

## CHAPTER - I

"Most religious men I have met", Gandhi once remarked to Mr. Polak, "are politicians in disguise; I however, Fundamental Thoughts and Ideas of Gandhi --- Was Gandhi a political philosopher?" who wear the guise of a politician, (1) am at heart a religious man".

"My bent is not political but religious", he wrote in a letter to (2)

Dr. Arundale in 1929. These statements provide a key to Gandhian philosophy. In all his thoughts and actions he took his stand on the principles of religion and morality. These were the very breath of his being. His political philosophy and political techniques were only corollaries of his religious and moral principles. For him politics bereft of religion was (3) a death trap because it kills the soul.

Therefore, Gandhi was not a political philosopher in the conventional, western sense of the term. He was not destined to propound a new political philosophy, nor did he pretend or profess to do that. He did not discard old philosophies, and, adhering to certain fundamental principles, and techniques based upon truth, he led men to the realisation of a better order of society than the destructive and cruel chaos in which mankind had hitherto existed. Gandhism is, thus, "not a set of doctrines or dogmas, rules or regulations, injunctions or inhibitions, but it is a way of life. It indicates a new attitude or restates an old one toward's life's issues and offers ancient

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solutions for modern problems". Gandhi never claimed finality for his opinions. He styled his activities as search for, or experiments with truth.

Gandhi himself said that "well, all my philosophy, if it may be called/<sup>by</sup> that pretentious name, is contained in what I have said. But you will not call it Gandhism, there is no 'ism' about it".<sup>(5)</sup> He observed, "there is no such thing as Gandhism, and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems ..... The opinions I have formed and conclusions I have arrived at are not final. I may change them tomorrow. I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could do...."<sup>(6)</sup>".

Gandhi was not a philosopher in the sense that he thought out a philosophy of life and chalked out a programme of action which he left to others to study and implement. He worked and experimented, identifying himself always and completely with the people. In the acid test of experience he remains not a politician or a reformer, not a philosopher or a moralist, but someone composed of them all, an essentially religious person endowed with the highest and most human qualities and made more lovable by the consciousness of his own limitations.<sup>(7)</sup>

Thus Gandhi never attempted to construct a

system of philosophy since he was not a professional philosopher. His domain was action. He was mainly concerned with applying the ideals and principles that had become part of his life, and in which he had unflinching faith. There was no department of life, particularly embracing the life of Indians, which he did not touch, which he did not influence and in which he did not make his own contribution. And, as a result, his thoughts and ideas could not have taken systematic and coherent form. Dr. Bonduarant writes: "Gandhi's political philosophy is, indeed elusive. To the scholar who seeks internally consistent systematised bodies of thought, the study of Gandhi is unrewarding".<sup>(9)</sup> Paul F. Power also states: "Divergent and sometimes conflicting positions can be traced throughout most of his public life,<sup>(10)</sup> although one may dominate the others during particular phases".

However, Gandhi had expressed his views on almost all important subjects which affect the lives of individuals, groups and nations and had highlighted some basic principles as guidelines for humanity. These basic ideas and the fundamental thoughts remain scattered in the brochures and pamphlets which were written by Gandhi during his life time, in his writings and speeches on a variety of topics, in his important speeches delivered on memorable and historic occasions, and finally, in the large number of letters written by Gandhi to many of his co-workers as well as men of public importance. Hence, for the better understanding of the present study, an

attempt has been made to present in brief the fundamental beliefs and ideas of Gandhi.

Society must provide opportunities for the maximum growth of the individual which consists in self-less service

(I) Metaphysical foundation and  
Ethical principles.  
Dharma -

of society and willing  
fulfilment of his social

obligations. In case either of the two goes wrong the other should resist non-violently. But apart from the pressure of the drastic step of non-violent direct action and the inward morality of the individual, both of which induce him to fulfil his social obligations, there is another non-violent factor which keeps the individual alive to these obligations. This is what Hindu thinkers call dharma.

In the village communities of ancient India social and economic life was regulated by dharma of which the law of varnashrama was an important part. The function of the state during those days was not to alter or amend dharma but to subserve it. The disciplinary function which the state performs today by means of law and coercion, mostly belonged, in ancient India, to voluntary associations employing non-coercive methods, that is, moral pressure. It was not a case of an utter lack of social restraint; non-violent moral pressure rather than coercion was the means of this restraint. In a free society Gandhi preferred it to the organised violence of the state.

Dharma is a system of culture and discipline rather than a creed. It is neither subjective in the sense of morality imposed by the individual's conscience, nor external like the law enforced by the state. Dharma is not a fixed code of mechanical rules, but a living spirit which grows and moves in response to the development of society. The function of dharma is to hold together harmoniously the social order and to act as a guide to the individual's conscience so as to train him to realise his potentialities .

Gandhi believed in the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation. Karma emphasises constant activation of moral energy by all individuals for the attainment of perfection. He wrote: "I believe in rebirth as much as I believe in the existence of my present body" . To him the law of Karma was inexorable and impossible of evasion. It has been called the law of moral continuity. Gandhi believed in the evolution of moral consciousness in man through successive births and in the accumulation of moral and spiritual merit (punya) and accepted that "death after a life truly lived is but a prelude to a better and richer life" .

Atman-nati, Universal Unliftment - In Gandhi's philosophy stress is always laid on the individual as the starting point of social regeneration. To him the problem of the group was essentially the problem of the individual. The reason for this emphasis was that man is above all the soul, and the progress of

society depends on the soul-force of the average individual. By means of deep faith and prayer, Gandhi prepared himself to realise God in the hearts of the dumb millions and went to the extent of saying: "I recognise no God except the God that is to be focussed in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognise their presence, I do" .

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There is no antithesis between genuine social service and the growth of moral individuality. According to Gandhi the work of individual salvation has to go hand in hand with the work of collective emancipation. Efforts, hence, have to be made for the enhancement of the good of all. All the inhabitants of the world, irrespective of race, denomination, caste and sex, are manifestations of God. Loyalty to this divine spirit implies that strenuous efforts have to be made for the growth of the sentiments of love, service, suffering and mutuality. The true sign of developed spirituality is the readiness to laydown one's life for the good of others .

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The central theme, the conceptual foundation of Gandhian thought, is 'non-violence'. It was for this reason Non-Violence : that, in offering a critique of the present day society, Gandhi had called it 'violent'. He rejected the basic frame as he found violence ingrained in it. He wanted to leap forward to a non-violent polity and the method of struggle or change that he sought to apply in the process was of 'non-violent Satyagraha'. He found no democracy possible without non-violence

and no institutional frame-work worth its keep until it became truly non-violent. Violence, according to this connotation, means 'exploitation', 'centralization of power' and 'dominance,' all that retards free expression and development of persons and institutions especially of the weak, who live at the base of the society. Non-violence is the antonym of all these; it means non-exploitation, non-organisation and non-dominance .<sup>(16)</sup>

To him, while truth was the end non-violence was the means. They were so intertwined that it was practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They were like the two sides of a coin .<sup>(17)</sup> Gandhi was so seriously committed to this ideal of non-violence that he declared "I would certainly retire from the political life if I find that India does not imbibe my message and that India wants a bloody revolution. I should have no part in that movement because I do not believe in its utility either for India or, which is the same thing,<sup>(18)</sup> for the world" . Non-violence can be used not only by isolated individuals, but by the masses and by nations in their mutual relations.

Gandhi said, "our non-violence to be true must be in word, thought and deed; non-violence is the law of our species, as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a

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higher law - to the strength of the spirit" . He wanted India to practise non-violence because he was conscious of her strength and power. It was his expectation that India would, through her path of non-violence, be a messenger of peace to the whole world. He had recognised that the nation had the right to vindicate her freedom even by actual violence. But in that case India would cease to be the land of  
(20) his love . He said: "If India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will  
(21) cease to evoke any pride in me" . For him non-violence was not a mere philosophical principle. It was the rule and the breath of his life. It was a matter not of the intellect but  
(22) of the heart .

In explaining the meaning and implications of non-violence, Gandhi laid stress on non-violence of the strong, not of the weak. Non-violence presupposes the ability to use physical force to defend the right, but its votary, applying conscious restraint, decides to use soul-force against the wrong-doer. Gandhi preferred violence, where there was only a choice between cowardice and violence. He said "... I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly  
(23) manner become or remain witness to her own dishonour" .

Gandhi's life was dedicated to the service of India through the religion of non-violence. Non-violence

in its dynamic condition, means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil doer, but it means putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul, and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration . Hence, he wrote "my creed is non-violence under all circumstances. My method is conversion, not coercion; it is self-suffering, not the suffering of the tyrant, I know that method to be infallible".

In its positive form non-violence means the largest love, the greatest charity, and it necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. It is no non-violence if we merely love those that love us. It is non-violence only when we love those that hate us . Thus "non-violence is a soul-force or the power of the Godhead within us. We become Godlike to the extent we realise non-violence" . Enemies we cannot have, if we practise non-violence. But if others feel enmity towards us, even of them we may not harbour an evil thought. To achieve this ideal, Gandhi said, will cost us many sleepless nights. But once we come near achieving it, the whole world is at our foot. "If you express your love-ahimsa-in such a manner that it impresses itself indelibly upon your so called enemy, he must return that love" .

Thus non-violence was considered by Gandhi as

immeasurably superior to violence. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will. Self sacrifice of one innocent man is a million times more potent than the sacrifice of a million men who die in the act of killing others .<sup>(29)</sup> 'There is no escape from the impending doom save through a bold and unconditional acceptance of the non-violent method with all its glorious implications'.<sup>(30)</sup>

In Gandhian philosophy means and ends are  
<sup>(31)</sup> convertible terms . He did not believe in the Machiavellian maxim that "the end justifies the means." Ends and Means

That is, if the end is desirable, even means like cunning, deceit, untruth, opportunism and violence are justified, if they help us to achieve the end. He discarded this Machiavellian diplomacy of terror and deception which, according to Gandhi, might seem to score for the time being over truth and love, justice and open-dealing. But the victory is partial and transitory. He was influenced by the Gita doctrine of 'niskama Karma' (action without attachment) which teaches us that a good deed only produces a good result. He believed that good means alone can lead us to lasting peace and progress .<sup>(32)</sup> In his view "means are after all everything. As the means, so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the creator has given us control over means, none over the end. Realisation of the goal is in

exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that  
admits of no exception" <sup>(33)</sup>. To quote Gandhi again, "the means  
may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree, and there is just  
the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as  
there is between the seed and the tree" <sup>(34)</sup>.

Gandhi's basic ideas on Satyagraha were evolved partly from his study of the teachings of Jesus, of Thoreau (1817-62) and of Tolstoy (1828-1910), as well as Satyagraha from his study of Hindu tradition; and partly from his leadership of (a) the Indian Community in South Africa in their struggle against racial discrimination practised by the white minority there, and (b) the non-co-operation and civil disobedience movements against the British Government in India (1920-  
<sup>(35)</sup> 1942).

The term Satyagraha was coined by Gandhi in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of passive resistance <sup>(36)</sup>. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end, whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest and excludes the use of violence and hatred in any shape or form. Satyagraha is a relentless search for truth and a determination to reach truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one's self.

Satyagraha, literally, means holding on to truth. Gandhi therefore, called it the 'soul force.'

Satyagraha is one of the most powerful methods of direct action. A Satyagrahi exhausts all other means before he resorts to Satyagraha. Gandhi also used it as his last weapon against injustice, after having exhausted all other possibilities of persuasion and conciliation.

Satyagraha stresses four basic ideas: (a) it is essentially the use of soul force. (b) Through the suffering of the Satyagrahi it appeals to the heart and thus seeks to convert the wrong doer. (c) It excludes the use of physical force, because 'man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish'. (d) 'Means and ends are convertible terms', 'as the means so the end'. A good result can be produced only by good means .

It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used against any sort of oppression and exploitation in political as well as in domestic affairs. It is a law of universal application. The idea underlying Satyagraha is to convert the wrong doer, to awaken the sense of justice in him, to show him also that without the co-operation, direct or indirect, of the wronged the wrong doer cannot do the wrong intended by him . It is never the intention of the

Satyagrahi to embarrass the wrong doer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, and must be, always to his heart. The Satyagrahi's object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrong doer.

A Satyagrahi never does anything out of fear from without. He should fear only God and a Satyagrahi never desires to reach the goal by harbouring or increasing ill will or hatred against his opponent .

He becomes a truly fearless person. Once his mind is rid of fear, he will never submit to any arbitrary action. Satyagraha is an attitude of mind. He who has attained the Satyagrahi's state of mind will remain ever victorious, at all times and places and under all conditions irrespective of whether it is a government or a people that he opposes, whether they be strangers, friends or relatives .

Thus Satyagraha is belief in the power of spirit, the power of truth, the power of love by which we can overcome evil through self-suffering and self-sacrifice. A Satyagrahi does not know what defeat is, for he fights for truth without losing any of his strength. Death in the struggle is release and prison a gateway wide open to liberty .

Gandhi observed "Satyagraha as a science is yet young". He wrote, "I have no set theory to go by. I have not worked out the science of Satyagraha in its entirety. I am

still groping, and Satyagraha as conceived by me is a science in  
(43)  
the making".

(2) Fundamental beliefs and ideas of Gandhi:

Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist, who ideally speaking, repudiated the state as such, whatever its form. Gandhi

(a) Political concept  
of Ideal State and  
Sarvodaya

believed that his end that is 'the greatest good of all' could be realized only in the classless stateless

democracy of autonomous village communities based on non-violence instead of coercion, on service instead of exploitation, on renunciation instead of acquisitiveness and on the largest measure of local and individual initiative instead of centralization. The (44)  
compulsive nature of state authority damages the moral value of the individual's action; for an action is moral only when it is voluntary. No action which is not voluntary can be called moral. (45)  
Besides, according to Gandhi, "the state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence." (46)

Gandhi held that violence was evil. Violence includes not only physical coercion but also economic and social coercion. Power of physical coercion belongs to the state. This power of the state to coerce is, according to Gandhi, a kind of organized violence in which lies the essence of the modern state. To quote Gandhi:

"I look upon an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress .....

What I disapprove of is an organization based on  
(47)  
force which a state is."

Therefore, the ideal society, which he named as Sarvodaya society was the stateless democracy, the state of enlightened anarchy where social life has become so perfect as to be self-regulated.

Gandhi said "..... one (book) 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)."

The teachings of "Unto This Last", he continued, "I understand to be: (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 all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work. (3) That a life of labour, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living ..... Sarvodaya (48) implies welfare of all secured by the conscious effort of

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everyone in the community. It is a new social order, planned by goodwill and co-operation. A believer of Sarvodaya and a votary of Ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula, - 'greatest good of the greatest number,' because under it the interests of a substantial minority could be sacrificed for the good of the majority. But a believer of Sarvodaya will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realise  
<sup>(49)</sup>  
the idea .

The Sarvodaya society of Gandhi's conception has to be based on the ideal of non-violence in every sphere. There must not be any social or economic exploitation of the poorer segments of the society. He said 'if we would see our dream of a Sarvodaya society realised, we would regard the humblest and the lowest Indian as being equal with the tallest in the land. In such a society the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the  
<sup>(50)</sup>  
employee, all would be placed on the same level'.

Sarvodaya society postulates that development of self-governing village communities, decision of local issues by consensus or near unanimity, limitation of wants and the development of people's capacity to run their affairs with minimum governmental control and assistance will lead to the  
<sup>(51)</sup>  
welfare of all and social harmony . Life in such a society will be a life of mutual aid and sharing, and of freedom.

Sarvodaya society will be based on truth and non-violence in which there will be no distinction of caste or creed, no opportunity for exploitation and full scope for development both for individuals as well as groups. Everybody would know how to earn an honest living by the sweat of one's brow and make no distinction between intellectual and physical labour. No one would then harbour any distinction between community and community, caste and outcaste. Everybody would regard all as equal with oneself and hold them together in the silken net of love...!

There is a somewhat detailed account of the ideal, decentralized classless, stateless, egalitarian society of non-violent citizens in Gandhi's Hind Swaraj, written in 1909.

Again, speaking of his own ultimate political ideal, he wrote in 1931: "If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a State, everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the Ideal State, therefore, there is no political power because there is no State. But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that the Government is best which governs the least."

Gandhi's ultimate ideal was Stateless society. Self-government, according to him, meant continuous effort to be

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independent of government control.

Therefore, Gandhi's ultimate political ideal was stateless democracy. The stateless society of self-regulating harmony was ideal in the Platonic sense that it was a model to strive for not a goal that could be attained. But as the 'golden age' was far off he thought it practicable to work for the realization of a 'predominantly non-violent society.' Gandhi stated: "Let us be sure of our ideal. We shall ever fail to realize it, but should never cease to strive for it."<sup>(55)</sup>

In the words of Dr. G. N. Dhawan: "The ideal non-violent society of Gandhiji, unattainable due to human imperfection, indicate the direction rather than the destination, the process rather than the consummation."<sup>(56)</sup>

The ultimate ideal of stateless society being unrealizable, Gandhi's thought was moving in the direction of the evolution of a predominantly non-violent state.

"By a non-violent state" says Dr. Dhawan, "we mean the state that is predominantly non-violent. A state depending as it does more or less on coercion is the negation of non-violence. The completely non-violent state would no longer be a state. It would then be the stateless society and society can be stateless when it is completely or almost completely non-violent. This is an ideal that may not be fully realized. What we may get in actual practice may be a predominantly

non-violent state advancing towards, though perhaps never reaching  
(57)  
the stateless stage."

Gandhi did not expect that his ideal social order could be realized in its fullness. It is not given to man to achieve perfection. But he said, 'Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in completeness. It sets a goal (58) to achieve.'

He was no mere visionary. Being a practical idealist, Gandhi believed that the ideal society of his conception could never be established in actual life. And, since an ideal society which he named as Sarvodaya society could not come into existence immediately, it was therefore, necessary to continue with the existing state, but modifying and purifying it with the nobler and virtuous ideals of Sarvodaya till the people were ready and worthy to be free of the state and government.

Taking for granted the human nature, as it was, he realized that it was impossible to achieve such a stage in the human development wherein there would be no necessity of the state organization to control human affairs. Therefore, he stood for an immediate goal of establishing a predominantly non-violent state. This predominantly non-violent state was Gandhi's second best ideal. Thus understanding the practical impossibility of realizing his ideal society, Gandhi had to compromise between

ideal and near-ideal; the former meaning stateless Sarvodaya society and the latter meaning predominantly non-violent state. And he also indicated in his speeches and writings the broad lines of the kind of state he aimed at.

In 1931, on the eve of his departure for London to attend the Round Table Conference Gandhi stated, "..... I shall work for an India, in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There shall be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of the intoxicating drinks or drugs, women will enjoy the same rights as men. Since we shall be in peace with all the rest of the world, neither exploiting, nor being exploited, we shall have the smallest army imaginable. All interests not in conflict with <sup>the</sup> interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous .... This is the India of my dream ..... I shall be satisfied with nothing less." (59) This statement gives us a complete picture of Gandhi's contemplated state, which will be based on equality in the very comprehensive sense of the term, i.e., social, economic and political. Such a State will be, according to Gandhi, a predominantly non-violent state, internally free and externally

equal to other states. Freedom will exist and flourish, because the state is subject to no one else, and all its people, without barriers of caste, creed, religion, colour and sex, participate in its governance. The policemen will be reformers. Their police work will be confined to robbers and decoits. Quarrels between labour and capital and strikes will be few and far between in a non-violent state. Similarly, there will be no room for communal disturbances. There will be no need for army to save the country from any kind of external aggression. The state of Gandhi's contemplation will have an army consisting of the entire non-violent populace, who meet the aggressor in offering non-violent resistance upto death and to the last man like true Satyagrahis.

Now, remaining conscious of the fact that there is a real difference between the Sarvodaya stateless Society of Gandhi's conception and his concept of Ideal State and that while Sarvodaya society is his Utopia, the predominantly non-violent state is realizable and attainable, we find that the contemplated social welfare state of to-day bears to a limited extent the marks of the predominantly non-violent state of Gandhi's conception so far as the former means an assurance about an unfailing access of all to the means of life, assurance to every citizen of the basic socio-economic and political rights and attempts to raise the standard of the uneducated and backward. But, from strictly theoretical point of view, the believers in Sarvodaya reject the state and its government no

matter what its form, because both are coercive institutions and force is the ultimate sanction behind them. Hence, even the welfare state does not offer them any satisfaction because the welfare state in the name of welfare threatens as much to enslave man to the state as the totalitarian state.

There is something in common in Sarvodaya and communism. Both strive and aim at the disappearance of the state, abolition of exploitation, and classless society. But there are significant differences between the two. Sarvodaya bases its whole philosophy on love, non-violence and social harmony instead of on class struggle and conflict. The essentially spiritual basis of Sarvodaya is the very antithesis of communism which is avowedly materialistic although in regard to its goal Sarvodaya is similar to communism.

Gandhi while asserting that the State is the embodiment of violence in a concentrated and organized form would not however, agree with a Marxist that this violence is in its essence violence of class domination.

Secondly, unlike Marxism, Gandhian programme is not the revolutionary seizure of power but a programme of transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power.

Thirdly, it is generally supposed that Gandhism and Marxism, while sharing the common ideal, depart

from each other on the question of method. But it should be remembered that Marxism does not advocate violent means for its own sake. The extent of violence depends on the intensity of  
<sup>(61)</sup>  
the resistance which is countenanced.

Gandhi's concept of Ideal State meaning his second best, predominantly non-violent, but practically realisable political order, may be said to have influenced the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution. The ideals contained in these provisions resemble to a certain extent the ideals of a Gandhian State. Some of these provisions aim at establishing socio-economic justice in general which was the life-long dream of Gandhi and for which he suffered much, and the other provisions deal with individual issues like prohibition, cottage-industry, decentralization, ban-on-cow slaughter etc. which are nothing but part of the socio-economic disease.

Article 38 aims at bringing justice, social, economic and political. Article 39, a charter for the poor man, is directed towards eradicating poverty, injustice and exploitation. Article 40 deals with village panchayat. Articles 41, 42 and 43 aim at furthering the welfare of the common man and a coverage at their distress. Article 46 deals with the promotion of educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people. Article 47, inter alia, intends to bring about prohibition of intoxicating drinks and Article 51 deals with the

promotion of international peace and security.

Therefore, it may be assumed that, sumtotal of all these provisions could produce a social order which would be nearer to Gandhi's concept of Ideal State.

"The word 'swaraj' is a sacred word, a vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which 'independence' often means".

By 'swaraj' Gandhi meant the government by the consent of the Indian people as ascertained by the largest number of the adult population, male or female, native-born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the state, and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. Real swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused. In other words, swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

Swaraj or self-government, can never be a free gift by one nation to another. It is a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood. Swaraj will be the fruit of incessant labour, suffering beyond measure.

The swaraj of Gandhi's dream recognised no

racial or religious distinctions. Nor was it to be the monopoly of the educated persons, and the monied men. Swaraj has to be for all, including the former, but emphatically including the maimed, the blind, the starving, toiling millions .

Under swaraj based on non-violence, nobody is anybody's enemy, everybody contributes his or her due quota to the common goal, all can read and write, and their knowledge keeps growing from day to day. Sickness and disease are reduced to the minimum. No one is pauper and labour can always find employment. There is no place under such a government for gambling, drinking and immorality or for class-hatred. The rich will use their riches wisely and usefully .

His swaraj is the poor man's swaraj or Ram Raj. Ram symbolized justice, equality, truth and charity. Ram Raj can only come out of truth and non-violence pursued as a creed. It is complete independence of alien control and complete economic independence. Besides these two ends, i.e., political and economic independence, it has two other ends. One of them is moral and social, the corresponding end is Dharma, i.e., religion in the highest sense of the term .

Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. "Swaraj 'government will be a sorry affair", said Gandhi,

"if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of  
(67)  
life .

Gandhi's conception of self-government means, a man governing his own being is the highest type of reformer. This concept is the basis of Gandhi's philosophy. Economic reform, political reform, social reform, religious reform are but extensions of individual reform. For example, he said, "Indian economic independence means to me the economic uplift of every individual, male and female, by his or her own conscious effort" .  
(68)

One may here find a striking similarity between Gandhi's concept of 'self-government' and J.S. Mill's concept of 'Liberty'. The central idea of Mill's essay 'On Liberty' is the immense importance to mankind of encouraging and promoting a large variety of types of character and modes of thinking. Thus, like Gandhi, Mill was also in favour of permitting full freedom to human nature to expand and improve in all kinds of directions. Like Gandhi he also disliked 'over government'. Mill pointed out that the powers of society and the government over the individual are constantly growing and that unless they be restrained by a strong conviction of the value of individual liberty, the government and public opinion may impose upon mankind an oppressive yoke of uniformity in thought and practice, unfavourable to the development of new ideas and of  
(69)  
moral standards . Hence, Mill declared, "the only part of

the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, (70) over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign" .

Gandhi attached far greater importance to Rights and Duties duties than to rights. Rights are the opportunities for self-realisation. The way to self-realisation is the realisation of one's spiritual unity with others by serving them and doing one's duty by them. Thus every right is the right to do one's duty. The true source of rights is duty. If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed we run after rights, they will escape us like a will-o' the-wisp. The more we pursue them, the further will (71) they fly .

It is true that the capitalists and zamindars talk of their rights, the labourer on the other hand of his, the prince of his divine right to rule, the ryot of his to resist it. But Gandhi thought that "if all simply insist on rights, and no (72) duties there will be utter confusion and chaos" .

Gandhi believed that if, instead of insisting on the rights, everyone performed his duty, there would immediately be the rule of order established among mankind. It was, therefore, necessary to understand the correlation of rights and duties. He suggested that "the rights that do not flow

directly from duty well-performed, are not worth having. They  
<sup>(73)</sup>  
will be usurpations, sooner discarded the better".

Gandhi pointed out that in swaraj based on Ahimsa, people need not know their rights, but it is necessary for them to know their duties. Because there cannot be any duty that can not create a corresponding right. Rights of true citizenship accrue only to those who serve the state to which they belong. Swaraj comes only from performance by individuals of  
<sup>(74)</sup>  
their duty as citizens .

(b) Social:

Gandhi always laid emphasis on social service rather than on the self-regarding propensities of the individual.

Emphasis on Social Service      He wrote, "people who obtain rights as a result to performance of duty,  
exercise them only for the service of society, never for them-  
<sup>(75)</sup>  
selves" .

Gandhi's swaraj is concerned with a simultaneous reform of the individual and society. There can not be a divorce between the two. The individual and society both act and react upon each other. To Gandhi society was just like a family, and the relation between the individual and society was one of close interdependence. He rejected alike the unrestricted individualism that ignores social obligations as well as

the other extreme view which regards the individual as a mere cog in the social machine. He wrote, "I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress".<sup>(76)</sup> Hence, his individualism is not egoism but proceeds from a recognition of the extension of the dimensions of the human spirit through service.

In Gandhi's philosophy one has to lose oneself in the continuous service of all life. The individual must live for social service, he must work not only for his own freedom but also for that of his fellow beings. Gandhi reconciled self-realisation with service to society. The conception that salvation can be sought in the seclusion of solitude was not acceptable to him. Self-realisation to him meant realisation of 'the greatest good of all'. His constant aim was the realisation of God and truth through service of mankind. In Gandhism, spiritual realisation and social service were integrally connected.

Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular state or family.<sup>(77)</sup> Untouchability

Gandhi was a determined opponent of untouchability; which he regarded as a blot on the fair face of India. He said, "I have never been able to reconcile myself to 'untouchability' I have always regarded it as an excrescence".<sup>(78)</sup>

Gandhi liked 'Varna' Dharma which sanctions four orders based on scriptural authority. This 'Varna' scheme places all the 'Varnas' on equal footing, doing the services, respectively assigned to them, and there is nothing in this law of 'varna' to warrant a belief in untouchability. Gandhi was very unhappy with the contemporary caste system in Indian society, which to him was a social evil, and encouraged inequality and disruption of which the worst manifestation was untouchability that had turned caste against caste and religion against religion. His suggestion was that untouchables or Adi Sudras should cease to be untouchables and be accepted as inalienable part of Sudra varna. Therefore, he meant by the removal of untouchability, the abolition of fifth caste. The untouchable should freely exercise all the rights of a non-Brahmin .  
<sup>(79)</sup>

Gandhi broke in his own person and encouraged other high caste Hindus to break all the traditional taboos which separated them from the lower castes. He took a low caste girl to live in his house. He loved to make his dwelling in the Bhangi quarters of Delhi. He called the lower castes - Harijans (God's children) and gave that title to his own weekly paper.

To him untouchability was a soul-destroying sin. It has been a passion of his life to serve the untouchables because he had felt that he could not remain a Hindu if it was true that untouchability was a part of Hinduism. "I think we are committing a great sin in treating a whole class of people

as untouchables. If we don't mind contact with a Christian or a Muslim, why should we mind it with one belonging to our own religion?", he asked . This he regarded as rank irreligion, fit only to be destroyed. He treated removal of untouchability as an Ashram observance to assert his belief, that it was not only not a part and parcel of Hinduism, but a plague which it was the bounden duty of every Hindu to combat. Gandhi regarded untouchability, a hindrance to swaraj and to the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity. He said in his Presidential address at Belgaum Congress, "this is an essentially Hindu question and Hindus cannot claim to take swaraj till they have restored the liberty of the suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression ..... The sooner we remove the blot, the better it is for the Hindus ..... To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves".<sup>(81)</sup> He said that he should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes ..... He loved Hinduism dearer than life itself; the taint had become for him an intolerable burden. "Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing"<sup>(82)</sup> . He wished that if he had to be reborn, he should be an 'untouchable' so that he could share their sorrows, sufferings and the affronts levelled at them in order that he might endeavour to free them from their miserable condition" .<sup>(83)</sup>

Besides Gandhi, Ambedkar and Savarkar were

the other two forces which began to operate for the uplift of the untouchables. Gandhi was a reformer while Savarkar and Ambedkar were social revolutionaries. A reformer rebuilds the old structure. A revolutionary blows up the old building and  
<sup>(84)</sup>  
builds a new one .

As a humanist, Gandhi's efforts stemmed from his genuine sympathy for the suppressed people under the sun. It was not his purpose to refashion or to reorganise Hindu society. As a believer in the caste system and the four varnas, it was his aim to solve the problem within the social structure prevailing in his time.

Savarkar's stand was nationalistic, realistic and revolutionary in its outlook as well as in action inasmuch as he aimed at moulding the different castes of the Hindus into a casteless Hindu society in which all Hindus would be socially, economically and politically equal. It was his aim to establish a powerful state on the invincible foundation of  
<sup>(85)</sup>  
oneness and unity of the Hindus . He said that untouchability must be condemned and abolished not only as the need of the hour but also as the command of true religion, not only as a policy or as an act of expediency, but also a matter of justice; not only as a matter of obligation but also as a service  
<sup>(86)</sup>  
to humanity .

Ambedkar sprang from amongst the untouchables themselves. He was a leader who thought as they thought

and felt as they felt. Over a decade he had observed, experienced and studied their utter privations, the appalling penury of their lives and their unclean habits. He boiled at their degraded condition and gave vent to their pent-up passions, their mind and their stifled self.

He was a man who regarded the woes and miseries of those classes as a personal humiliation, and therefore he had taken a vow to make self-respecting citizens out of those virtual slaves.

Ambedkar hated the sense of dependency and abhorred the feeling of patronage of the caste Hindu reformers. He taught the untouchables self-respect and self-reliance and exhorting them to fight for self-elevation .<sup>(87)</sup>

Now, if we try to assess their respective positions, we find that Gandhi saw the problem of untouchability from one angle and Ambedkar and Savarkar saw the same problem from a completely different angle. To Gandhi it was a problem of adjustment and understanding amongst the members of the four varnas. As such, his attempts to this end remained primarily confined to appeals to the Hindus and ethical prescriptions and suggestions to different communities. On the other hand, Ambedkar and Savarkar had condemned the caste system. On this issue they were very near to each other. Savarkar fearlessly and whole-heartedly supported Ambedkar's struggle. Their unity of mind and character is reflected from a letter from Ambedkar to

Savarkar where the former wrote "..... if the untouchables are to be part and parcel of Hindu society, then it is not enough to remove untouchability, for that matter you must destroy chaturvarna. I am glad that you are one of the very few who have  
(88)  
realised this .

Gandhi's wishes on this issue found partial and limited expression in the article for Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution. Article 17 categorically declares that 'untouchability' is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability' shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. Besides, there are other provisions, viz., article 14 assuring equality before the law and equal protection of the laws, article 15(1) prohibiting the state to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them and article 15(2) assuring all citizens access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment and throwing open all wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort. Article 16 goes further in matters relating to employment. Article 19 guarantees seven freedoms to all the citizens irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex etc. Articles 23 and 24 guarantee 'right against exploitation'. Article 46 declares - "the state shall promote with special care the

educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

With equal generosity Gandhi took up another great cause, that is, emancipation of women in India. Indian womanhood was in a pitiable condition at the beginning of this century. Both law and religion gave her a subordinate status in comparison with man. She was denied educational facilities and bartered away in marriage at a tender age when she knew not what it meant to be a wife. The agonies of child wives and child mothers were numerous and the woes of widows and deserted wives innumerable. The evil custom of 'Devadasi' in South India condemned her to a life of shame and the pernicious institution of Purdah in North sentenced her to a life long prison where, without light of knowledge illuminating her vision, steeped in ignorance and prejudice, groping in the dark, she became a martyr to the conventions of the society in which she had been born .

(89)

Gandhi was uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights. His opinion was that she should labour under no legal disability, not suffered by man. He would treat the daughters and sons on a footing of equality . He was a passionate advocate of the utmost freedom for Indian women. He detested child marriages. He shuddered to see a child widow, and

(90)

and shivered with rage when a husband, just widowed, with brutal indifference, contracted another marriage. He deplored the criminal indifference of parents who kept their daughters utterly ignorant and illiterate and brought them up only for the purpose (91) of marrying them off to some young man of means . . .

(92) He had been a fierce opponent of Purdah and called it a 'vicious and brutal custom' which had kept women backward and under-developed. He condemned their domestic slavery and urged that woman should have the same liberty and opportunity of self-development as men. The division of the spheres of work being recognised, the general qualities and culture required were (93) practically the same for both the sexes . . He opposed the dowry system and the Devadashi system as an institution for the perpetuation of vice, which must go if Hinduism was to be purified . (94) In exceptional cases of extreme cruelty on the part of the husband, he even favoured divorce. He termed that religion as irreligion, which assigned a subordinate place to ~~women~~ women, and sanctioned (95) evil customs like child marriage . His firm opinion was that India's salvation depended on the sacrifice and enlightenment of (96) her women . In his speech on New year's day, January 1, 1948, he said, "a community or country in which women are not honoured (97) cannot be considered as civilised . At his call our women came to the front and took charge of the Civil Disobedience movement which took not only the British Government but their own men-folk (98) by surprise.

Gandhi included the uplift of women in the

Constructive Programme and appealed to the Congressmen to give  
(99)  
the women of India a lifting hand .

Certain provisions in Parts III and IV of the Constitution of India may be considered to have been somewhat influenced by Gandhi's spadework on the subject. Equal status of women is first of all recognised by the 'right to equality'. According to Article 14, all persons, implying both men and women alike, are assured of equality before the law and equal protection of the laws. Article 15(3) reserves the right for the state to make special provisions for women. Article 16 guarantees equality in respect of public employment. Article 39(a) and (d) state, respectively, that "the state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing - (a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood; (d) that there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

To Gandhi, all religions were one in spirit - so many pathways to the same ultimate reality - the sovereign God of Love and Truth. Though his inclination was greater for

Equal respect for all religions Hinduism, he was not a blind believer accepting unquestioningly all the ill-traditions and evil customs of his religion. His religion must satisfy his reason and correspond to the dictates of his conscience. By religion he did not mean the Hindu religion which he

certainly prized above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. He pointed out that it was the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself".  
(100)

He believed in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world. To him these were all God-given .  
(101)  
If only we could all of us read the scriptures of different faiths from the stand point of the followers of those faiths we should find that they were at bottom all one and were all helpful to one another  
(102). He Said: "The essence of all religions is one, only their approaches are different" . For him the different religions were beautiful flowers from the same garden, or they were branches of the same majestic tree, or leaves on a tree, there was no antagonism between them, they were equally true. Men being imperfect, all religions were also imperfect revelations of truth and liable to error .  
(103)  
(104)

The need of the moment, he said, was not one religion, but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of the different religions. We want to reach not the dead level but unity in diversity .  
(105)

(106)

Gandhi did not believe in state religion . He contemplated a secular state which had nothing to do with religion. "If I were a dictator", he said in 1946, "religion and state would be separate. Religion is purely a personal concern". According to him the state cannot concern itself or cope with religious education, which must be the sole concern of religious associations. He was also opposed to state aid partly or wholly to religious bodies. An institution or group, which does not manage to finance its own religious teaching is a stranger to true religion. Here Gandhi meant denominationalism and not fundamental ethics common to all religions. Teaching of fundamental ethics was a function of the state.

Gandhi's views have found their place in the 'Right to Freedom of Religion' (article 25-28) and 'Cultural and Educational Rights' (article 29,30) of the Indian Constitution. In fact, his whole concept of secularism has found suitable expression in the Constitution. These provisions, taken together, give to the religious minorities, freedom of religion, protection of language, script and culture, and the right to maintain their religious and educational institutions, and safeguard against discrimination based on grounds of race, religion, caste etc.

Besides, the protection of minorities (including religious minorities) figured very prominently in the Constituent

Assembly. And after much debate, the minorities were again granted some privileges which are embodied in Articles 330-340 of the Indian Constitution.

(C) Economic: Gandhi was of the opinion that the economic concept of constitution of India and for the matter of that, Economic Order of the world, should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. He thought, this ideal could be universally realised, if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remained in the control of the masses .  
<sup>(107)</sup>

To Gandhi the contrast between the rich and the poor was a 'painful sight'. He thought it disgraceful that poor villagers who produced the food go hungry. His picture of economic equality conveyed the idea that everyone must have balanced diet, a decent house to live in, facilities for the education of one's children, and adequate medical relief. He was not opposed to everything above and beyond the bare necessities but they must come after the essential needs of the poor were satisfied.  
<sup>(108)</sup> First things must come first .

At the centre of Gandhi's economic programme for India, was his plan for revival of the village economy. He took up the cause of the peasants and clearly saw the tendency towards urbanisation and the exploitation of the villages for the sake of urban centred economy. He saw that the only way of

bringing hope of good living to the people in the rural areas is by making the villages the centre-piece in the economic programme.

In his "Constructive Programme" working for 'economic equality' was one of the programmes. To Gandhi it meant, abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour, it meant the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands was concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and a levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. In his view, a non-violent system of government was clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persisted . In his judgement, any kind of economy which exploits people and concentrate wealth in a few hands, stands self-condemned.

According to Gandhi, Khadi and village industries represent the symbol of economic freedom and equality. He felt that real economic freedom means that the common necessities of life should be found through the labour of villagers . His attempts to find a solution for the poverty of the country were not entirely motivated by economic consideration. It was a case of applying certain basic principles, highly ethical in their content, to the special field of economics. It was a newly created 'Economy of delight' in the service of the good that would come eventually to lead and to direct the quantitative economy .

Gandhi was opposed to the machine-age, but not to the machine as such. He believed that machine is good when it serves man, but not when it seeks to master him.

Gandhi did not reject machinery as such. What he objected to was the craze for machinery. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on saving labour till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. He held that machinery was harmful when the samething could be done easily by millions of hands not otherwise occupied. An industrialised India must therefore mean utter extinction of many millions. Therefore, he never agreed (112) with those who favoured the use of machine in India .

Gandhi was not a doctrinaire socialist believing in the state ownership of the means of production. If he was a socialist at all, his type of socialism was Gandhi's ideas on Socialism village socialism. To quote him, "my socialism means even unto this last. I do not want to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf, and the dumb .... I want freedom for the full expression of my personality .... under the other socialism, there is no individual freedom. You own nothing, (113) not even your body" . Socialism and communism of the West are based, according to Gandhi, on their belief in the essential selfishness of human nature. Gandhi did not subscribe to that view. He did not approve of the idea of class-war. His own method was 'conversion', not compulsion. In his opinion

class-war was not inevitable, if the doctrine of trusteeship is accepted and implemented. Gandhi wrote in Young India in 1929: 'The idea I want to realise is not spoliation of the property of private owners, but to restrict its enjoyment so as to avoid all pauperism, consequent discontent and the hideously ugly contrast that exists today between the lives and surroundings of the rich and the poor' .  
<sup>(114)</sup>

It was not out of any theoretical study or critical intellectual analysis of the social development of history that Gandhi arrived at his socialism. His concept of socialism was entirely his own in the sense that socialism did not represent itself to him as a necessary and logical stage in social evolution growing out of production relations of capitalism.

He developed his concept of socialism when he was confronted with the growing influence of scientific socialism and when the whole country was surcharged with socialist slogans. Even the platform of the Indian National Congress was utilized to voice the urges of the newly emerging socialist forces. Jawaharlal advocated socialism in 'the scientific, economic sense'  
<sup>(115)</sup> as 'the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems'. At the Faizpur Congress (December 1936) the same fervour was noticeable.

In 1916 Gandhi said: "I am no socialist and I do not want to dispossess those who have got possessions. I should  
<sup>(116)</sup> then be departing from the rule of Ahimsa" . But in 1924 he

admitted the necessity of nationalization or state control. Thus Gandhi was not a dogmatist. He always tried to adapt himself with the changed situation. But it was only after 1934 when the idea of a substantial section of Congressmen and of the educated public, general turned for the first time towards socialism, that he also began to call himself a socialist. But he was a socialist not in the Marxist sense of the term. Gandhi said, "I call myself a socialist, I love the very word, but I will not preach the same socialism as most socialists do." (117)

During his detention in the Aga Khan Palace (1942-4) Gandhi read for the first time, at the age of seventy four, Karl Marx's first volume of Capital. He did not care whether Marxism was right or wrong. Moral indignation against acquisitiveness was the axiology of socialism for him. He said "All I know is that the poor are being crushed. Something has got to be done for them. To me this is axiomatic". (118)

By economic equality Gandhi did not mean absolute equality, because that was neither possible nor desirable. He believed in approximate equality. Gandhi wrote: "Economic equality must never be supposed to mean possession of an equal amount of worldly goods by everyone. It does mean, however, that everyone will have a proper house to live in, sufficient food to eat and cloth to wear. It also means that the cruel inequality that obtains to-day will be removed by purely non-violent means." (119)

Therefore, his conception of economic equality did not mean that everyone would literally have the same amount. It simply meant that everybody should have enough for his or her needs, so the real meaning of economic equality was, "to each according to his needs".  
<sup>(120)</sup>

It meant the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands was concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and the levelling up of the semi-starved, naked millions on the other. A violent and bloody revolution, he believed, was a certainty one day, unless there was a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give, and sharing them for the common good.  
<sup>(121)</sup>

The Encyclopaedia of the Labour Movement gives the definition of socialism as follows:

"Socialism is a working class doctrine and movement aiming through the class struggle, at the collective control of society, by the capture of the state machine by the workers and the establishment of self-government in industry."  
<sup>(122)</sup> Gandhian socialism is based on assumptions different from the assumptions stated in the above definition.

Nevertheless, Gandhi often claimed in the course of his discussion with communist and socialist friends that he was a better communist or a socialist than they. Their goal was

and /

identical. The difference in regard to the means and the technique employed was however fundamental. Changing the structure of society through violence had no attraction for him because he believed that it would not benefit the dumb millions of India .<sup>(123)</sup>

Gandhi believed that economic justice could not be achieved through violence and coercion. "By non-violent method we seek", he wrote in March 1931, "not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism ...."<sup>(124)</sup> He believed that exploitation of the poor could be ended not by destroying a few capitalists but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-cooperate with their exploiters.

Therefore, Gandhi's opposition to capitalism was not based on any logic, like that of the materialist conception of history propounded by Marx, from which to arrive at the inevitability of socialism. Gandhi did not adopt any theory of value which could explain accumulation of the surplus value. He opposed capitalism, because there was too much of inequality in it, because he did not subscribe to the capitalistic code of justice.

But with the passage of time, his criticism of more capitalism grew/severer. The soul-killing process and the economic inquailty generated by capitalism repelled him and he tried in his own way to bring about an end to the rule of capital. The ideal society as he conceived it, was not to be brought about by forcible overthrow of capitalism but by pursuing the principle

of trusteeship. And that was in keeping with his general creed of conversion since he believed that man was not beyond redemption. The theory of conversion or change of heart follows from his concept of human nature.

After the 1917 Revolution of Russia, Gandhi's views on Bolshevism was as follows: "I must confess that I have not yet been able fully to understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics, and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion, there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism, it not only does not preclude the use of force but freely sanctions it for the expropriation of private property and for maintaining the collective state ownership of the same. And if that is so, I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence ....."

Gandhi expected to convert the capitalists by the non-violent method and therefore, there was for him nothing like an inevitability of class conflict. He said: "the moment the cultivators of the soil realize their power, the zamindari evil will be sterilized ... In reality the toiler is the owner of what he produces. If the toilers intelligently combine, they

will become an irresistible power. That is how I do not see  
(126)  
the necessity of class conflict". He did not believe that there was an irreconcilable antagonism between the interests of the capitalists and those of the masses. What was needed, according to him, was not the extinction of capitalists, but a transformation of the existing relationship into something healthier and purer.

Hence, we have seen that there are common points between Marx's socialism and Gandhi's socialism, since both of them originated from a desire for the welfare of the masses. The cause of the poor, the exploited, and the have-nots is the basic sentiment running through both. But Gandhi's socialism was more a code of personal conduct and a programme for service of the poor than an economic ideology. Socialism for Gandhi was neither a gospel for the expropriation of the rich nor a programme for the nationalization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, but it was based essentially on ideas of non-possession, trusteeship, non-violence, human equality, and service of the poor. (127) Gandhi's faith was in individuals and co-operative effort and not in the state. He could not trust the state with unlimited power for bringing about a radical social and economic transformation. An omnipotent state would not bring about a good society, it would only emerge as the most powerful tyrant and create a situation in which the Marxian dream of the state withering away would never be fulfilled. Gandhi therefore, wanted to establish a village based

utterly decentralized society where power would be universally dispersed .  
(128)

Gandhi, while attacking the inequitable and unjustifiable basis of capitalism and vested interests, went on pleading for the adoption of trusteeship. The theory of trusteeship occupies a central place in the scheme of Gandhian thought.

Concept of trusteeship  
(129) whatever talents, physical strength, wealth or other capacities a person might possess, he should take them as having been given to him as a trustee, for the benefit of the world. This is the noble idea of trusteeship . Where persons possess property, whether that possession is vested in them in a manner deemed legal at the time or otherwise, they must be deemed to hold it in trust for society and not for themselves .  
(130)

In the nature of things, some will have ability to earn more, and they will utilise their talents for this purpose. If they utilise their talents kindly, they will be performing the work of the state. Such people exist as trustees, on no other terms. Gandhi said "I would allow a man of intellect to earn more, I would not cramp his talent. But the bulk of his greater earnings must be used for the good of the state".  
(131)

In an interview with Prof. N. K. Bose in November 1934 explaining why he preferred the doctrine of Trusteeship, Gandhi said: "Those who own money now are asked to

behave like trustees holding their riches on behalf of the poor. You may say that trusteeship is a legal fiction. But if people meditate over it constantly and try to act up to it, then life on earth would be governed far more by love than it is at present. Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction. But if we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realizing (132) a state of equality on earth than by any other method."

In 1939, in reply to a question by a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangha, he explained the theory of trusteeship in the following terms:

"Supposing I have come by a fair amount of wealth .... I must know that all the wealth does not belong to me; what belongs to me is the right to an honourable livelihood, no better than that enjoyed by millions of others. The rest of my wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the (133) community ... Gandhi wanted the capitalists to outgrow their greed and sense of possession, and to come down inspite of their wealth to the level of those who earn their bread by labour.

Gandhi asked the owners of wealth to make their choice between class war and voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. They would be allowed to retain the stewardship of their possessions and to use their talent to

increase the wealth, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the nation and, therefore, without exploitation. The state would regulate the rate of commission which they would get commensurate with the service rendered, and its value to society.

If, however, the rich do not rise to the occasion and accept the new basis of ownership, then Gandhi proposed to employ the weapon of non-violent, non-co-operation and civil-disobedience, but if they fail, he was not against the state resorting to confiscation with the minimum exercise of violence when necessary.

Gandhi summed up his idea of trusteeship in the following formula:

(1) Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one; it gives no quarter to capitalism, but gives the present owner-class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption.

(2) It does not recognise any right of private ownership of property except in as much as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.

(3) It does not exclude legislative regulation of the ownership and use of wealth.

(4) Thus, under state regulated trusteeship, an individual will not be free to hold or use his wealth for selfish

satisfaction or in disregard of the interest of society.

(5) Just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, even so a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that could be allowed to any person in society. The difference between such minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable and equitable and variable from time to time, so much so, that the tendency would be towards obliteration of the difference.

(6) Under the Gandhian economic order the character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed .  
<sup>(134)</sup>

Gandhi was not a believer in class struggle. His emphasis was on class-co-operation, all working together for a common good. He insisted upon adherence to truth and non-violence for achieving this object. He was a philosophical idealist. While Marx, a dialectical materialist, did not care about the quality of the means, provided they appear efficient enough for achieving the end as quickly as possible .  
<sup>(135)</sup> Marx puts forth the theories of class war, expropriation of land, mines and other material sources of wealth and its end through the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. As against this the Gandhian theories are those of satyagraha, decentralisation, trusteeship etc.

The theory of trusteeship has been generally objected to on the ground that as a means of effecting social transformation this theory, its ethical content notwithstanding, is ineffective.

According to the Marxist thinkers, the division of society into the property-owning and the property-less classes, which is the characteristic of capitalism, is sought to be retained in Gandhism also. The only difference in Gandhism is that the erstwhile capitalist, property-owning class will consider itself trustee on behalf of the proletariat. The change is purely in the subjective sphere, the objective conditions of production will continue by remaining as they were in capitalism. Production will continue by unplanned private competition among the individual trustees. These conditions of production have a compelling logic of their own which lead to the same contradictions as are witnessed under capitalism to-day. The class appropriation of surplus value, which trust productions will continue in a pious guise, will mean larger and larger accumulations of the capital on the one hand and pauperization of the masses on the other .... These evils can not be banished by wishing a change in the hearts and minds of the owners of property. (136)

Gunnar Myrdal maintains that "The trusteeship idea is fundamentally a concept that fits into a paternalistic, feudal, pre-democratic society. It is so flexible that it can serve as a justification for inequality ...." (137)

Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: "Is it reasonable to believe in the theory of trusteeship to give unchecked power and wealth to an individual and to expect him to use it entirely for the public good? Are the best of us so perfect as to be trusted in this way? ... And is it good for the others to have even these benevolent supermen over them?"  
<sup>(138)</sup>

According to Professor Amlan Datta: "In actual practice the Gandhian theory lends itself to being employed as a shield against any movement for overthrowing the dominant classes in existing society."  
<sup>(139)</sup>

As to the argument that trusteeship will help in the process of humanization of social relationship, it may be submitted that the socialization of property is the basic pre-condition for such transformation to take place in reality. Humanism  
<sup>(140)</sup> is an empty concept so long as class divisions persist.

In providing for adequate means of livelihood to all citizens, a proper distribution of the material resources of the community for the common good, the prevention of concentration of wealth to the common detriment, in Article 39, right to work, education and public assistance in cases of undeserved want, in Article 41, living wage and decent standard of life, in Article 43, one can feel the vibrations of the cherished ideas of the Gandhian economic order, but it will be hardly possible to establish a clear linkage between the two.

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