such as equality or justice. This might not solve the problem of communal hostilities but it might at least widen the support base of the secular state.

Communitarians have opposed nation and community unlike western communitarian thinkers like Walzer and Taylor who have upheld republicanism as a way of invigorating nation-states today while they have at the same time advocated greater cultural rights for individuals and groups within the state. Indian communitarians are naturally cautious about republicanism on account of their fear about increasing the powers of the nation-state over groups and communities. But to give importance to communities without at the same time confronting the need for greater democratization of communities and state and without expressing commitment to egalitarian ideals could send all the wrong message about what is needed to strengthen inter-group tolerance in our society (Joseph, 1997, pp.2517-2523).

Gandhian Alternative:-

In his *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform*, and *Gandhi's Political Philosophy* Bhikhu Parekh argues that Gandhism did not merely seek to replace colonial rule with Swaraj or self-government, but to restore to India its past, its culture and tradition. He argues that Gandhi, suffered distortion and corruption in the melting pot of Colonial rule, and was threatened, not only by colonial autocracy and the racial cultural idioms of superiority associated with it, but by the invasion of a despotic rationalist modernity. Bhikhu Parekh holds that Gandhi's greatest contribution was his ability to resist the onslaught of modernism and rationalism which had influenced all other strategies of anti-colonialism, reform and nation-building in India. Parekh credits Gandhi with having profoundly redefined Hinduism (turning), it upside down in a way that no one had done before in a way which 'outsmarted' the cunning of 'the Brahmans', thus Gandhi attempted to do for Hinduism what Martin Luther had done to Christianity. In this sense, he argues, Gandhi was a radical traditional and a cultural revolutionary.

Gandhi's programme of religious politics was a complex experiment which envisaged the traditionalisation of reform, the radicalization of tradition and politicization of religion in his challenge to colonial domination. Such a man was Gandhi, a deliverer who was to carry India towards moksha (liberation). Thus, Parekh presents Gandhi to the reader as a dharmaraj (one who rules in the true spirit of dharma), and his programme of Swaraj as a quest for Ramrajya. He was no ordinary man, but one in a millennium, a yugapurusha (symbolizing an epoch and its deliverer) Gandhism, therefore, is represented as the philosophy of this epoch and Gandhi himself as the deliverer of the Kaliyug, in the same fashion as Rama was for the Satyuga and Krishna for the dwapar and tretayugas. His path was a unique one, in that it sought to use age old cultural resources to regenerate 'Indian ness' among Indians and humaneness among

humans. Gandhism offers the most radical programme for the liberation of India (and through it, the world), for it is the only philosophy of the modern period which draws upon the entire fabric of India's heritage – spiritual and socio-psychological and even sexual. Gandhi's experiments with sexuality were directed towards finding ways to channel sexual energy into building the national character through moral salvation, ultimately seeking the transformation of the sensual into the spiritual. Parekh admits that Gandhi was unable to argue convincingly against the orthodox Hindu interpretation of the caste system, and its justification of untouchability.

Bhikhu Parekh claims that Gandhi started his 'epic fast' against separate representation for the depressed classes in the Communal Award, thousands of prominent Hindu women accepted food from the hands of untouchables and that 'scenes' of inter-caste public dining were repeated in almost every village and every city of India.

The ambiguities of Gandhi's position on the caste question quite understandably caused untouchable leaders to be suspicious of his intentions, most noteworthy among these was B. R. Ambedkar almost in anticipation of Parekh's declaration that Gandhi was a *yugapurusha*, Ambedkar's book *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables* ends with the question, "... The Untouchables have ground to say Good God! Is this man Gandhi our Saviour?" (Ambedkar, 1946). Not surprisingly, Parekh judges Ambedkar's account as 'biased and uneven'. Ambedkar found it difficult to accept as the deliverer of the untouchables the same Gandhi who held that the caste system was a worthy institution because the 'law of Varna prescribes that a person should, for his living, follow the lawful occupation of his forefathers' and who declared in the same vein that 'one born a scavenger must earn his livelihood by being a scavenger' (Harijan, 1937). If Gandhi's Harijan Andolan was essentially a strategy against the British attempt to divide the Hindus, Ambedkar's was undoubtedly sincere in his fight to restore dignity to

his fellow untouchables. Parekh's assertion that 'no one before Gandhi mounted a frontal attack against untouchability' is itself biased and uneven in its outright dismissal of the role played by scheduled caste leaders like Ambedkar in seeking their own liberation. Parekh's assertion that Gandhi was the first to fight untouchability is curious, for he appears to be aware of the contradictions in Gandhi's position on the subject. For instance, Parekh is no stranger to the fact that Gandhi and the Congress failed to give Ranga Iyer's untouchability Bill their unconditional support on the flimsy pretext that he had not taken the Congress into confidence. Parekh acknowledges that Gandhi and the Congress adopted this posture out of the exigencies of electoral politics, from the fear of losing the 'votes of caste Hindus'. Yet Parekh does not take this point further, and does not attempt to provide a theoretical account of the relationship between Gandhian moral discourse and political practice (Parekh, 1989). On the contrary, where the evidence fails to fit into Parekh's picture of Gandhi, he has, on occasion, altered it to match his argument. Thus, for instance, Parekh ascribes to Patel the statement that if the Communal Award were to stand, 'untouchable hooligans will make common cause with Muslim hooligans and kill caste Hindus' (Desai, 1953, p.301). when in fact, these were Gandhi's own words. Gandhi's position on the caste question no doubt was politically expedient, his statements arguing that 'a scavenger has the same status as a Brahmin' can be understood as sound politics in the particular historical context in which Gandhi was placed, his euphemistic populism reflected the prevailing structure of social domination to suggest however, as Parekh does, that Gandhi's words have a universal value and provide valid solutions to India's problem today. Parekh's immense admiration for Gandhi allows him to admit occasionally that his hero made mistake, it does not, however, allow room for the idea that there may have been some legitimacy in the arguments of Gandhi's opponents. Thus he holds that Ambedkar was 'wrong to question (Gandhi's) commitment and enormous contribution', to the cause of Harijans and

that the untouchable leaders demand for separate electorates for India's untouchables represented the politics of frustration. Gandhi's alternative is celebrated by Parekh as both radically Hindu and genuinely India; it bears therefore great relevance to India today. So, Gandhism may appear to be based on traditional and conservative assumptions, Parekh argues that in fact it is the most radical school of thought of India. By discovering the scientific of tradition and the openers of Hinduism, Gandhi's philosophy of change is thus shown to have presented a radical alternative both to western modernity and to Hindu orthodoxy (Parekh, 1989, p.248). Eighties of the last millennium saw the rise of Feminism and Communitarianism and the nineties, the rise of Environmentalism. Scholars have then found elements in Gandhian thought relevant to the latter.

Environmentalism: Meaning and Ideas

According to American Heritage Dictionary, environmentalism means advocacy for or work toward protecting the natural environment from destruction or pollution, the theory that environment rather than heredity is the primary influence on intellectual growth and cultural development. According to Britannica concise Encyclopedia, environmentalism means advocacy of the preservation or improvement of the natural environment, especially the social and political movements to control environmental pollution. Other specific goals of environmentalism include control of human pollution growth, conservation and natural resources, restriction of the negative effects of modern technology. Environmental advocacy at the international level by non-governmental organizations and some states has resulted in treaties, conventions and other instruments of environmental law addressing problems such as global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the danger of trans-boundary pollution from nuclear accidents. Influential U.S. and British environmentalists have included Thomas-Robert-Mathus, John Muir, Rachel Carson, Barry Commoner, Paul R. Ehrlich and Edward O.

Wilson. In the Social Sciences, the term refers to any theory that emphasizes the importance of environmental factors in the development of culture and society. According to Oxford Dictionary of Geography, environmentalism means – a concern for the environment, and especially with the bond between man and the environment, not solely in terms of technology but also in ethical terms, we are reminded of the necessity for sharing and conservation. Man is seen as having a responsibility for his environment. The term may also be used as a synonym for environmental determinism, but stressing the influence of the environment rather than control by the environment. Again, according to Oxford Dictionary of politics environmentalism means a belief in and concern for the importance and influence of environment with a society.

Environment is derived simply from the French verb *environer*, to surround. Our environment, literally, is no more and no less than our surroundings. The concept of environment, though, arose in the mid-nineteenth century. It was given force by a range of new ideas that human beings are, to an important degree, formed by their surroundings. These included Darwin's discovery that the survival of species depends on their suitability to their surroundings and the German geographer's theories of the importance of environment in determining economic and cultural differences between the peoples.

In the second half of the twentieth century environmentalism has come to refer to a combination of beliefs in the value and fragility of the environment, and a tendency to be conservationist with respect to it, leaving the expression environmental determinism to cover the old meaning of the word. Unfortunately, what was intrinsically a very broad concept has been further stretched to the point of meaninglessness. Just as environmental studies can embrace geography, biology, chemistry, law, history, politics and many other disciplines, the concerns of environmentalism can range from architecture to the stratosphere, from the water supply to the diversity

of species on the planet. Environmentalists can base arguments on virtually any known discipline or philosophical assumption, including those which are anthropocentric (concerned only with benefits to human beings) and those which are studiously opposed to anthropocentrism, and insist that non-human entities have value in themselves. Fortunately, some constructive limitation has been suggested by the eco-philosophers, principally Arne Naess, who, since the 1970s, have expressed suspicion of 'Mere environmentalism' which criticizes existing practices and policies affecting our surroundings only in terms of criteria derived from their effects on human interests. This suggests that environmentalism occupies a middle ground between those (rare) minds that see no disadvantages to current practices because of their effects on our surroundings and those eco-philosophers who seek to orient our entire approach away from anthropocentrism.

So, environmentalism is a broad philosophy, ideology and social movement regarding concerns for environmental conservation and improvement of the health of the environment, particularly as the measure for this health seeks to incorporate the concerns of non-human elements. Environmentalism advocates the preservation, restoration and improvement of the natural environment, and may be referred to as a movement to control pollution. For this reason, concepts such as a land ethic, environmental ethics, bio-diversity, ecology and the bio-philial hypothesis figure predominantly.

As its crux, environmentalism is an attempt to balance relations between humans and the various natural systems on which they depend in such a way that all these components are accorded a proper degree of respect. The exact nature of this balance is controversial and there are many different ways for environmental concerns to be expressed in practice. Environmentalism and environmental concerns are often represented by the color green, but this association has been appropriated by the marketing industries and is a key tactic of green

washing. Environmentalism is opposed by anti-environmentalism, which takes a skeptical stance against many environmentalist perspectives.

Definitions:-

Environmentalism denotes a social movement that seeks to influence the political process by lobbying, activism, and education in order to protect natural resources and ecosystems. The word was first coined in 1922.

An environmentalist is a person who may speak out about our natural environment and the sustainable management of its resources through changes in public policy or individual behaviour. This may include supporting practices such as informed consumption, conservation initiatives, investment in renewable energy, improved efficiencies in the materials economy, transitioning to new accounting paradigms such as Ecological economics and renewing and revitalizing our connections with non-human life. In various ways (for example, grassroots activism and protests), environmentalists and environmental organizations seek to give the natural world a stronger voice in human affairs. In general terms, environmentalists advocates the sustainable management of resources, and the protection (and restoration, when necessary) of the natural environment through changes in public policy and individual behaviour. In its recognition of humanity as a participant in ecosystems, the movement is centered on ecology, health and human rights.

History:-

A concern for environmental protection has recurred in diverse forms, in different parts of the world, throughout history. For example, in Europe, King Edward I of England banned the burning o sea-coal by proclamation in London in 1272, after its smoke had become a problem. The fuel was so common in England that this earliest of names for it was acquired because it could be carted away from some

shores by the wheelbarrow. Air pollution would continue to be a problem in England, especially later during the Industrial Revolution, and extending into the recent past with the Great Smog of 1952.

Origins:-

In Europe, the Industrial Revolution gave rise to modern environmental pollution as it is generally understood today. The emergence of great factories and consumption of immense quantities of coal and the fossil fuels gave rise to unprecedented air pollution and the large volume of industrial chemical discharges added to the growing load of untreated human waste. The first large scale, modern environmental laws came in the form of the British Alkali Acts, passed in 1863, to regulate the deleterious air pollution given off by the Leblanc Process, used to produce soda ash. Environmentalism grew out of the amenity movement, which was a reaction to industrialization, the growth of cities, and worsening air and water pollution. In Victorian Britain, an early "Back to Nature" movement which anticipated modern environmentalism was advocated by intellectuals such as John Ruskin, William Morris and Edward Carpenter, who were all against consumerism, pollution and other activities that were harmful to the natural world.

In the United States, the beginnings of environmental movement can be traced as far back as 1739, though it was not called environmentalism and was still considered conservation until the 1950's, Benjamin Franklin and other Philadelphia residents, citing "Public Rights", petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly to stop waste dumping and remove tanneries from Philadelphia's commercial district. The US movement expanded in the 1800s, out of concerns for protecting the natural resources of the West, with individuals such as John Muir and Henry David Thoreau making key philosophical contributions (Doyle, 2005).

1970s:-

Environmental movement gained rapid speed in the U, S. and around the world. The Chipko movement was formed in India; influenced by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, they set up peaceful resistance to deforestation by literally hugging trees (leading to the term “tree huggers”). Their peaceful methods of protest and slogan “ecology is permanent economy” were very influential.

Another milestone in that movement was the creation of an Earth Day. Earth Day was first observed in San-Francisco and another city on March 21, 1970, the first day of spring. It was created to give awareness to environmental issues. On March 21, 1971, United Nations Secretary General U – Thant spoke of a spaceship Earth on Earth Day, hereby referring to the eco-system services the earth supplies to us, and hence our obligation to protect it. Earth Day is now coordinated globally by the Earth Day Network and is celebrated in more than 175 countries every year.

The UN first major conference on international environmental issues, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (also known as the Stockholm Conference) was held on June 5 to 16, 1972. It marked a turning point in the development of international environmental politics.

1980s:-

During the 1980s the growing awareness of global warming and other climate change issues brought environmentalism into grater public debate.

Today:-

Environmentalism has also changed to deal with new issues such as global warming, overpopulation and genetic-engineering. Many youth of today’s society have become more aware of the State of the planet and are deeming themselves environmentalists. School-Eco-Clubs are now working to create new ideals for the future through

sustainable schools and other minor changes in student lives like buying organic food, clothing and personal care items. In the future, many of the jobs opening up will have environmentalist aspects.

Criticisms:-

Criticisms of environmentalism tend to fall into two major categories: - environmental skepticism and anti environmentalism. Environmental skeptics, such as Bjorn Lomborg (the author of skeptical Environmentalist) dispute the claims of environmentalists, claiming they are either inaccurate or exaggerated. Anti-environmentalists, on the other hand, accept many of the claims made by environmentalists while simultaneously accepting that change is inevitable, regardless of cause and speed. They do not deny the impact of humanity, but they dispute the argument that humanity can kill the planet, citing life's several billion year history as evidence that it is more resilient than many environmentalists realize (Doyle, 2005, p.18).

Mahatma Gandhi's views on environment:-

The whole world knows that Gandhi was a political leader and a revolutionary of an extraordinary type. That he was a great thinker and a saintly figure is also well known all over the world. It is also widely known that he was a humanist and pacifist of international fame. But very few people know that he was an environmentalist too. This is primarily because the environmental problems have surfaced largely in the post Gandhian era and as such, the concern for environment has assumed importance only in recent years. Nevertheless, there were people in the past too who could foresee the future and visualize the dangers inherent in the kind of development the nation chose to go in for following the Industrial revolution in the west. Gandhi was one of such persons. Gandhi had bewildering insights and foresights. One is really appalled by his farsightedness so clearly and emphatically expressed in the Hind Swaraj almost a century ago in 1909 when few people talked of environmental

problems and hazards. Similarly one is overwhelmed by his grasp of the resultant human predicament and his ingenuity to suggest appropriate measures to root out the problem rather than search a solution to control it.

It needs hardly any mention that entire problem of environmental hazards and degradations are rooted in the scientific-technological development leading to large scale and speedy industrialization and the consequent socio-cultural upheavals the world over. True, the achievement of industrialization for mankind cannot be undermined. Industrialization has given to human society tremendous material pleasure and prosperity. But at the same time, it has also imperceptibly done irreparable loss of mankind. Reckless and limitless pursuits of industrialization by all nations are now posing serious problems for every existence of not only man but for all living creatures and all kinds of species on our planet.

Detection of depletion of the ozone layer, reported recurring of acid rain and warming up of the earth as a result of green house effect are serious pointers to the existential problems. Already numerous species of animals, birds and plants have become extinct. Desert formation is increasing with rapid speed. Deforestations and increasing emission of smokes and injurious gas are not only polluting the atmosphere, but also affecting adversely climatic conditions to the awful disadvantages of living beings, Mushrooming of the slum area (in most of the third world countries) as an unavoidable by-product of urbanization of the syndrome of our cherished mode of development is fatal to the physical atmosphere required for proper living. Disposal of industrial wastes and things like plastic and synthetic containers and used or discarded wares has already become a formidable problem not only in the developed west but also in the developed countries. The cumulative effect of all these factors on the health and living of human beings has caused an alarming concern among people in the entire world.

Everybody now knows that scientific and technological development is at the root of the state affair. And yet, people are taking resort to the same science and technology for a solution of the environmental problem. Gigantic efforts are being made for the management of this problem. But its magnitude and viciousness are defying any proper and satisfactory solution. The reason is quit obvious. The actors responsible for the problem continue to aggravate the situation with much faster pace than the effort to control it. There is no control and management of environmental pollutions and degradations. The permanent cure of this dreadful problem lies in a suitable alternative life style in tune with nature. People now do realize the truth of it but the naked materialism of modern civilization becomes a roadblock in putting it into practice.

Gandhi has clearly perceived this solution. His indictment of the modern civilization in the Hind Swaraj was intended to caution mankind against this calamity. He made a relevant appeal to the people of his countrymen not be trapped by the allurements of this civilization. He also wanted the western society against its ill effects. As a front leader of the Indian nationalist movement and a Visionary and Planner of society and political systems of India after Independence, he drew a blue-point which accordingly rejected the western model based on the scientific-technological culture.

To Gandhi, the main plank of the modern civilization is the insatiable and unending pursuit of material pleasure and prosperity. All modern western socio-economic and political theories and institutions are based on this cardinal principle and people in other parts of the world are blindly imitating it. If the trend is not arrested and a suitable alternative to it provided, Gandhi believed, the result would be disastrous. For instance, the modern western economic development is flourishing on the extravagant utilization of the non-renewable resources i.e., coal, oil and metal. So long it was confined to a few western countries; it did not create that much of problem. But

when the whole world is involving in this never ending venture, this will play havoc with nature. Nature is a sine qua non of existence and if men interfere with it beyond a point, he will be doing it at the cost of his own existence. Perfect and meaningful existence is possible only in harmony and conformity with nature.

Gandhi fully understood the primordially of man-nature relationship and his theory and philosophy of life, society and politics are in consonance with it. It is this understanding of, and, reverence for, the salience and senility of nature for human existence which makes him an environmentalist par excellence. He is not environmentalists who will analyses the causes and consequences of depletion in the ozone layer. He is not competent to recommend measures against environmental pollutions and safeguards against all kinds of environmental hazards. He belongs to the school which believes in remedy rather than cure. In Plato's ideal state, there was no place of doctors, for he advocated the practice of a life style in which nobody would fall ill. Gandhi also subscribed to this line of thinking. He is a propounded of a kind of life, culture and society which will never lead to environmental problems. The universe is based on certain principles and governed by interoperable laws of the creator. Man has potentiality to unfold them. However, undue interference in the system of replete with dangerous consequence. Every created thing has specific meaning and purpose and therefore its autonomy is to be respected and safeguarded. Interactions among created things and their mutual give and take sustain the universe system. Gandhi believed in this universal co-existence and subscribed to the principle of reverence for all life. His non-violence is this way is universal law of life and it manifests in love for all creatures. This is the basic principle of life and no human endeavor, individual or collective, social, economic or political, should be in conflict with it according to Gandhi.

This is precisely the reason of his condemnation and rejection of modern western and socio-economic and political systems. Gandhi highlights the ills of industrialization which is the base of modern civilization. Industrialization leads to centralization of economic power, it flourishes on exploitation of both man and nature and has now become the greatest source of pollution. It leads to urbanization which makes life miserable according to Gandhi. He was highly critical of the growth of big cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi in India. As our present day experience shows, mega polls and metro polls are the real pollution centre of the world. Gandhi had visualized this and as early as in 1910 gave a graphic description of the consequences of madness for urbanization in the following words:-

Nature works unceasingly according to her own laws, but man violates them constantly. In different ways and at different times, Nature tells man that there is nothing in the world is not subject to change ... And yet extraordinary occurrence startles us and sets us thinking. There has been one such in Paris. This river in Paris in such a heavy flood that huge buildings were washed off. A picture gathering was in imminent danger. Strongly built roads, on which millions of pound has been spent, sagged at places. Men were drowned. Some who escaped drowning were buried alive. Rats deprived of their food, attacked children. How did this happen? The people of Paris had built the city to last for ever. Nature has given a warning that even whole of Paris may be destroyed. It certainly would have been had the floods subsided a day later. Frequent occurrences of devastating flood, and dreadful earthquakes in recent times are consequences of our craze for development and its damaging impact of nature. Nations are mad after acquiring economic, military and political power in cutthroat compellation against each other. Very few states have at present nuclear power and keeping in view the destructive potentiality of the nuclear weapons, every nation is speaking against them. Nevertheless, those who do not have these weapons do not really cease to aspire for

acquiring them. Some of them indeed have been making clandestine efforts even at the neglect of their basic duties and necessities to become nuclear powers. The nuclear-haves, on the other hand, are vociferously advocating for disarmament, but in actual practice are not prepared to do anything to destroy or curtail their weapons. That the production and testing of these weapons are awfully detrimental environment and their use is fatal to both man and nature are not secret to anybody. Yet, nations are not desisting from resorting to suicidal exercise. When atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima Gandhi had mankind to follow the path free from his danger in future. To quote him: "when I heard that the atom bomb had wiped out Hiroshima, I said to myself, the word adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide, for mankind"(Gandhi,1958).

Having thus clearly visualized the dangerous direction in which the moderning was pushing the world, Gandhi alternative for man's peaceful and happy existence. In his non-violent systems and life-style, weapons of annihilations, which are produced at considerable cost of natural and human resource, become redundant.

Gandhi is a passionate champion of a life pattern based on three cardinal principles, simplicity, slowness and smallness. Modernity makes life complex by multiplying its day to day needs. In fact this kind of complexity is ingrained on it. A complex life can hardly peaceful and happy ultimately. On the contrary, tension and frustration are its attendant characteristics. A simple life is one which requires only bare necessities of life. It is a life of contentment, a pleasure some experiment in austerity. Modernity makes life very fast. Just imagine, mankind today has the fasted modes of travel. Life is equipped with all kinds of time-saving devices. And yet, paradoxically, everybody is always short of time.

Finally Gandhi believed that a good life can be lived only in a small community. To him, big cities were centers of corruption and all kind of vices. Therefore, he remained an ardent advocate of the village.

life throughout. He repeatedly said that India lived in her villages. What he tried to underline was that the soul of India lived there, that the village life is the ideal life and that India should live in the villages. Infact, this is his universal prescription for a good life. It is a life of peace and tranquility, a life of innate simplicity and a life in close proximity with nature. Such a life is also prone to the ethical.

From scientific point of view too, this kind of life alone can be based on renewable resources. The pastoral and agricultural predominance in the pattern of life is conducive to the preservation of environment. An eminent Gandhian has thus highlighted this:-

“A civilization built on renewable resources, such as products of forestry and agriculture, is by this fact alone superior to one built of non-renewable resources, such as oil, coal etc. That is because the former can last, while the latter can not last. The former co-operate with nature, while the latter roles sign of life, while the latter bears the sign of death. It is already certain beyond any possibility of doubt that the “OIL- COAL -METAL - ECONOMICS” cannot be anything else but a short abnormally in the history of mankind because they are based on non-renewable resources and because being purely materialist, they recognize no limits. The frantic development of atomic energy shows that they know their rate and are now appalling than the atomic or Hydrogen bomb. For here unregenerate man is entering a territory which to all those who have eyes to see, bears the warning sign ‘keep out’ (Schumacher, 1997, p.7). The real importance of Gandhi as an environmentalist lies not in his vision and his right understanding of man-nature relationship. He made honest efforts to translate his percepts in actual life. Even before he became an internationally known leader and a Mahatma, he patterned his personal life and that of a small community on these ideals. His Phoenix and Tolstoy Farms in South Africa testify to it. Subsequently, in India too he established Ashram as on that pattern. He did eulogize the village life but he was pained to see the poverty, illiteracy and unsanitary conditions in

Indian villages. Therefore, throughout his life he kept on telling people and giving demonstration on health, hygiene and Sanitation. Hardly any political leader of his stature in the world had ever devoted so much of time and energy on these problems with so much sincerity and dedication. There are also activist environmentalists no doubt. But M. K. Gandhi tried to carry the message to the mass through the life he himself led. This is what made him an environmentalist with a difference (Jha, 1995).

Gandhian Philosophy, Gandhi and Environment:-

In the course of development all sort of problems such as rapid population growth, production and consumption pattern causing stress and strain on natural systems, degradation and depletion of natural resources affecting the life support system (air, water, soil and bio-diversity), unpredictable global climate change, ozone layer depletion and sea-level-rise, unemployment, poverty, economic inequality, social injustice, poor condition of villages, big polluted cities, rivers and polluting industries, ...we have to think of these problems and try to find out the solution best suited to our needs.

Self-sufficiency of villages, promotion of small and cottage industries, control on the import of consumption goods, improved agriculture etc. are some of the ways to reach our goal. Importance should be given to the qualitative improvement of human resources, education. Better Sanitation, better living condition and better life, can be achieved only through the Gandhian ways today. A sustainable society has to aim at working in partnership with nature and conserve resources and energy, reduce wastes and avoid degradation of renewable. It should produce goods that are easy to recycle, reuse and repair after use. The methods of growing food and raising livestock have to be based on the use of soil and water conservation, bio-fertilizers, biological control of pests. The society should largely be a solar, wind, bio-mass based society together with a whole range of environment friendly technologies mainly based on renewable

resources. Hence, resources should be utilized prudently and the basic need of people is to be met without any serious detriment to the environment. In this context Gandhiji's thought, shall always remain relevant for the smooth global development.

Gandhi's entire life and deeds, indeed is an environmental bequest for whole mankind. This is not because he wrote big volumes of books on environment, led a people's movement to oppose the construction of large scale-dam project or spent his life-time for clearing Ganga or whatsoever, rather because he was a true practitioner of environmentally sustainable development in the real sense, by his personal life-style, he has adopted in his day to day life. Here is a being, which is in harmony and place with environment and himself, although his all life was spent locked in an unequal battle with the mighty British Empire. His strength came to him on account of his spirituality and practice of non-violence and truth. In wider sense, these are the critical elements for the success of practicing sustainable development in true spirit. In brief, his whole life, was his message and a lesson on "Protecting and Conserving Environment along with the development process", not only for Indians, but also for the whole world to follow at large.

Gandhi felt industrialization is going to be a curse for mankind. It can not provide jobs for its millions of citizen and in addition it would be creating pollution problems, whereas, developing thousands of cottage and village industries would provide an outlet for the creative facilities and resourcefulness of the people. It would also usefully employ many persons, who are in need of employment, which in return would add to the national wealth too. The big industries can never overtake the unemployed millions. Their aim is primarily to make money for the few owners. Dead machinery must not be pitched against the millions of living machines. If we compare between the Gandhian model of bottom up rural development and Nehruvian model of top-down industrial development, we can visualize

that Gandhian models lead to an economy of permanence and based largely on renewable, where damage to the environment is minimum and manageable, while the latter is based largely on non-renewable and causes environmental pollution. And de-pollution is far more expensive. Moreover in reality what we find today even after independence is the rich have become richer and the poor have become poorer.

Gandhi's theory of economic inequality went hand in hand with his theory of equal distribution of wealth. The real implication of equal distribution is that each man shall have the means to supply all his natural needs and nothing more beyond this. To bring this ideal into being, the entire social order has to be reconstructed; we must always bear the goal in mind and work continuously to achieve it. Gandhiji has suggested the practical way and means, how to bring this theory of equal distribution into reality. One should reduce one's want to a minimum, bearing the poverty of others in mind. His earnings should be free of dishonesty; there should be no desire for speculative earnings. Gandhiji was of the firm belief that work and culture, should not be separated. Really there is enough hands and fete, God has given everyone the capacity to work and earn more than his daily bread. No labour is too mean for one who wants to earn an honest penny. To be honest to oneself is to be life pro in protecting nature.

There is a perfect awareness that irrespective of all our economic planning, social philosophy, scientific discoveries, we have contributed to a situation which make the life impossible now on this planet earth. The water we drink is becoming poisonous and scarce too. It is estimated that in the next 20 years several cities and towns of many countries will not have sufficient surface or underground water sources. In addition, the marine forms are fast disintegrating and getting depleted. And may more such stories, news capsules tell how the earth is becoming and unworthy place to live in what really contributed to this situation is probably the greedy and selfish

manner in which we interpreted the concept of growth or development which is the central to the human existence. The law of growth presupposes that any growth will be subject to the innumerable constant factors, which govern the human life. Modern planners seem to have forgotten the simple truth that while something ought to grow, other ought to be diminishing, Schumacher has rightly pointed out – “unlimited material consumption in a finite world is impossibility”.

Gandhi abandoned the luxurious life, which he could have easily afforded and identified himself with less polluting poor people. This is because perhaps – one of the basic and profound tenants of Gandhian environmentalism, is that – “the earth provides enough to satisfy everyone’s need, but not for anyone’s greed”. Here is a statement that; makes Gandhi a prophet not of the past but also of the future. The statement related to the most basic and fundamental question as to what is enough for need based comfortable life style. If we take more than we need, we are actually taking from others we are also taking from the future and destroying environment. Gandhiji opted for voluntary simplicity so as to end over consumption is consuming more than our need, because ultimately that would be at the expenses of earth’s resources. According to Mr. Mustafa Jolba, former Executive Director (UNEP) - “unless we begin to use natural resources rationally and fairly, the world would face an environmental catastrophe as complete and irreversible as any nuclear holocaust”. Gandhiji felt, we can use the bounties of nature, but not with an element of greed. He was a vegetarian and had compassion for all forms of life. Infact, he advocated – “man has no power to create life, therefore has no right to kill any life also”. Gandhi also believed that – “Non-violence and compassion are not to be practiced only towards living beings, but also towards inanimate materials. Overuse of the latter, motivated by greed and the desire to undue profit at the expense of bio-sphere, is also violence, since it deprives others of the use of such materials.”

Gandhi addressed himself to the problems of sanitation and told – “sanitation should occupy the foremost place”. A Latin proverb says that – a healthy mind is possible only in a healthy body. He also said – Ahmedabad can not evade the responsibility of sanitation by pleading poverty. Anyone who fouls the air by spitting about carelessly, throwing refuse or rubbish otherwise dirtying the grounds, sins against man and nature. Man’s body is the temple of God. Anyone who fouls the air that enters that temple desecrates it, his taking the name of lord Ram is in vein”. “We like to have an enjoyable bath, but don’t mind dirtying the well tanks and river, by whose side of in which we perform ablutions. These practices should be considered as a great vice, which is responsible for the disgraceful state of our villages and the sacred bank of sacred rivers and for the diseases those springs due to the lack of sanitation”.

Gandhi’s environmentalism, was based on various ethical principles such as :- non-violence, practicing and preventing truth, shunning the use of materials obtained by illegitimate means, celibacy – as a means of population control, neither coveting or amassing materials and wealth beyond one’s need, sanitation of body, mind and surrounding, contentment with available resources austerity, introspection and meditation and even fasting for self purification and any dereliction of duties towards nature including human beings. In this process he controlled himself by himself, because, being a yogi, he had complete control over his body and mind. He did not preach anything that he did not practice himself. Other principles followed by him were emancipation and empowerment of women, and welfare of poorer sections of the society. These principles, those Gandhiji adopted ultimately gave him an internationally acclaimed acceptance of a great pacifist, a democrat, a defender of rights and privileges of downtrodden and of women and last but not least, a social and economic environment.

Once the great Nobel Prize winning Scientist, Sir Albert Einstein spoke on Gandhiji – “Generations to come, will scarcely believe that, such a person as this ever in flesh and blood, walked upon this earth”. The moral influence which Gandhi has experienced upon the thinking of the people of the world, may be for more durable than it would appear likely in our present age ... The best way to pay the proper homage to this immortal should today, is to adopt his basic principles and policies towards life through practicing the self-reliance and self-governance, which ultimately would help to achieve environmentally sustainable development, enabling us to return a “Green Globe” to our future generation, in fact from whom we have borrowed this planet (Document,2010).

Environmental Thoughts of Gandhi for a Green Future:-

We live in a world in which science, technology and development play important roles in changing human destiny. However, over-exploitation of natural resources for the purpose of development leads to serious environmental hazards. Infact, the idea of development is itself controversial in the present situation as in the name of development, we are unethically plundering natural resources. It is true that science does not respect nature’s needs and development which does not respect people’s needs threatens human survival. The green thoughts of Gandhi give us a new vision to harmonize nature with the needs of people. M. K. Gandhi was not an environmentalist in the modern sense. Although he did not create a green philosophy or write nature poems, he is often described as an “apostle of applied human ecology” (Khoshoo, 1995, p.9). It is a fact that environmental concerns were minimal in Gandhi’s time, but eminent environmental writers like Ramchandra Guha consider him an early environmentalist (Guha, 1998, p.67). His views on nature are scattered throughout his writings. His ideas relating to Satyagraha based on truth and non-violence, simple life style, and development reveal how sustainable development is possible without doing any harm to nature and our

fellow beings. His idea that “nature has enough to satisfy every one’s needs but not to satisfy anybody’s greed” became one line ethic to modern environmentalism. Gandhi considered the earth a living organism. His ideas were expressed in terms of two fundamental laws – cosmic law and law of species. Cosmic law views the entire universe as a single entity. Nothing could malfunction outside the threshold limits built into the grand system that includes both living and non-living phenomena (Mishra, 2009, p.9). He believed that “the universe was structured and informed by the cosmic spirit, that all men, all life and indeed all creation were one” (Pa1989.p.72). He wrote: - “I believe in the advaita (non-duality), I believe in the essential unity of man and for the matter, of all that lives. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the world gains with him and if one man fails, the whole world fails to that extent” (Young India, 1924). Regarding the law of species Gandhi believed that without the cooperation and sacrifice of both human and non-human beings evolution is not possible. Being rational human beings, we are the custodians of the rest of creation and should respect their rights and cherish the diversity. It is for this reason that taking more than the required resources is seen as theft. Gandhi evolved these principles from his vast readings and understandings of religious traditions of Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam. His social, economic and political ideas were framed on the understanding of interdependence of the whole universe. Truth, Non-violence and Satyagraha:-

Truth and Non-violence are the fundamentals of Gandhian Philosophy. Non-violence and Ahimsa means non-injury, but to Gandhi non-violence was much more than the absence of violence. He used it to mean non-injury in thought word and deed. Ahimsa, Satyagraha and Tapasya were the basic principles that guided his life. To Gandhi truth is that “which determines the spirit in which one lives or the religious and ethical criteria which governs the way in which he thinks and acts” (Richards, 1991, p.33). He believed that truth can be achieved only by means of non-violence. It affords the

fullest protection to one's self respect and sense of honor. The concept of Satyagraha gave practical expression to the religious and ethical ideas of truth and non-violence. Tapasya or self-sacrifice is necessary to achieve the highest truth. It involves freedom from fear and a willingness to die. Gandhi believed that Satyagraha is nothing, but Tapasya for the truth. The suffering that has to be undergone in Satyagraha is Tapasya in its fullest form (CWMG, 1965, p.13). The ecological scope of non-violence is unlimited. Gandhi's faith in non-violence and vegetarianism made him a votary of conservation of all diversity including all forms of life, societies, cultures, religions and Traditions. Arne Naess, the pioneer of deep ecology argued that ecological preservation is non-violent in nature (Naess, 1988, p.26). Naess introduced and Thomas Weber systematized the relation between non violence, self realization and mutual dependence of all living in the following points:-

- (1) Self-realization presupposes a search for truth;
- (2) All living beings are one;
- (3) Himsa (Violence) against one self makes self-realization impossible;
- (4) Himsa against a living being is himsa against oneself;
- (5) Himsa against a living being makes complete self-realization impossible (Weber, 2009.p.18).

Naess used these principles to evolve a broader philosophy of environmentalism i.e., deep ecology. He believed that Gandhi's utopia is one of the few that shows ecological balance (Naess, 2005). As Gandhi envisaged, non-violence has the power to solve all our problems, including ecological crisis. Many thinkers considered the Indian Environmental Movements like Chipko Movement, Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) etc as the living example of Gandhian Environmentalism and they consider Gandhi as a "man with deep ecological view of life, a view much too deep even for deep ecology"

(Sharma,2003,p.45). The key agenda of the Chipko Movement was that carrying forward the "vision of Gandhi's mobilization for a new society, where neither man nor nature is exploited and destroyed, which was the civilization response to a threat to human survival" (Shiva,2007,p.21). All these together made Gandhi an exponent of Indian environmentalism.

Gandhi's Critique of Modern Civilization:-

Modern industrial civilization has had a huge impact on human kind as well as on the environment. It made a small part of the population wealthy at the cost of exploiting the world's natural resources. Gandhi believed that it propagates nothing other than the hunger for wealth and the greedy pursuit of worldly pleasures (Roy, 1985, Pp36-38). Hind Swaraj, Published in 1909, criticized the modern civilization as "Satanic". He observed that machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization, it represents a great sin. It is machinery that has impoverished India (Gandhi, 1938, p.81). The distinguishing characteristic of modern civilization is an indefinite multiplicity of wants, whereas ancient civilizations were marked by an imperative restriction upon, and a strict regulating of these wants. Gandhi believed that the ancient civilizations were religious in nature which would surely limit worldly ambitions (Young India, 1927)).

Gandhi believed that true civilization values are not present in modern civilization. In Hind Swaraj Gandhi argued that what we think as "civilization" today is an illusion, and that any civilization that ill treated outsiders could hardly avoid ill treating its own people, Gandhi's critique of western civilization and science emanates from his dissatisfaction with the divorce of science and progress from morality. He was not against the technology, but the technologism which creates a hierarchical relationship among men as well as between men and nature. Gandhi believed that the greatest achievements of modern civilization have been weapons of mass destruction, the awful growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes

between capital and labour and cruelty inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of science and technology. He believed a science to be science only if it afforded the fullest scope for satisfying the hunger of body, mind and soul. Modern civilization involved an egregious amount of violence against nature which was largely seen as man's property. This undermined man's unity with his environment and fellowmen and destroyed stable and long established communities. Natural resources were ruthlessly exploited and their rhythm and balance disturbed while animals were killed or tortured for human needs. Gandhi believed that villages would soon disappear due to the urbanization which is part of modern civilization is a product. While the western environmentalist spread the message of "going back to the nature" Gandhi spread the message of "going back to the villages". He believed that "the blood of the village is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built".

Ecological Economics of Gandhi:-

Modern economy is "Propelled by a frenzy of greed and indulges in an orgy of envy" (Schumacher, 2011, p.18). It makes man more materialistic at the risk of majority and the environment. Gandhi asserted that "true economics stands for social justice; it promotes the good of all equality, including the weakest and is indispensable for decent life" (Harijan, 1937). Dr. J. C. Kumarappa summed up Gandhian economic ideas as constituting philosophy that sought "economy of permanence" (Kumarappa, 1946, p.95). All nature is dovetailed together in a common cause". Kumarappa argued that "when this interconnection works out harmoniously and violence does not break the Chain, we have an economy of permanence". Gandhian economic concepts like Swadeshi, trusteeship, bread labor etc. received attention and acceptance from the whole world. The Swadeshi Spirit encourages us to consume commodities made from our own villages, thus promoting small scale industries which help ordinary farmers and weavers to live happily. Limitation of wants is

another important aspect in Gandhian economics. Our civilization, culture and Swaraj depend on the restriction of wants. Bread labor is another important economic concept of Gandhi. He valued bodily labor saying "the rains come not through intellectual feats, but through sheer bodily labor. It is well established scientific fact that where forests are denuded of trees, rains cease, where trees are planted rains are attracted and the volume of water received increases with the increase of vegetation"(Young India,1925). The Gandhian concept of bread labor encourages the use of human hands and body instead of machines to produce essential items like vegetable, cloth etc. The economic ideas of Gandhi differed from conventional economics and bore close resemblances with ecological economics. The term sustainable development was not much discussed at Gandhi's time, but his ideal vision of the world known as Sarvodaya safeguard the rights of future generations, through the welfare of all.

Gandhian Conflict Resolution and Environment:-

Conflict resolution is an emerging branch of social science which deals with the techniques to resolve conflicts between nations or between individuals. It can also be applied to address environmental issues. Whenever there is a mismatch between different interests, conflict arises. Gandhian non-violence or Satyagraha is accepted by many as an effective technique of conflict resolution. Gandhi never used the word "conflict resolution", instead he use terms like mediation and 'negotiation'. He never considered conflicts as problems; they were opportunities for moral growth and transformation. The contribution of Gandhi in conflict resolution was his "working hypothesis that the non-violent resolution of group conflict was a practical goal" (SWAN,1998, p.5). His philosophy of truth and non-violence contribute to the theory of conflict resolution. So far as the Indian environmental movements are concerned, the conflict is often between different interest groups or between the state and people, and are often led by peasant groups or tribal people. It is

often in the form of struggle for the protection of livelihood control over resources or some form of self-determination. Environmental injustice and marginalization are considered as instances of structural violence. As Gandhi believed violence and counter violence will never help to resolve conflicts, he considered Satyagraha as they “only force of universal application be that of Ahimsa or love” to fight these kinds of problems (CWMG,1965, p.341). It is entirely different from mere passive resistance, where there is no scope for mutual love. In passive resistance, Gandhi believed “there is a scope for hatred” but “Satyagraha may be offered to one’s nearest and dearest” (CWMG, 1965, p.97). Environmental movements in India used Satyagraha as the moral equivalent of war. Forest Satyagraha was first used effectively in Chipko movement to protest against deforestation. Gandhain techniques like Padayatras were conducted to save nature. Conflict resolution techniques based on non-violence and self-sacrifice were used by environmental activities like Chandi Prasad Bhatt, Baba Amte, Sunderlal Bahuguna, Medha Patkar and others.

Several decades before the rise of environmental movements, Gandhi picked up fundamental environmental issues like over consumption, violence to man and nature and so on. There is several movements in different parts of globe fighting against environmental injustice. Some of them are violent in nature, but in India environmental movements have been forged by Gandhian tradition of non-cooperation and non-violence. The Gandhain definition of non-violence is far more than mere passive resistance, rather “it is a way of life, which affects everything from what a person eats through to how they relate to the world around them”. Gandhian Satyagraha often functions as a conflict resolution technique. Gandhi believed that “the economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts” (Doyle, 2005, p.18). Gandhi observed that the Indian situation demanded a new vision on economics which is centered as

central to his environmental philosophy. The tussle among different ideologies with distinct preferences made way for a strong relativistic outlook by the close of the previous millennium. Below we posit Gandhi in relation to this.

Gandhi and Post Colonialism or Post Modernity:-

Reading Ruskin's "Unto This Last" on the train from Johannesburg to Durban in 1904 Gandhi experienced a conversion. In his autobiography, - Gandhi says "I determined to change my life in accordance with (Ruskin's) Ideals" Of all the books that he had read, "the one that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life was Unto This Last. I translated it later into Gujarati, entitling it Sarvodaya (the welfare of all)". Gandhi summarizes Ruskin's anti-industrial utopianism in three main lessons:-

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's; in as-much as well have the same right to earning their livelihood from their work.
3. That a life of labor, it, the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living (Gandhi, 1960, Pp.364-365).

Gandhi reframes Ruskin for the Indian context. Ruskin was anti-industrial, pre-capitalist communalism – the sort of communalism that Gandhi identified with traditional Indian village life. Gandhi and his advocacy of Khaddar, or home spun cloth, and of Swadeshi, which involved his rejection of British manufacture. In contrast to Marx, Ruskin defends imperialism not because the path to utopia for non-western societies lies through capitalism and industrialization but because those societies consist of inferior races that need to be ruled for their own good. Like many other partial critics of imperialism, Ruskin

sometimes criticizes what the British are doing in, say, India largely by upholding an ideal model of what they should be doing, of the right way to discipline barbarians. Ruskin can declare that “every mutiny ... every terror, and every crime, occurring under ... our Indian legislation, arises directly out of our national desire to live on the loot of India”(Sherburne, 1972, p.205).

Ruskin often advocates an idealized, Chivalric imperialism, as he sometime also – while damning modern, industrialized, democratic, or mass warfare – advocates war in Chivalric terms. Gandhi could not have guessed what Ruskin thought about India just from reading *Unto This Last*. However, Ruskin’s greatest British disciple, William Morris, must have had difficulty reconciling the utopian, quasi-socialist, and at times anti-imperialist Ruskin with the authoritarian, imperialist, racist Ruskin.

The Anglo-Indian hybridity of the idea of Post Industrialism also suggests that the anti-machinery attitudes shared by Ruskin and Gandhi, Morris and Commaraswamy affected not only what Martin Wiener call “the decline of the industrial spirit” in Britain but the decline of British imperialism in India and elsewhere. Meanwhile “Modernization” and “Development” – euphemisms for the continued economic exploitation that, as early as 1965, Kwame Nkrumah called “neo-colonialism” – are the order of the day in India and apparently everywhere else around the globe (Kwame, 1965).

Was Gandhian Anti-industrialization or Post-industrialism – ever a realistic alternative to more and bigger industrialization, with its attendant scourges of economic exploitation and environmental degradation? Was there ever a moment during the emergence of Post-colonial India when a renewal of traditional village life was a viable option? Even after his assassination in 1948, Gandhi’s vision of a new India based on non-violent, de-centered communitarianism rather than on centralized, violent, state socialism or capitalism has

continued to motivate the Sarvodaya movement associated with Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan, or land re-distribution programme, and with the work of A. T. Ariyaratna in Sri Lanka. Gandhian communitarianism also informs the environmentalist movement and "Greens" both within and beyond India (Schumacher, 1973). Despite Gandhi and Gandhism, however, from Jawaharlal Nehru forward the Congress party leadership has favoured centralization and big technology – Tata Steel, Air India, and nuclear power. But the 1984 Union Carbide disaster at Bhopal, like the Chernobyl meltdown two years later, dramatizes the downside that all industrial so-called progress seems to entail. "To change to industrialism", Gandhi warned, "is to court disaster" (Nehru, 1960, p.325). Gandhi as growing more amenable to the idea that some large-scale industries are necessary and desirable as long as they are state-owned. Nehru also insists that the Indian National Congress "has ... always been in favour of the industrialization of India, and at the same time has emphasized the development of Cottage Industries and worked for this". But while agreeing that machinery could sometimes be useful, Gandhi consistently opposed large scale industrialization and state centralization. He can be considered an advocate of appropriate technology for a sustainable economy and environment and would have agreed with Panty and Coomaraswamy that, in so far as possible, workers exercising local, democratic autonomy should decide what machinery (if any) should be used for specific tasks.

Nevertheless, the subaltern studies collective and some other recent Indian theorists including Aijaz Ahmad take what can only be called a skeptical stance toward Gandhism. Thus Partha Chatterjee views Gandhi's anti-industrial communitarianism as a moral essentialism antithetical to historicism, "the dominant thematic of Post-Enlightenment thought (Chatterjee, 1993, p.97). Also, Gandhi was instrumental in consolidating "The national by decrying the modern", and Partha Chatterjee claims, Gandhi's anti-industrial critique of capitalism was merely the antithesis that has helped to

promote the thesis, industrial capitalism (Chatterjee, 1993, p.51). For Chatterjee in other words, Gandhism has helped to spawn precisely that which Gandhi must abhor. And Ahmad Treats Gandhi's anti-industrialism as little more than a Ruskinian "Romantic orientalism". But by viewing Gandhian utopianism as naïve, essentialist, and romantic, Chatterjee and Ahmad seem implicitly to affirm the course of industrialization that Post-colonial India has pursued. Do they mean also to affirm the Enlightenment "Project of Modernity"? A "Subalternist" perspective, emphasizing peasant and working class historical agency, might instead be expected to echo Gandhi, and also C. M. Bird wood and Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy, by valuing aspects of Indian Village Culture with its arts and crafts "Cottage Industries" that remain preferable to life in modernizing Bombay or New Delhi (Pandey, 1988, pp.233-348).

No doubt the utopian imagination has limitations; perhaps it is always romantic, nostalgic, backward looking. But, as Andre Gorz contends, "those who propose a fundamentally different society can no longer be condemned in the name of realism. On the contrary, realism now consists of acknowledging that 'industrialism' has reached a stage where it can go no further, blocked by obstacles of its own making" (Gorz, 1985, p.1). Another perspective on Gandhian anti-industrialism (less dismissive of it than are Chatterjee and Ahmad) might ask whether a renewal of pre or post-industrial village culture may not be a viable economic alternative and not just for India – an alternative that modernizing nation-states around the globe have buried in the ruins of their relentless pursuit of "the mirage of modernization". The idea of such an alternative path the non-industrial, non-violent, decentralized, democratic, communitarian and economically and ecologically sustainable path that Morris imagined and that Gandhi wanted India to follow – may turn out to be the only rational blueprint for survival. In any event, Gandhi was surely more insightful about the crisis of modernity that Chatterjee and Ahmad acknowledge. "If the village perishes", Gandhi declared, "India will

perish too". For a land of seven hundred thousand village", such a prognosis seems self-evident.

While Government in India, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere struggle to industrialize, much current discourse in Britain – once in the Vanguard of both empire building and industrialism is now gloomy focused on “the decline of the industrial spirit” and “de-industrialization”. The first modern nation state to industrialize, Britain may also be the first Post-modern nation state “to return across the watershed of industrialization” (Gable, 1985, p.37). Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy identifies the utopian tradition in western literature with what he calls the “inspired tradition” of the world’s great religions, including Hinduism. Citing Plato’s Republic, he writes, “Thus the ideal society is ... a kind of co-operative work-shop in which production is ... for use and not for profit ... the arts are not directed to the advantage of anything but their object ... and that is ... to satisfy a human need ... (thus serving humanity) in a way that is impossible where goods are made for sale rather than for use, and in quantity rather than quality. According to Anand Coomaraswami, as do Ruskin, Morris and Gandhi, that the most important product of industrialism isn’t progress, but the destruction of civilization – that is destruction of the very possibility of a social formation in which both justice and beauty prevail (Coomaraswami, 1977).

Gandhi’s Critique of the Modern Western Civilization:-

For Gandhi civilization was by definition a moral enterprise, “civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty” (Gandhi, 1939). Hence it is the very basic ethos of this modern west that Gandhi sets himself against., The three recurrent themes in Hind Swaraj are:- Colonial imperialism, industrial capitalism and rationalist materialism.

Colonial Imperialism:-

Gandhi categorically insisted that “the English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them” (Gandhi, 1939). He was one of the earliest to realize that colonialism was something to be overcome in our own consciousness first. Unless this ‘Intimate Enemy’ was exorcized and exiled, unless we addressed this loss and recovery of self under colonialism, we would always be a people enslaved by one power or another, whether foreign or native. Certainly, Gandhi would not want to exchange an external colonialism for an internal one, a white Sahib for a brown one, or compensate the loss of ‘Hindustan’ with ‘Englishtan’ (Gandhi, 1939).

British India colonialism was first justified by a supposedly Christianizing mission, but very soon this was articulated in terms of a civilizing one. In rejecting this modern civilization, Gandhi is subverting the legitimacy of the colonial enterprise at its core. For there could be no colonialism without a civilizing mission (Nandy, 1983, p.11). Since it could hardly be sustained in India by brute force.

Industrial Capitalism:-

Gandhi sees capitalism as the dynamic behind colonial imperialism. Lenin too had said as much, and like Marx, Gandhi’s rejection of capitalism is based on a profound repugnance to a system where profit is allowed to degrade labour, where the machines are valued more than humans, where automation is preferred to humanism. It was this that moved Gandhi to his somewhat hyperbolic claim, “Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization, it represents a great sin” (Gandhi, 1939). However, by 1919 his views on machinery do begin to change right up to 1947, as he gradually comes to concede some positive aspects like time and labour saving, even as he warns against the negative ones of concentrating wealth and displacing workers (Parel, 1997, Pp.164-170). He was acutely sensitive to how machinery can dehumanize and technology alienate,

and he extends his critique to the professions of medicine and law (Gandhi, 1939). The poor hardly benefit from these professional services, though they are often their victims. He backs up his criticism of these professions in Hind Swaraj with a later suggestion for their nationalization (Gandhi, 1965, p.17).

Rationalist Materialism:-

Technology is the expression of science, which in modern civilization becomes an uncompromising rationalism. For Gandhi this is but a dangerously truncated humanism. His incisive remark is much to the point, "Just as dirt is matter misplaced, and reason misplaced is lunacy! I plead not for the suppression of Reason, but for a due recognition of that in us which sanctifies reasons itself" (Gandhi, 1965, p.106). However, Gandhi would test his faith with his reason, but he would not allow his reason to destroy his faith. What makes such technological rationalism even more destructive in Gandhi's view, is its flawed materialism. That is, the negation of the spiritual, the transcendent, or in other words, the denial of a religious world views.

For Gandhi truth was much more than could be grasped by science or reason. For him there was a reality beyond that perceived by the senses. It is this transcendent reality that gave meaning and value to our present one. Gandhi is very much in the mainstream of Hindu tradition. Indeed, most religious traditions would be similarly sensitive to such a transcendent world, even when it is not perceived as wholly other worldly. In a more secular world today we may not be sympathetic to such a worldview. And yet a materialism that is deterministic leaves no scope for human freedom and hope. Gandhi emphasizes this reaching out to a beyond, that gives this freedom and hope its dynamism and a reach beyond its grasp.

Relevance of Gandhi's Critique Today:-

Gandhi's critique of modern civilization does overlook many of its strengths, its scientific and critical spirit of inquiry, its human control over the natural world, its organizational capacity. Such achievement would imply a certain 'spiritual dimension' that Gandhi seems to have missed (Parekh,1997, p.35). However, the focus of his criticism is modern civilization of a specific period, his condemnation of colonialism focuses on its imperialistic inspiration, his rejection of industrialism derives mostly from its capitalist context, his apprehensions about rationality regard its truncation by materialism.

However, once the real limitations of Gandhi's critique are acknowledged, then we can better contextualize and interpret his relevance for us today, whether this be with regard to politics in our neo-colonial world or technologies in our post-industrialist times, or culture in our post-modern age. These will now be some of the issues on which we must allow Gandhi to interrogate us. For "the kinds of questions Gandhi asked nearly eight decades ago are the ones which now face both the underdeveloped and post-industrial societies caught up in a deep upsurge of confusion and disillusionment" (Sethi,1973, p.3).

Neo-colonialism:-

Gandhi's rejection of the supposedly civilizing mission of colonialism brings into question the whole legitimacy of colonial rule, at a fundamental ethical level. Thus, he opens up a host of ethical issues between the colonizer and the colonized, the dominant and the dominated, the oppressor and oppressed. The post-colonial era brought such issues into sharper focus across the world. Now with globalization leading to a unipolar world, such concerns with empowerment and disempowerment, dependency and interdependency, have gained, not lost their urgency. Moreover closer home this widening divide bears down on us more decisively than ever before. Thus, our post-colonial world can only be described as a neo-

colonial one, inter-nationally divided into developed and developing nations, as also intra-nationally between privileged and underprivileged citizens. Moreover, these divisions are mutually reinforced, not just economically and politically but culturally and socially as well.

For the colonial masters had stripped our collective identity of any intrinsic dignity by denigrating us as a cowardly and passive people. Gandhi sought to reverse this damage to our collective psyche by his "redefinition of courage and effective resistance in terms of or through non-violence (Roy, 1986, p.185).

Post-industrialism:-

With the new technologies there was much hope for a new freedom from degrading and monotonous work. However, what seems to have come into replace this degrading monotony is not a new dignity of labour but rather a compulsive consumerist society, which is but dehumanizing in newer ways. This should hardly surprise us since the ethic underlying post-industrialism is the same as that which underpinned industrial capitalism, namely the profit motive and the market mechanism. Gandhi's critique was precisely a condemnation of these. If we find his ideas of trusteeship a little naïve and impractical our environmental crises are surely a manifestation of this loss of innocence, even to the point when we want newer technologies to repair the damage already done by the older ones. Gandhi was precisely rejecting such a naïve "nineteenth century optimism which sought for the positive sciences the liberation of humanity" (Nandy, 1986, p.102).

Post Modernism:-

The excessive and aggressive rationalism of the age of reason now seems to have turned on itself with the post-modern revolt. But this has thrown up its own irrationalities. It seems to have lost the liberating project that was implicit in modernity. For the kind of

relativising and subjectivising of ethics that post-modernism has led to undermine the claims of any justice. For there can hardly be any mutually accepted legitimacy to arbitrate conflicting claims, when consensus irrevocably breaks down, so might becomes right and the power its own legitimation.

Gandhi and Post Modernism:-

Gandhi's critique of modernity was focused on modernist rationalism, but it was equally opposed to a post modern rejection of rationality. What Gandhi was pleading for is a richer concept of rationality and a Meta Theory of rationalism (Parekh, 1995, pp.165-166). He wanted to contain excessive rationality within reasonable bounds without an irrational revolt against reason itself, but he would emphatically reject any forced choice between totalizing rationalism and relativising subjectivism.

Gandhi has been severely criticized as impractical, as someone who took out an impossible overdraft on human moral resources. But this is to claim that human beings are not capable of a metanoia, a radical change of heart that can open up new perspectives, not just for individuals and groups, but for entire societies and whole cultures as well. We need organic intellectuals and transformative activists who can articulate and precipitate such a social movement. The cascading crises that our society and our world is experiencing, only underlines more emphatically the need to find new ways of redefining ourselves and understanding our problems, before we can begin to respond to the situation.

M. K. Gandhi as a Constructive Post-Modern Thinker:-

Modern is a form of thought that loves to dichotomize. It separates subjects from subject from objects, the inner from the outer, the private from the public, fact from value, individuals from their communities, and rights from responsibilities, procedural justice from the good and religion from science. Constructive Post-modernists wish

to re-establish the post-modern harmony of humans, society and the sacred without losing the integrity of the individual, the possibility of meaning, and the intrinsic value of nature. Constructive Post-modernists want to preserve the concept of world view and propose to reconstruct one that avoids and propose to reconstruct one that avoids the liabilities of both post-modernism and modernism.

One of Gandhi's most basic assumptions appears to be thoroughly modernist. This is his firm belief in the integrity of the individual; "the individual is the one supreme consideration", and "if the individual ceases to count, what is left of society"? (Harijan, 1942). The most extreme position in modern political philosophy is anarchism, and Gandhi shares its fear of the power of state: "It does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress" (Bose, 1972, p.63). For Gandhi individuals must act on their own truth regardless of the consequences and regardless of whether others think they are in error. This proviso is foundational to Gandhi's experiments with truth. This affirmation of the integrity and reality of the individual is the principal reason why Gandhi cannot relate to post-modern forms of thought such as Advaita Vedanta. If individuals are ultimately illusory or even derivatively real, the very foundations of Gandhi's engaged ethics and political activism are undermined.

One could also argue that even though he differed with other Indian nationalists, his own nationalism was modernist in its main points, especially if it is seen in connection with his anarchism and utopianism. But his views appear more communitarian and thus post-modern when, in *Hind Swaraj*. Gandhi makes a significant difference between a genuine nation formed as community (*Praja*) and a nation of individuals merely held together by state power (*rastra*). As Anthony Parel states, "Hind Swaraj does not propound the modern concept of nation in so far as the latter is based on the notions of brute force, the priority of national interest, and a principle of exclusiveness based

either religion, or language, or race". Even the relatively innocuous state apparatus of liberal democracy does not escape Gandhi's critical eye. Although it is theoretically designed to do so, liberal democracies do not empower individuals, rather, as Bhikhu Parekh so aptly phrases it, they abstract "power from the people, concentrate it in the state and then return it to them in their new (abstract roles) as citizen". This critique holds true only for the morally neutral procedural liberalism that is now being reformed by thinkers such as Gamwell, Macedo and Galston.

Parel's and Parekh's views of Gandhi's political philosophy allow us to get our first glimpse of a post-modern Gandhi. His views of the nation state is arguably post-modern in that it offers India as a model for a new type of polity, one which has already proved itself, with some unfortunate exceptions, to be a success in bringing sixteen different major language groups and six world religions together, not by brute force but by the rule of law and representative democracy. The centralized Indian federal government and its five year plans are of course something Gandhi would have strongly rejected. Gandhi's post-modern vision of nationhood is one based on decentralized local control, assimilation and tolerance of cultural differences, and above all, non-violence. The "decentering" the self and its national analogues is the crux of all post-modern philosophy. Gandhi's position, however, definitely does not go as far as Jacques Derrida's view, which has been described as a "radical form of democracy, one without representation, and therefore one in which even individuals' representations of them would be drawn constantly into question" (MacDonald, 1990. P.230). Gandhi's commitment to civil disobedience also appears to be modernist and is intimately related to the issue of Gandhi's professed anarchism. Gandhi called his village republicanism a form of "enlightened anarchy" in which "everyone is own ruler". (From this angle Gandhi's village does not appear communitarian at all.) He agrees with Henry David Thoreau that "Government is best that governs least", and he believed that

government is a necessary evil. Close scrutiny of Thoreau's on civil Disobedience and the Gandhian texts reveal that neither thinker is an anarchist in any of the traditional senses. Gandhi spoke fervently of his village communities as ideal states, but he was keenly aware of human fallibility and the limits of reason, especially the calculative reason of modern mass political organization.

Joan Bondurant has also taken issue with those commentators who have interpreted Gandhi's anarchism along traditional lines. Most anarchist theories are based on the idea of mutual self-interest and a rejection of all external sanctions. But Gandhi's practice of non-violence and self-suffering discourages self-interest and reintroduces constraint and coercion in a way unlike any other previous political theory. In addition to the two anarchist positions-violent overthrow of the authoritarian state or passive withdrawal from society altogether – Gandhi adds a third solution, which Bodurant believes solves the anarchist dilemma. Anarchists have always opposed the state because they believe that the only way it would assert its authority laws through violence. Gandhi's technique of Satyagraha (soul force) offers a non-violent way of restraining and persuading people to work for the common good. As Bondurant states, ---“Anarchists may claim a positive philosophy, but they, like other political theorists, have rarely sought a positive technique whereby a system could b realized” (Bondurant, 1988, pp.177-178). When Gandhi said that Indians should “Study [their] Eastern institutions in [a] spirit of scientific inquiry ... [to] evolve a truer socialism and a truer communism” this appears to be the synthesis of pre-modern and modern that we find in constructive post-modernism. His rejection of all political hierarchy is strong. “There will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles --- an oceanic circle whose centre outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle” (Gandhi, 1961, p.73). This is indubitably communitarian, but could Gandhi have realistically believed that these ever-widening circles will never ascend to national or international communities?

Gandhi's passionate belief in the unity of the world religious includes the integration of all cultures, accepting each of them on their own terms. At the same time, however, he would have insisted with equal passion that each and every person must be treated with equality and respect, and it would be difficult for anyone to believe that Gandhi would have rejected the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an appropriate international framework.

Gandhi's principal problem with modernism is its separation of fact and value. The goal of modern life, especially in its most utilitarian forms, is simply the satisfaction of one desire after the other. In *Hind Swaraj* Gandhi equates modernism with sensual self gratification and condemns it primarily for this reason. The modern worldview not only alienates us from nature but also alienate our desires from any moral end. The teleology of the ancients, that which gave their life its ultimate meaning and purpose, has been eliminated in modernism. Ironically, the power promised by modernism has in many instances turned to importance – either in complete hedonistic dissipation or the clash land mutual cancellation of personal and national power.

Bhikhu Parekh lists five “distinctively human powers” – self determination, autonomy, self-knowledge, self-discipline and social cooperation – that Gandhi would have required for any great civilization. According to Gandhi, all five of these capacities are threatened by modern civilization, with the last three as the most weak and vulnerable. Except for the spiritual self determination land autonomy of the Yogis, which does not have a political or even a moral goal, these two characteristics have not been strong in Asian thought either.

We can now see what Gandhi meant when he said that his attack on modern civilization was not an attack on the west, because each of his basic human powers is part of the European tradition. The great irony is that Gandhi was initially inspired to recapture this lost

ground by European thinkers (Socrates, Leo Tolstoy, John Ruskin and Henry David Thoreau) and by English translations and expressions of his own Indian tradition. It is obvious that Socrates and Thoreau's "Soul Force" is strongly activist compared to the passive "Soul Force" of his Hindu tradition. Gandhi's own Vaisnava tradition is known for its dynamic spirituality but not for political confrontation, so Euro-American activism represents an important key to Gandhi's idea of Satyagraha and progressive non-violence.

Gandhi was so profoundly influenced by Socrates and Thoreau that his strong individualism appears to be a form of social atomism, which of course it can not ultimately be. Constructive post-modernism has generally sought a middle way between extremes of social atomism on the one hand and the dissolution of the self in Hegelian or Vedantist schools on the other.

Following the lead of Gandhi and constructive post-modernism's fusion of the inner and outer, non-violence would not be optional personal virtue but a required civic virtue. As future citizens, children should be taught that violence is never morally necessary and that conflicts should always be resolved peacefully. In a society not as steeped in violence as ours, the police such as British Bobbies could do most of their work unarmed, relying on SWAT teams only in extreme circumstances. The armed forces could also be established on the same principles with the use of violence only in a direct attack on the country. With regard to violence against animals, Gandhi's doctrine of vegetarianism, just as with his ideal of the ashram, will obviously not be practical. But the abolition of feedlots for cattle and fish farming would turn society in the right direction. Gandhi actually accepts this less than ideal State:- "A government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent, because it represents all the people But I do believe in the possibility of a pre-dominantly non-violent society".

At the end of this chapter one is left in no doubt that Gandhi's ideas have been inexhaustible sources of inspiration to so many distinctive perspectives. However this very fact indicates a quality of Gandhi's approach to 'truths' where he does not reject any truth out of hand but extends it by enriching, extending, modifying or limiting that in a dynamic process, a quality, which we suggest, it shares with modern Republicanism, to which we will now turn in the next chapter.