

**SELF AND THE OTHER IN M. K. GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY OF NON-VIOLENCE**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University*

*in partial fulfilment of the requirements*

*for the award of the degree of*

*Master of Philosophy*

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "Self and the Other in M. K. Gandhi's Philosophy of Nonviolence" submitted by Ekta Bhati, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is her original work. It is further certified that the dissertation has not been submitted in part or in full to any other university or elsewhere to obtain any other degree.

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
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## DECLARATION

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I, Ekta Bhati, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "**Self and the Other in M. K. Gandhi's Philosophy of Nonviolence**" submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the **degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University** is my original work. The dissertation has not been submitted in part or in full to any other university or elsewhere to obtain any other degree.

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**Dedicated to My Mother Mrs. Rajeshwari Bhati**

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I feel fortunate to have received the kindness and support from several people during my research period. Expressing my sincere thanks to all in this limited space is impossible. However, my sincere gratitude will not be accomplished without mentioning some names.

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## PREFACE

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The title of this dissertation is “Self and the Other in M. K. Gandhi’s Philosophy of Nonviolence”. M. K. Gandhi proposed the theory of nonviolence to solve conflicts that may arise from violence. Gandhi advocated the cultivation of the virtues of tolerance and compassion in order to achieve peace in diversity. Gandhi made an excellent use of the moral virtue of nonviolence to mobilize the Indian masses to fight against violence, exploitation and injustices of the society. The concept of compassion and tolerance strengthen Gandhi’s notion of nonviolence in combating violence. Gandhi’s doctrine of nonviolence aims at transforming the adversary by bringing the positive change in the nature of the opponent by achieving the purity of heart in him. Gandhi’s notion of nonviolence works as a dialogue between the oppressor and the oppressed by bringing them to discover one another. According to Gandhi, Truth is one and so as God, hence the different viewpoints describe one of the many aspects of truth thus, there is unity in plurality. The search for truth Gandhi held presupposes the realisation of self in terms of developing equal-mindedness towards all.

Gandhi’s philosophy of non- violence is the result of the influence of various religions on him. The concept of *Niskāma Karma* Gandhi adopted from *Bhagavad-Gitā* and his ideal of *Ramrajya* is the outcome of the influence of Hindu epic *Ramāyana* on him. Gandhi derives his notions of compassion and tolerance from Buddhism and Jainism respectively. The *Anekāntvāda* of Jainism also helped Gandhi to develop veneration for plurality of viewpoints. The life of Jesus motivated him to bear pain for the betterment of others. The Ṛg Vedic exhortation namely, *ekam sat viprāh bahudā vadanti*’, which denotes that reality is one but it is interpreted differently by different people, provided him an insight into the pluralistic perspective of Indian culture. Another Vedic exhortation namely, *Āno Bhadrāh Kritvo Yantu Visvatah*, which says that, let noble thoughts come to us from all directions helped him to develop respect for others ideologies.

The study basically investigates the concept of Self and the Other in Gandhi’s philosophy of nonviolence in terms of realizing and embracing each other. The concepts are interlinked with one another as by realizing the true nature of the self leads us to the realization of others as well.

I am thankful to the authors whose works have helped me directly or indirectly. I have duly acknowledged those texts and in the general bibliography, I have given certain books for further reading. I am thankful to the translators of the writings of Gandhi, Jainism, Buddhism, Kant and others. In citing the works of Gandhi, Jainism, Buddhism and Kant, I have used the most accurate available English translations. I am thankful to the translators. I have also taken help from online sources and articles, I am thankful to these authors too.



## Introduction

M. K. Gandhi (1869-1948) was a man of virtue. According to him, Truth is the greatest of all virtues and one must follow the path of Truth. All his ideas were groomed and substantiated in his ideal of Truth. His entire philosophy seems to me as an action-centric system as he never preached anything which cannot be manifested in action. It is important to admit at the outset that Gandhi never formulated a philosophy of his own nor did he systematize his set of ideas. So, whatever we have in the name of his philosophy has been culled out from his ethical and political endeavours grounded on ideals of truth, nonviolence, tolerance, peace, etc. Hence, whatever Gandhi preached and practiced is considered as his philosophy. Harmony between his thoughts and actions is the benchmark of his philosophy. He devoted all his life in establishing peace and harmony in the world. Exhilaration of the downtrodden and fight for India's independence were two chief struggles that occupied the entire life of Gandhi. The 20<sup>th</sup> century was the era of exploitation, destruction and violence. The use of nuclear weapons in World War II caused annihilation and utter obliteration to the people of Japan. But also, it is during this century that human race had learned the most unique and peaceful strategy of resisting evil, i.e., *nonviolence*. Gandhi through his moral weapon, nonviolence, showed the futility of war to the world. Gandhi through his political and ethical weapon nonviolence demonstrated his veneration towards all sentient beings.

Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence can be characterized as establishing a relation between "Self and the Other". Gandhi considered nonviolence as an important aspect which provide a unity between self and the other in as much as there is a duality between self and the other in conflicting (violent) situation. In order to overcome violence, Gandhi was not in favour of any kind of totalitarian thinking in which differences are suppressed with violence. Gandhi proposed pluralism to end violence, to achieve human potential, and the unity of human kind in its diversity. Gandhi offered his philosophy of nonviolence in such a way as to dissolve antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves. This clearly shows his reverence for others.

Metaphysically, the notions of ‘Self and the Other’ are given simultaneously in the Jewish tradition. In Jewish tradition, the ‘Other’ is referred to as God’s chosen people. “According to Talmud (*Avodah Zarah*, 2b), a central text of Rabbinic Judaism, God offered the *Torah* to all the nations of the earth, and the Jews were the only ones who accepted it. The story goes on to say that the Jews were offered the *Torah* at the end, and they accepted it only because God held a mountain over their heads! (In Ex. 19:17, the words generally translated as "at the foot of the mountain" literally mean "underneath the mountain"!) Another story suggests that God chose the Jewish people because they were the lowliest of all nations and their success would be attributed to God’s might rather than their own ability.”<sup>1</sup> Here, Jews who accepted god’s instructions are referred to as ‘Self’ and rest of the people as ‘Others’. “Judaism holds that righteous of all nations have a place in the world to come. Judaism generally recognizes that Christians and Moslems worship the same God that we do and those who follow the tenets of their religions can be considered righteous in the eyes of God.”<sup>2</sup>

The philosophical notion of the ‘Other’ emerges in the process of the emergence and development of “identity”. “In psychology, sociology and anthropology, identity is a person's conception and expression of their own (self-identity) and others' individuality or group affiliations (such as national identity and cultural identity).”<sup>3</sup> The emergence of the other is also traceable to their cultural identity. “Culture is the one people inherit. They have either unconsciously adopted it or reflectively revised it in rare cases. Human beings are culturally embedded in the sense that they grow up and live within a culturally structured world and organize their lives and social relations in terms of a culturally derived system of meaning and significance.”<sup>4</sup> Culture could be apprehended by the notions of affinity and diversity. The affinitive aspect of culture gives rise to ‘identity’ in the spheres of language, geography, history, people, architecture, art, etc., and by the virtue of identity culture creates diversity with other cultures or ‘the others’.<sup>5</sup> It is these two aspects of culture, i.e., affinity and diversity, which create distinction between ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’. As a result of the affinitive aspect we get the notion of ‘Self’, in the sense that it helps us

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<sup>1</sup> Singh, R.P., 2014, “Gandhi’s Pluralistic Perspective on the Notion of the other.” p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity\\_\(social\\_science\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_(social_science)) retrieved on 2015/08/15

<sup>4</sup> Singh, R. P., 2011, “Understanding Diversity/ Plurality in Multiculturalism, fusion of Cultural Horizons”: *World of Philosophy: A Harmony*, pp. 185-187.

<sup>5</sup> Singh, R.P., 2014, *Gandhi’s Pluralistic Perspective on the Notion of the other*, p. 2.

understand our identity in terms of language, history of our culture, geography of the land and art etc. and by the virtue of these aspects, we are able to comprehend the diversities among various cultures or ethnic groups. Our resemblance with a particular group of people or culture forms our identity as ‘Self’ and our dissimilarity with other groups or cultures represent the ‘Others’. Our resemblance in terms of language, art, history etc. with a particular civilization creates our diversity with other cultures, civilizations or others.

The basic feature of Gandhi’s notion of self lies in simplicity, substantiality and integrity. And these three have been manifested in his experiments with truth. So far as the notion of the other is concerned, besides the fact that it has biblical origin, for Gandhi, it was imperialist forces besides different religions and identities in India which is marked as others. Even in the ‘Other’ Gandhi found the reflections of the self only.

Gandhi’s work in South Africa made him an inspiring personality who’s longing for equality and justice attained him great admiration worldwide. Gandhi’s principles are an outcome of his intuition and insightfulness. He possessed great faith in God. According to Gandhi, all religion worships the same god in different forms. For him, albeit of the prevalent discrepancies between the practices of different religions, their essence is the same. Hence, it expresses unity in plurality. And it is our task to identify this unity to establish peace and harmony in society. The basic unity among people can only be realized when we discard the complexities involved in their religious or cultural practices to achieve an identity of ourselves with the God. Simplicity is the key that makes religions a unifying force. And simplicity is attainable through determination and temperance. According to Gandhi, “when an individual strives for truth he shares in an attribute of God. This conviction made Gandhi hold the view that “Truth is God”.<sup>6</sup> We give various qualifiers to the name God such as almighty, omniscient, benevolent etc., but the qualifier truth is the most appropriate of all for “where there is truth there is also knowledge, pure knowledge. Where there is no truth there can be no pure knowledge that is why the word *chit* or knowledge is also associated with God as he is pure bliss (*sat-chit-ānanda*). And where there is pure knowledge, there is always bliss (*ānanda*), sorrow has no place

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<sup>6</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, Gandhi the Pacifist, p. 6.

there. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as ‘*Sat-chit-ānanda*’, one who combined in Himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.”<sup>7</sup>

In order to proceed, I will make a reflection on the method or the philosophical perspective that Gandhi had adopted. In his attempt to understand and appreciate Upanishads and *Gītā*, Gandhi adopted the method of hermeneutics, which is an effort to find out the meaning of the text because the language in both, Upanishads and the *Gītā* is very symbolic, metaphorical and suggestive. Gandhi also accepted anti-essentialistic and pluralistic perspective which is deeply rooted in Indian tradition or philosophy especially in Jainism. Since, Gandhi was involved in the freedom struggle of India; he certainly had historical understanding of India and the world.

Gandhi held a pluralistic and anti-essentialistic perspective towards others. His pluralistic perspective is an outcome of the influence of various religions on him. From Buddhism, Gandhi adopted the notion of *Karunā*. The *anekāntvāda* of Jainism helped Gandhi to know many aspects of reality. Jainism also helped Gandhi to develop his doctrine of nonviolence. The very life of Jesus was a lesson to him in soul suffering. Islam too influenced Gandhi by insisting on conscience, soul-force, tolerance and fellow feeling. The pluralism of Indian culture also helped Gandhi to hold an equal-mindedness towards all religions. Gandhi appreciated the triple four civilizational concepts of Varna, Āshrama and Purushārtha system.

Pluralism has been part of India since time immemorial. But the problem which arises here is that, when there already exists plurality (of various religions and their varied practices) in the country, then how can we understand those theories which endorse crude hierarchical practices, like caste system? How these two, which otherwise are completely opposite to each other, co-existed simultaneously in the society? I will be discussing this in detailed manner in the first chapter of my dissertation.

The notion of Pluralism has been explained in various ways other philosophical thought systems. For instance, in the *Vedānta* philosophy, we go from

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<sup>7</sup> Duncan, R., 1951, *Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 39.

one to many; in Vallabha *Vedānta*, we go from many to one; in *Jainism*, *Sāṅkhya* and *Nyāya-Vaisesika* systems, we go from many to many and in Buddhism, we go from nothing, i.e. *svabhāva shunya* to many. Its reflection can be noticed in the preliminary characteristics of Indian society, as it is diverse, liberal, democratic and pluralistic in regulating and restructuring the morals, ethos and values.<sup>8</sup> *Syādvāda*, which is *Anekāntvāda* of Jainism, is the model of relative pluralism which suggests us how to comprehend reality and truth in its diverse facets. The philosophy attempts to teach us to respect and value the divergent views and it may help us to unveil the roots of modern democracy. The element of adoration, concord, harmony and respect can be found in foundational prayers of Jainism that says “let me forgive all the being and let all the beings forgive me. I have amity with all and enmity with none.”<sup>9</sup> Hence, in Jainism, the pluralism to accept the other can be witnessed. Gandhi incorporated these outlooks in his idea of self and the other.

When Gandhi expressed his views regarding pluralism, he too accepted that there exists plurality of religious practices as well. The country like India, where people of different religious practices and ethnicity co-habit, there arises the need for religious tolerance. In order to practice religious tolerance, one need to develop “compassion” towards others. A compassionate being refrains himself from causing harm to the other, and from Gandhian perspective, equal importance is given to the other as given to “self”. The compassion or *karunā* is understood to mean active sympathy or a willingness to bear the pain of others. In practice, *prajñā* (*pure Knowledge*) gives rise to *karunā* (compassion), and *karunā* gives rise to *prajñā*. Truly, we can't have one without the other. They are a means to realizing enlightenment, and they are also enlightenment manifested. Gandhi's position on nonviolence is different from both Jainism and Buddhism. For him, nonviolence is a peaceful resistance against the other with a sense of autonomy and dignity of the self and the other. This insight he took from European enlightenment which had developed the self to the status of autonomy and dignity. I will engage with this issue in an elaborate manner in my second chapter.

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<sup>8</sup> Singh, R. P., 2004, Moral Dilemmas in the Era of Globalization: International Journal of Vedic Management, p.71.

<sup>9</sup><http://www.jainworld.com/book/shramanmahavirajainism/ch5.asp> retrieved on 8-17-15

For Gandhi, any act which involves violence and results in suffering and grief is bad. Victory achieved through violence can never bring peace in the society as peace is that which brings serenity and calmness to the mind and allows the promotion of justice and harmony in the society. Peace achieved from violence can never provide us tranquillity and quietness of mind. Therefore, one's actions must be in consonance to the virtue of compassion and nonviolence. We, being a social creature must live harmoniously and peacefully with others. According to Gandhi, there is a unity of self and the other as both depends on each other for the realization of their goal. There also exist unity in diversity, on the one hand, and the goal is peace and harmony on the other. Gandhi believes that there is no religion in the world which does not preach nonviolence, compassion and love. Hence, besides the diversity among cultures, religions, ideologies there is some unity between them. In my third chapter, I will be focusing on this relation between the virtue of nonviolence and the idea of unity in diversity. This kind of unity paves the way for the reunion of divergent opinions, thoughts, ideologies etc. with the aim of establishing peace and harmony in the world. By the concept of unity in diversity, he tried to establish peace and harmony in the world.

## Chapter I

### Gandhi's Pluralistic Perspective on the Notion of Self and the Other

In this chapter, I offer to study and examine Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence as a method of bringing 'Self' and the 'Other' together. The 20<sup>th</sup> century is considered to be the most violent century witnessed in human history as it had two world wars that devastated millions of lives and brought the world under destruction. It is during this century that Gandhian ideals proved to be heroic for everyone who adhered to them. His determination to give himself whole heartedly in service of others and his adherence towards nonviolence made him an extraordinary personality whose love for humanity still animates the lives and works of millions.

The chapter is divided into two sections, Section I, is devoted to study the pluralistic perspective of Indian culture and how did this pluralism of Indian culture helped Gandhi to contour his doctrine of nonviolence. The pluralistic perspective of Indian tradition can be understood by two *Ṛig Vedic* formulations namely, i) '*Ekam sat viprāḥ bahudā vadanti*'; an exhortation that reveals that truth is one but it is interpreted differently by different people. And ii) '*Āno bhadraḥ kritvo yantu visvatāḥ*', which suggests, let noble thoughts come to us from all directions.<sup>10</sup> Section II, is dedicated to study *Jaina Anekāntvāda* which helped Gandhi to develop an element of passivity in accepting pain and suffering for the benefit of the others. The *Anekāntvāda* of Jainism also known as *Syādvāda* is a theory of relative pluralism that suggests us how to realize truth in its different aspects. Hence, in Jainism there is plurality to accept the other.

But the question arises that if we have such a sound pluralistic philosophy to recognize and respect 'the other' then why there is so much of cast discrimination and hierarchy in Indian society such as there are *dalits*, *Shudra*, women, etc., who have been in vast majority, they have always been humiliated and misbehaved in Indian society. The cause of such discrimination is enrooted in the misinterpretation of the culture. So, in order to eradicate this inequality and injustice, we need to revise our

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<sup>10</sup> Singh, R. P., 2014, "Gandhi's Pluralistic Perspective on the Notion of the Other" in *Embracing the Other*, p. 1.

culture and look upon it from a rationalist stand point. We need to understand the pluralistic approach embedded in our culture towards embracing the other in the same way that Gandhi did. He took the help of Indian notions of plurality to elevate the other of the downtrodden sections of society and strived to bring them at par with the self.

## **Section I**

### **Vedic Formulations on Pluralism**

Gandhi adopted a pluralistic and anti-essentialistic perspective on the notion of the other. He held that all religions, cultures and nations worship the same god in different forms. According to Gandhi, to bring about a change in society one does not need to subscribe to a physical warfare. A physical warfare, for him, is futile as it brings society under destruction, sorrows and despair. Gandhi, through the Gita realized that the soul is omnipresent and the body is a possession. “The desire for enjoyment creates body for the soul and when the desire vanishes, their remains no further use for the body, and man is free from the vicious cycle of births and deaths.”<sup>11</sup> For Gandhi, the body is like a cage and in order extricate oneself from it; one must devote himself/herself to the service of others. Such a service will bring peace and happiness to the mind and thus enhances one’s vision towards life. For Gandhi, the ultimate goal of human life is to realize our basal self. Gandhi’s way of realizing it through nonviolence and selfless actions for the elevation of the dispossessed inspired the millions around the world. Hence, it is by the realization of our basal selves that we can develop better understanding of others because self and the other are inextricably linked with each other.

Gandhi was a spiritual person; he trusted his intuition and insightfulness to solve any kind of moral dilemmas. He was a hard core pragmatist too for he manifested his thoughts into actions. He never believed in anything that cannot be shown in action. Gandhi draws his inspiration from “Western intellectuals like Anna

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 41



Kingsford, Howard Williams, Leo Tolstoy and John Ruskin. The life of Christ and the “Sermon on the mount” provided him with a spiritual background.”<sup>12</sup> Besides western influences, Indian religious texts and scriptures also helped him to shape his philosophy of nonviolence. In writing to his weekly journal called *Harijan*, he admitted that his notions are an outcome of his study of Indian *Vedic* and *Upanishadic* literatures:

“The Mahabharata and Ramayana, the two books that millions of Hindus know and regard as their guides, are undoubtedly allegories that the internal evidence shows. That they most probably deal with historical figures does not affect my proposition. Each epic describes the eternal dual that goes on between the forces of darkness and of light. Anyway I must disclaim my intention of straining the meaning of Hinduism or the Gita to suit any preconceived notion of mine. My notions were an outcome of a study of the Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads, etc.”<sup>13</sup>

Gandhi’s anti-essentialistic perspective and pluralistic standpoint are an outcome of Plurality of Indian cultures, ideologies and traditions that has been part of India since antiquity. In India, we have many cultures practicing different religions and every culture is related to other cultures in some way or the other. We are Cosmo-centric people; we have many gods and goddesses, each with their own specific qualities, and functions to perform. We live in a cosmos and it functions in a certain way; it has its own law of functioning. In Ancient Indian tradition, “the principle of natural order which regulates and coordinates the operation of the universe and everything within it is called *Ṛta*.”<sup>14</sup> “In the hymns of the Vedas, *Ṛta* is described as that which is ultimately responsible for the proper functioning of the natural, moral and sacrificial orders. Conceptually, it is closely allied to the injunctions and ordinances thought to uphold it, collectively referred to as *Dharma*, and the action of the individual in relation to those ordinances, referred to as *Karma* – two terms which eventually eclipsed *Ṛta* in importance as signifying natural, religious and moral order in later Hinduism”<sup>15</sup> According to Maurice Bloomfield, “*Ṛta* is one of the most

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<sup>12</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, “Gandhi the Pacifist”, p. 95.

<sup>13</sup> Gandhi, M. K., *Harijan*, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1936.

<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%B9%9A#cite\\_note-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%B9%9A#cite_note-1), retrieved on 2016/1/3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*.

important religious conception of the *R̥g Veda*<sup>16</sup>, he further adds that in order to view the history of Hindu religious ideas one should begin with the concept of *R̥ta*.

The term "*R̥ta*, is derived from the Sanskrit verb root *ṛ-* "to go, move, rise, tend upwards", and the derivative noun *ṛtam* is defined as "fixed or settled order, rule, divine law or truth."<sup>17</sup> According to Oldenberg (1894), "the notion of *R̥ta* refers to Indo-Aryan era from consideration of the world order and of taking into account the occurrence that takes place within it as doing so with a kind of casual necessity."<sup>18</sup> According to Vedic tradition, the features that remains constant or which occur on regular basis were seen to be a manifestation of the power of *R̥ta* in Physical cosmos. In Vedic tradition the concept of *R̥ta* has also been frequently associated with many deities, such as "*Bṛhspati* is referred to as possessing a powerful bow with "*R̥ta* as its string" and as one prepared to "mount the Chariot of *R̥ta*", deity *Agni* is described as one who is "desirous of *R̥ta*", one who is "*R̥ta*-minded" and as he who "spread heaven and earth by *R̥ta*"; the *Maruts* are referred to as "rejoicing in the house of *R̥ta*" and as "knowers of *R̥ta*"; *Ushas* is described as having been "placed at the root of *R̥ta*" ; *Varuṇa* is praised as "having the form of *R̥ta*" and along with *Mitra*, as *Mitra-Varuṇa* as "destroying the foes of *R̥ta*" and as professing *R̥ta* by *R̥ta*."<sup>19</sup>

In ancient Vedic tradition, *R̥ta* is regarded as a cosmic law of retribution. And it is instructed that, in order to avoid natural calamities and sufferings, one should follow the ordinances laid by the moral law, i.e. *R̥ta*. "Committing one's actions to the governance of *R̥ta* were referred to as it's *Dharma*, and was therefore understood as an imperative in ensuring one's own well-being. In this vein, the individual who follows the ordinances of nature can be described as one who acts according to the "*Dharma of R̥ta*."<sup>20</sup> *Dharma* is a component of *R̥ta* and is invariably associated with it. But during the fall of Vedic tradition and dawn of Hindu literature, the concept of *Dharma* overshadowed the notion of *R̥ta*;

"...became so useful for framing religious, moral and social regulations, that interest in it and discussion of its applications to social and moral order eclipsed all discussions of metaphysical and theological ideas. Since, moreover, *Dharma* was made the central subject of

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<sup>16</sup> Bloomfield, M., 1908, *The Religion of the Veda: The Ancient Religion of India, From Rig-Veda to Upanishads*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>17</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%B9%9A#cite\\_note-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%B9%9A#cite_note-1), retrieved on 2016/1/3.

<sup>18</sup> Oldenberg, Hermann 1894, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 195.

<sup>19</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%B9%9A>, retrieved on 21016/1/5.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*.

a literary tradition which was to become vast and extensive throughout India, while the conception of *Rta* remained largely confined to the Vedas and their commentaries, it naturally took possession of brāhmaṇical thinking even at the expense of older, exalted concepts and conceptions.”<sup>21</sup>

Hence, *Dharma* shifted the prominence from gods as preservers of *Rta* and brought it towards individuals who uphold it through their actions (*karma*) and “the ethical responsibility and culpability of the individual received an increasing amount of emphasis towards the end of the Vedic period.”<sup>22</sup> Central to this shift was the notion of *Karma* which is inevitably related with the concept of *Dharma* because *Dharma* being the law of righteousness is inextricably related to the actions leading to its fulfilment. “The emergence of *Karma* as a central doctrine of late Vedic and early Hindu tradition also helped to overcome the problems of theodicy that includes evil in the world, and provided us with “law of moral causation” which in turn excused deities and *Rta* from the occurrence of evil in the world and shifted the responsibility of evil solely upon individuals.”<sup>23</sup>

Indian society is pluralistic and diverse in term of arranging and regularizing the lives of its people. Indian civilization is a combination of various civilizations;

“Since the middle of the second millennium BC, Indian civilization has played host to several streams of migrant groups and communities from different parts of the world. The advent of the Aryans, the Tibeto-Burman speaking Mongoloid groups, the Kushans, the Sakas, the Greeks, the Huns, the Arabs, the Persians, the Turks and the Mongols at different points of time testifies to the pervasiveness of the migration process during the successive periods of Indian history. The migrant groups and communities brought their respective traditions and behaviour patterns from their native lands. In the course of time they lost contact with their places of origin and underwent an extensive process of indigenization. The process of adaptation and interaction among the various groups brought about, on the one hand, India’s characteristic diversity and, on the other, a complete cultural tradition.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Day, T. P., 1982, *The Conception of Punishment in Early Indian Literature*, p. 42.

<sup>22</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%B9%9A%9A%9A>, retrieved on 2016/1/5.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> [http://ignca.nic.in/ls\\_03016.htm](http://ignca.nic.in/ls_03016.htm), retrieved on 2016/1/13

We find archaeological evidence referring to trade, commercial and cultural relations between the borderlands of north-western India and Iran and Central Asia even before the dawn of the Harappan civilization.<sup>25</sup> “The Harappan civilization had extensive trade and cultural contacts with Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan and the Mediterranean world. The process of acculturation which was set into motion as far back as the third millennium BC continued unabated during the successive periods of Indian history and led to the intermingling of a variety of cultural traits and features. Among other things, the Indian astronomical lore was influenced by the Babylonian arithmetical system as well as the Greek geometrical system.”<sup>26</sup>

The notion of plurality in terms of multiplicity of viewpoints is also observable to ancient Indian schools of thought. “Pluralism has been expressed in many ways in the later development of Indian philosophical systems; such as in *Vedānta* philosophy, we go from one to many, i.e. Brahman alone the cause of origination, sustentation and destruction of this universe, in Vallabh Vedānta, we go from many to one, i.e. all creatures are manifestations of god, he is essence of all living beings: in *Sāṃkhya* and *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* systems, we go from many to many, for example, in *Sāṃkhya* system there are plurality of Purushas and in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system, world is made up of many atoms and their conjunctions by the will of the supreme and in Buddhism, we go from nothing i. e. *svabhāva shunya* to many.”<sup>27</sup> Pluralism of Indian tradition has been manifested in diverse ethnic identities, languages, arts, community structures etc. Early Vedic tradition could be generally divided into two categories; namely, the Brahminical tradition and the *Śramana* tradition. “The Brahminical tradition is textual, intellectual tradition also known as *Sāstriya pramparā* consisting of four stages of life, i.e. *Āshramas*, *Purushārthas* and *Dharma Shāstras*. And the latter is the folk tradition, oral tradition also called as *Lokpramparā*. Although both the traditions are equally strong in their application but it is the folk tradition which has robust social basis. It consists of three pillars, namely; family, community and economy.”<sup>28</sup> It is with the help of these two traditions that we have developed symbols, proverbs sutras, and idioms. With regard

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<sup>25</sup> Possehl, G., (ed.), 1982, *Harappan Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*, p.79.

<sup>26</sup> [http://ignca.nic.in/ls\\_03016.htm](http://ignca.nic.in/ls_03016.htm), retrieved on 2016/2/1.

<sup>27</sup> Singh, R. P., 2014, “Moral Dilemmas in the Era of Globalization”, p. 71.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

to plurality, there are 327 languages and 4000 communities out of which 3000 communities speak in 33 languages. And there are above 4000 castes in India.<sup>29</sup>

Due to the pluralism of stand points and ideologies, Indian schools of thought has been divided on three basis, including –the authorities of the *Vedas*, the principle of Causality (*satkāryavāda* and *asatkāryavāda*), and *Śramana* and *Brāhmana* tradition. There are six schools that believe in the authority of Vedas and thus, are called orthodox schools, viz.; *Nyāya*, *Vaiśeṣika*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Mīmāṃsā* and *Vedānta*. And there are three schools, who do not believe in the authority of Vedas, and thus, are called heterodox schools, these are; *Cārvāka*, *Jain* and *Buddhism*. Out of these nine schools, there are three schools, viz., *Nyāya*, *Vaiśeṣika* and *Buddhism* that believe in *Asatkāryavāda* theory that holds that effect does not pre-exists in its cause but is a new creation, a new beginning. And the remaining six schools, viz., *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Mīmāṃsā* and *Advaita Vedānta* advocate *Satkāryavāda* view of causation.<sup>30</sup> Out of the three heterodox schools, there are two schools namely; Jainism and Buddhism that come under the *Śramanic* tradition, which means “seeker, one who indulges in acts of austerity, ascetic etc.”<sup>31</sup>

The prevalent differences among these schools of thought signify the plurality of interpretations. The different strands of thought represent the different ways of interpreting the reality. Interpretation is essential for comprehending the text. To quote Terence Bell in this context:

“Interpretation is not an option but a necessity for the meaning-seeking creature that we are...Our prehistoric ancestors interpreted the meaning of animal entrails, omens and other signs that might make their future. They, like modern meteorologists, attempted to forecast the weather by looking at clouds and observing the behaviour of birds and other creatures.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 72

<sup>30</sup> *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* gives the example of clay to illustrate their view on *asat-kārya-vāda*. They argue that the clay is the material cause (*upādāna kārna*) for making a pot which has not come into existence yet while the potter is the efficient cause (*nimitta kārna*). *Advaitins*, *Sāṃkhya* and *Mīmāṃsikas* on the other hand, argue that the pot was pre-existent in the clay that is why its creation could be made possible. The *advaitins* argues that oil could be extract from a sesame seed only when the sesame seed has potential to produce it. Oil cannot be extracted from clay nor can pot be produced out of sesame seed. Their production compliments their potential.

<sup>31</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Arama%E1%B9%87a#cite\\_note-mmw1096-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Arama%E1%B9%87a#cite_note-mmw1096-2), retrieved on 2016/3/28.

<sup>32</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 89.

“In Indian Vedic system, the art of interpretation is performed by *bhāṣyakāras*. Among the ancient and mediaeval Veda, *Sayāṇa bhāṣyakāras* has produced the maximum number of *bhāṣyas* and has incorporated in them, to a very large extent, the main results of Vedic exegesis achieved by his predecessors.”<sup>33</sup> Gandhi draws his inspiration from the spiritual texts such as, *Rāmāyana*, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Quran*, *Bible*, etc. He from his own interpretations of various religious manuscripts concluded that the essence of all texts is the same. They all preach nonviolence, compassion and love for all. Gandhi followed the *advaitic* vision of life for he believed in the essential unity of mankind. “The Advaitic vision of life made him believe in the unity of all beings. Every individual has divinity within himself/herself. Thus, Advaita served as a firm philosophical foundation for Gandhi.”<sup>34</sup> According to Gandhi, God is one and each and every individual possess some attributes of him. Only human race possess reason, love, compassion and the ability to practice nonviolence in its virtual sense. And this makes us different from other existing races. Gandhi like the *advaitins* believed that every inch of this world is inspired by the omnipotent God. By God the origination, Sustention and destruction of this world is possible. He also believed that self-transformation demolishes all dilemmas and dichotomies caused by *avidyā*.

Every culture or tradition has their own conceptions of world and man. On the basis of their understanding of man and the world, they lay certain *weltanschauung* to be followed by their successors. Such is the case with Indian tradition. Indian sages and seers have developed an organized *weltanschauung* or a systematic philosophy for the pursuit of life. The *weltanschauung* is represented by the triple four civilizational concepts like *Varnas*, *Āshramas* and *Purushārthas* embedded in Vedas. These social laws were introduced by Indian sages to help mankind to achieve their highest goals. “The idea of *Varṇa* is stated in the *Purusha Shukta* of *Ṛg Veda*. In it was laid down that the whole cosmos is the *Purusha*, of which the *Brahmin* represented the mouth, the *Kshatriya* his arms, *Vaiśeya* his thighs, and the *Shudra* his feet. Again, in *Ṛg Veda* one finds mention of the four *Varnas* when it is said, one to high sway, one to exalted glory, one to pursue his gain, and one to his labour- all to

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<sup>33</sup> Gopal, R., 1983, *The History and Principles of Vedic Interpretation*, p. 169.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. P. 103

regard their different vocations, all moving creatures hath the dawn awakened.”<sup>35</sup> “In *Nirukta* (ancient science of interpretation connected with Vedas), *Shri Yaskācharya* evolved the word ‘*Varna*’ from the root ‘*Vri*’ giving the meaning of choice or *Varana*. In this way, *Varna* is that which person chooses according to his nature and his function. *Varna* has been used for colour as well. Originality, the word ‘*Varna*’ was applied to white complexioned Aryans and black complexioned slaves or servants. At a later stage the word came to be used for the four social classes i.e. *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaiśeya*, and *Shudra*.”<sup>36</sup> The *Varna* system of Indian tradition signifies the social division based on labour in human beings. Division based on labour is essential for any social organization to work methodically. While addressing the notion of *Varna*, lord Krishna said in *Gītā*;

“The four-fold order was created by me according to the divisions of quality and work. Though I am its creator, know me to be incapable of action or change.

*Cāturvarṇyam*: the four-fold order. The four *Varnas* are named - *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaiśeya* and *Shudra*. They constitute the four-fold order.

The three *gunas* - *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* - and the law of *karma* - these four elements were divided by me to create the four *Varnas*.

*Sattva* *guna* predominates in *Brahmins* - and they are assigned the tasks (*karma*) of *sham*, *dam*, *tapas* (meditation) etc.

*Rajas* *guna* predominates in *Kshatriyas* - *Sattva* *guna* is secondary. Their *karma* is to be warriors and show bravery and *tejas*.

*Rajas* *guna* also predominates in *Vaiśeya* - *Tamas* *guna* is secondary. Their *karma* is to be farmers and traders.

*Tamas* *guna* predominates in *Shudra*- *rajas* *guna* is secondary. Their *karma* is to serve others.”<sup>37</sup>

Hence, the *Varna* system was based on the internal tendencies and capabilities of human beings. It was in no way based on birth or heredity, though the notion has been greatly disrespected and misconceptualized in the later development of Hindu tradition. In the *Arthvaveda*, it is said that “I do not take a man to be slave or *Ārya* from his birth. I evaluate him from his qualities.” And in Hindu *Dharamshastra*, it is mentioned that, everyone is *Shudra* at birth, becoming a *Dwijā* only after *saṃkara* like *upanayana*.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Sharma, R. K., 2004, *Rural Sociology*, p. 109.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. Pp. 109-110.

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.eaglespace.com/spirit/gita\\_castesystem.php](http://www.eaglespace.com/spirit/gita_castesystem.php), retrieved on 2016/7/11

<sup>38</sup> Sharma, R. K., 2004, *Rural Sociology*, p. 110.

Rajendra Kumar Sharma in his work entitled; “Rural Sociology” (2004) throws light on the notion of Varna system;

“...The division of labour has been effected on the basis of inherent qualities and mental tendencies. Indian has accepted four tendencies among human beings, *Sātvika*, *Rājasika-Sātvika*, *Rajsika-tāmasaika*, and *Tāmsika*. The division of the Varna system has been made on the basis of these tendencies. The Brahmins were the *Sātvika* nature, Kshatriyas of *Rajasika-Sātvika*, Vaiśeya’s of *Rajsika-tāmasaika* and Shudras of the *Tāmsika*.”<sup>39</sup>

Thus, those who possessed the *Sātvika* qualities were labelled as *Brahmins*. Their duty was to govern and regulate the administration, educational and religious departments of the state. And those who possessed the *Rajasika-Sātvika* qualities were regarded as *Kshatriyas* and their job was to govern and protect the nation. And the people who owned *Rajsika-tāmasaika* abilities were regarded as *Vaiśeyas* and their job was to regulate the economic domain by enhancing trade and commerce in the state. And lastly the group of people who possessed the *Tāmsika* qualities were referred to as *Shudras* and their works was to serve and help others.

Hence, *Varna* system was not entirely faulty as it is conceived today, in fact; it was based on the tendencies and inherent qualities of people. The *Varna* system also signifies the decentralization of power. In *Varna* system, different powers were allotted to different people based on their capabilities, for example, *Brahmin Varna* was given the power of knowledge. The *Kshatriya Varna* was allotted with the power to rule, the *Vaiśeya Varna* was given the power to mint money and lastly, the *Shudra Varna* was rewarded with the power of labour. But in the later development of Hinduism, the *Varna* system grounded on capabilities and qualities had become a source for exploitation and thus lost its essence.

Regarding the Sanskrit term, *Varna*, it is often observed that it has been used interchangeably with the Portuguese term, caste. But before using both the terms as interchangeable to each other, one should keep in mind that there lies an important distinction between the two. As Vavalkar stated;

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.



“Here it would be advantageous for us to firmly fix in our mind that the ‘Varna theory’ of society is not to be confused with the *Jāti* system which we meet with today in the Hindu society and which is usually described by the term the caste system.”<sup>40</sup>

“Caste is a Portuguese word translated as *Jāti* in Hindi. *Jāti* is not same as *Varna*. *Jatis* are divisions within *Varnas*, for example, king and soldier would both be members of *Kshatriya Varna* but they would have different *Jatis*.”<sup>41</sup> R. K. Sharma in his work entitled; *Rural Sociology*” (2004) draws the following four major distinctions between the Varna system and the caste system;

- 1.) **Literal distinction;** the basic distinction between the term Caste and *Varna* lies in their etymology, for example; the term “*Jāti* is evolved from a Sanskrit root ‘*Jaha*’ meaning to be born”<sup>42</sup> and the term *Varna* is evolved from the Sanskrit root *Vri*, meaning to choose. Hence, *Jāti* or caste signifies, one’s place in the social order on the basis of their birth, whereas, *Varna* characterizes one’s position according to his/her capabilities and qualities.
- 2.) **Caste is based upon birth, Varna is based upon action;** the second distinction is derived from the first one, which describes that in caste system, one’s position in the society is based on his/her birth, whereas, in *Varna* system, one has to showcase their qualities and capabilities to acquire the position he/she is worthy of. Hence, “in the caste system an uneducated Brahmin is respected while an educated Shudra is looked down upon.”<sup>43</sup> The *Varna* system, on the one hand, gives preference to innate talent of men, the caste system, on the other hand, differentiates people on the basis of their birth.
- 3.) **Varna system is flexible and caste is a rigid one;** the *Varna* system admits change based on people’s interest and capabilities. We find various examples of “*Varna* and inter-*Varna* marriages during and even after the Vedic period. For example, the *Kshatriya* Vishvamitra became a Brahmin on the basis of his penance. The lord *Parshurām* was a *Brahmin* by birth and a *Kshatriya* by action. And in the *Padma Purana*, we have a mention of low born *Vyās* and *Vaishya* becoming Brahmins. Similarly, there are various examples of inter-*varna* marriages in *Mahābhārata*. *Kshatriya* king *Yayati* married the *Brahmin* women

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid. P. 111

<sup>41</sup> [http://creative.sulekha.com/varna-ashrama-and-purusharthas\\_332575\\_blog](http://creative.sulekha.com/varna-ashrama-and-purusharthas_332575_blog) retrieved on 2016/03/1

<sup>42</sup> Sharma, R. K., 2004, *Rural Sociology*, p. 112.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

*Devayani* while *Dushyant* married *Shakuntla*. Although *Shyantanu* was a *Kshatriya*, he married low born *Satyawati*.<sup>44</sup> Hence, the *Varna* system allows the change of *Varna* according to the potentials, abilities, and interest of men. Whereas, the caste system does not allow the change of caste according to the capabilities of men and inter caste marriages are impermissible in the caste system.

**4.) Difference in numbers;** the *Varna* system is generally divided into four *Varnas*, *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaiśeya* and *Shudra*. On the other hand, “according to socio economic and Caste Census 2011 conducted by Registrar general of India, there are 46, 73,034 categories of castes, sub-castes, synonymous, different surnames, gotras in the caste and clan names.”<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the caste system and *Varna* system are not similar, although the former is originated from the later, yet the former system is a rigid system and has become the source of exploitation in India.

### **The Āshram System:**

According to German scholar, Paul Deussen, the word *āshram* has two meanings: (1) “where people labour or make effort and (2) to labour and make effort. The word *āshram* comes from the Sanskrit root giving the meaning of ‘making an effort’- *āshram*. In this way *āshram* literally mean a step in the journey of life.”<sup>46</sup> According to Indian ethics, the highest aim of a man’s life is to attain liberation. And “every *āshram* is a step in the long journey to that aim. In the *Shānti Parva* of *Mahābhārata*, Saint *Vedvyāsa* has described *āshram* as a four rung ladder which takes one in the direction of Brahma. *Vedvyāsa* says, *Chatushpadi hi nishreni brahman yesha pratishthika, etamaruhya nishreni brahmaloke mahiyate.*”<sup>47</sup> The *āshram* system depicts the four stages of human life. It presents a systematic development of human life. According to Dr. “P. M. Modi, in the beginning there were only three *āshrams* and that *Vānaprastha* and *Sanyāsa* were considered as one *āshram*. It is in *Jabala Upanishad* that one finds the mention of four *āshrams* for the first time. Hindu

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socio\\_Economic\\_and\\_Caste\\_Census\\_2011](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socio_Economic_and_Caste_Census_2011), retrieved on 2016/03/11.

<sup>46</sup> Sharma, R.K., 2004, *Rural Sociology*, p. 112-113.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. P. 113

Dharamshastra maintains that each individual should normally pass these four stages of life.”<sup>48</sup>

The Indian sages and seers have divided human life into the following four stages;

**1). *Brahmacharya āshram*:** “Taking man’s average life to be 100 years, the span of each *āshram* is believed to be 25 years. *Brahmacharya āshram* is the first stage and it starts with *upanayana* ceremony. *Brahmacharya* means leading the life according to *Brahma*. In this *āshram*, the student or *brahmachari* used to spend 25 years with his teacher studying the *Vedas* and leading a life of self -control.”<sup>49</sup> At this stage, the student is required to live a life of austerity and self- control. At the Brahmacharya stage, the emphasis was laid on the education and moral modelling of the individual.

**2). *Grihastha āshram*:** After completing the education, one was advised to live a Grihastha life, i.e. married life. “According to Gautama *Dharamsutrra*, the Grihastha *āshram* is foundation of all *āshrams*. Manu maintains that just as all beings subsist on air so do all beings take life from Grihastha *āshram*. *This āshram* feeds all the other *āshrams*. According to Manu, the three *āshrams* attain fulfilment through Grihastha *āshram* and live on its help, just as all the big and small rivers become fulfilled upon reaching the ocean.”<sup>50</sup> There are various duties associated with this stage of life, for example, reproduction, raising one’s family, minting money and providing finances to his own family, helping others and engaging in various other material activities. “In this *āshram*, the person learns the lesson of selflessness, sacrifice, pity and sympathy, besides fulfilling his own needs and satisfying his own desires.”<sup>51</sup>

**3). *Vānaprastha āshram*:** This stage refers to the retirement age. Here one skin starts to wrinkle and he gradually enters into old age. According to Manu, “when a person finds his hair grey and his son has a son and leave for the jungle in order to pray to God and practise yoga.”<sup>52</sup> This is a period to pursue *Sādhna* and to gradually withdraw from the world. At this stage, one was advised to renounce all his mundane attachments and to prepare oneself for attaining the liberation.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. P. 114

4). **Sanyāsa āshram:** “After 25 years of conditioning in the *Vānaprastha āshram*, one entered the last the *Sanyāsa āshram*. Before entering in this *āshram*, one has to take a vow that “I have completely, from this day, bidden farewell to all desires and anxieties regarding son, wealth and the world. All living beings may be made fearless by me.” In this way, having completely given up all such selfish desires, a *sanyāsi* roamed about in the world with a desire to teach the people in order to emancipate mankind.”<sup>53</sup> This stage generally denotes the complete renunciation of material bounds and relations. During this stage, one lives an austere life with the aim of attaining liberation or *Moksha*.

The *āshram* system denotes a well-organized social as well as individual life. The system demonstrates a unique and integral approach towards life. The system incorporates educational, material and spiritual needs of the individual and thus, paves the way for integral and complete development of man. The *āshram* concept of ancient Hinduism also incorporates the *Purushārtha* system or the four ways of Hindu life. The *Āshrama* rule of life is inextricably linked with four *Purushārtha*’s, namely: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Moksha*. The four *Purushārthas* has been considered as the most basic for Hindu social life. Each of the four *Purushārthas* represents ethical, social, physical and spiritual pursuit of man’s life.

1. **Dharma:** Righteous way of leading life is called *Dharma*. *Dharma* is held most basic and primary for all four stages of *Āshrama* life. *Dharma* is the moral, ethical and righteous conduct for the regulation of attainment of various means of life. *Dharma* is an expression used for justice and righteous conduct in the great Hindu epic *Mahābhārata*. *Dharma* plays an important role in setting up moral and ethical social life. *Dharma* being a component of the moral law, i.e. *Ṛta* provides us the ethical laws and rules for living a harmonious social life. “According to *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy, *dharma* is that which leads to improvement in this world and to liberation in the next.”<sup>54</sup>
2. **Artha:** A normal man cannot live life solely on *Dharma*; *artha* also plays an important role in leading a good social life. “The term *artha* loosely refers to wealth, career, economic stability, and financial prosperity, activity to make a

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Sharma, R.K., 2004, *Rural Sociology*, p. 114

living, financial security and economic prosperity so on.”<sup>55</sup> “Etymologically the word *artha* is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘*ri*’ which means “that which one goes for”. Thus *artha* is interpreted as anything that is sought after.”<sup>56</sup> In *Mahābhārata Artha* is defined as:

“What is regarded as *Dharma* here depends solely upon *Artha* (wealth). One who robs another of wealth robs him of his *Dharma*. Poverty is a state of sinfulness. All kinds of meritorious acts flow from the possession of great wealth, as from wealth springs all religious acts, all pleasures, and heaven itself. Wealth brings about accession of wealth, as elephants capture elephants. Religious acts, pleasure, joy, courage, worth, and learning; all these proceed from wealth. From wealth one’s merit increases. He that has no wealth has neither this world nor the next”.<sup>57</sup>

Hence, wealth is essential for leading a prosperous social life. Even the *Pañcatantra*, a tradition compilation of the stories of wisdom emphasize upon the benefits of wealth. As it is quoted:

“The smell of wealth (*artha*) is quite enough to wake a creature’s sterner stuff. Wealth gives constant rigour confidence, and power. Poverty is a curse worse than death. Virtue without wealth is of no consequence. The lack of money is the root of all evil”.<sup>58</sup>

The above is true even in today’s context. Poverty gives rise to various kinds of evil. And *dharma* without *Artha* cannot be followed in its virtual sense because a normal man can’t live the life of righteousness when he is starving of hunger. *Artha* accompanied with *dharma* lead to a prosperous life. But *artha* without the regulation of *dharma* gives rise to various social and moral evils. Hence, both are equally important for a harmonious and peaceful social order.

**3. *Kāma*:** *Artha* alone is not enough to provide one with a good social life. *Artha* without *Kāma* fails to give complete satisfaction to a man. A man by nature seeks satisfaction, aesthetic enjoyments, affection and pleasure in his life. “In the absence of *kāma*, life becomes dry and miserable.”<sup>59</sup> *Vātsyāyana* in his *Kāmasutra* defined *Kāma* as:

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<sup>55</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artha>, retrieved on 2016/3/21.

<sup>56</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 53.

<sup>57</sup> Koller, John M., 1970, *Oriental Philosophies*, p. 11.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* P. 10

<sup>59</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 54.

“The enjoyment of the appropriate objects of five senses of hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting, and smelling, assisted by the mind, together with the soul. The ingredient in this is a peculiar contact between the organ of senses and its object, and the consciousness of pleasure that results from the contact is called *Kāma*”.<sup>60</sup>

Manu defined the relationship between *Dharma*, *Artha*, and *Kāma* as:

“Some declare that the good of man consist in the *dharma* and *Artha*; others opine that it is found in *Artha* and *Kāma*; some say that *dharma* alone will give it; the rest assert that *Artha* alone is the chief good in the harmonious coordination of the three”.<sup>61</sup>

It is natural for human beings to have desire for materialistic pleasures. The attainment of these sensual as well as materialistic pleasures provides satisfaction to their desires. But these desires should be regulated with the knowledge of *Dharma*. Over indulgence in any kind of materialistic pleasure may lead to the destruction of inner peace. Hence these pleasures must be sought in accordance with *Dharma*. *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama* relate to objects of this world. These are in brief, called the *Trivarga*. At one time, the Hindus interpreted the *trivarga* as a means to liberation, though generally all the four *Purushārthas* has been stressed. *Vātsyāyana* has written, a man in hundred years of age should gain knowledge in childhood, sex satisfaction in youth, and attend to duty and liberation in old age.”

**4. Moksha:** “*Moksha* refers to various forms of emancipation, liberation and release.

In its soteriological and eschatological senses, it refers to freedom from *saṃsāra*, the cycle of death and rebirth. In its epistemological and psychological senses, *moksha* refers to freedom from ignorance: self-realization and self-knowledge.”<sup>62</sup>

In Hinduism, *Moksha* is considered as the supreme goal of life. And *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* are considered as a means to attain Moksha.

Hence, like the *āshram* system, *Purushārtha* system too, demonstrates four inter-related stages of leading a harmonious and integral social and individual life. “In Man’s history there are many instances of the balance between the society and the individual being lost due to laying of excessive importance on one aspect of life. Buddhists, Christians, among them St. Paul and Tertullian and priests of middle ages

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<sup>60</sup> Sharma, C. D., 1979, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 14

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. P. 15

<sup>62</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moksha>, retrieved on 2016/3/22

in Europe laid excessive emphasis on abstention with the there was a strong reaction in the direction of immortality. And as the result, *Vama Margi* Buddhist took women and wine to be an important part of the means.”<sup>63</sup> But perhaps, the ancient Indian sages could foresee the above short comings of laying emphasis upon just one aspect of human life and they were conscious of the psychological tendencies of man; hence, they gave equal importance to all the four means of life, i.e. *Purushārthas*. In ancient Indian system, one may observe that the rules were formed to establish the internal coherence between the various stages of life. The ancient Indian system, provides us the most unique and powerful way of integrating social as well as individual life. Here, social life is not conceived distinctly from individual life, rather, both are considered as inter-related and thus, equal emphasis was laid on both the aspects of life.

The Indian thinkers have paid equal importance to the concept of Rinas or debts along with *āshram* and *Purushārtha* system. “Four types of debts have been enumerated in the *Sharpath Brahmana*: first to gods, second to seers, third to, ancestors and fourth to fellow beings.”<sup>64</sup> Paternal debt is considered to be the highest debt because parents look after the child in his/her most vulnerable conditions. “According to Indian commentators, the way of repaying parental debt is to have children oneself and look after them in the same way. Besides, the parents, the seers and teachers impart knowledge to a person and make them capable of doing all his work efficiently in the world. As for the repayments of this debt, the means are to study Vedas and obey the laws of the *Brahmacharya āshram*. The debts to gods are paid off by performing different *yajnas*. A person owes this debt the moment he is born and he cannot hope for liberation unless he clears the debts.”<sup>65</sup> And lastly the debt to fellow beings is paid off by maintaining the felling of love, care, sympathy and empathy towards others. “In the *Brahmacharya āshram*, the individual clears his debts to his ancestors, seers, gods and fellow beings. The same is true about the *Grihasta āshram* as well.”<sup>66</sup>

Central to the notions of *Varna Āshrama*, *Purushārtha* and *Ṛna* is the moral utility of man. All of these four systems strive to bring the best in man and guide him

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<sup>63</sup> Sharma, R.K., 2004, *Rural Sociology*, p. 115.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Sharma, R. K., 2004, *Indian Society, Institution and Change*, p. 44.

towards the right path of life. For example, in Varna system, man is offered a position in the society on the basis of his abilities and tendencies whereas, the *āshram* system is formed in keeping in view the educational, physical, material and spiritual needs of man. Similarly, Purushārtha system denotes the ethical, social, and spiritual pursuits of man and *R̥na* system reminds one of his duties towards others. Hence, the fundamental aim of the above mentioned system is the moral, social, individual, physical and spiritual upliftment of men. All the four system, if applied in their true sense, would help mankind to achieve their goals in an enlightened and organized manner.

Gandhi admired the ancient Hindu value system for he thought it to be the appropriate weapon against the evils in the society. According to him, if we all duly perform our duties for the well-being of the society then most of the human problems can be solved. He emphasized on self-restriction to avoid over indulgence in materialistic activity. Gandhi valued the ancient Indian systems and laws of life prescribed in them. He also preached the values prescribed in the Ancient Indian system. Gandhi laid several rules to be followed by his followers and central to those rules was, the rules of nonviolence, temperance, non-stealing, non-corruption, fearlessness and righteousness and love for all. Regarding the rule of non-stealing, Gandhi said;

“I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my immediate use and keep it, I thief it from somebody else. I am no socialist, and I do not want to dispossess them who have got possessions; but I do not say that personally those who want to see light out of darkness have to follow this rule. I do not want to dispossess anybody; I should then be departing from the rules of nonviolence (one of the vows). In India we have got millions of people who have to be satisfied with one meal a day. You and I have no rights to anything we really have until these many millions are clothed and fed. You and I, who ought to know better, must adjust our wants, and even undergo voluntary privation, in order that they may be nursed, fed, and clothed.”<sup>67</sup>

Gandhi gave utmost importance to values, for him, the establishment of a just social order is possible only by the cultivation of moral values within us. “Like, Aristotle and Sri Aurobindo, he too felt that man, society and human values are

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<sup>67</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1933, *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 384-385.



inseparable from each other. One cannot think of man without society and society without man. Similarly, there is no society without human values; they regulate our moral conduct in the society. Lack of moral values breeds corruption, and it is progenitor to poverty, terror and other threats affecting social harmony and progress.”<sup>68</sup>

Hence, it can be said, that the pluralism of Indian culture helped Gandhi to hold an anti-essentialistic perspective towards life and others. The notion of *Niskāma karma* motivated him to pursue his duty without expecting the desirable fruits of his actions. His adherence towards nonviolence is certainly a gift of Buddhism and Jainism. The notion of tolerance, compassion and equal respect for all religions seems to have stemmed from Anekāntvāda of Jainism. His concept of ideal nation, i.e. *Ram rājya* shows the influence of Indian epic *Ramāyana* on him. His saintly life is nothing but the practices of various teachings of different religions. Hence, his teachings, ideals and notions are an outcome of his pluralistic approaches that he held towards various traditions.

## Section II

### An Exposition of *Jaina Anekāntvāda*

“There have been two parallel developments of thought in the main stream of Indian philosophy. One emphasizes on the principal of self-discipline and nonviolence, and the other, on the sacrificial duties for the salvation of human beings. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., there was an upsurge of ideas leading to new philosophical tenets and religious systems often of a revolutionary character.”<sup>69</sup> The new philosophical systems were revolutionary in terms of their ideologies and practices. They allotted supremacy to freedom of thought over any other Vedic practices. The law of asceticism and life unrestricted by mundane relationships and clinging for material objects became the foundation of new philosophical systems. The new philosophical systems arose from a “wandering class of ascetics, who freed themselves from the obligations of prevailing religious ideas and practices, and

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<sup>68</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 58.

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.jainworld.com/pdf/A%20PANORAMIC%20VIEW%20OF%20JAINISM.pdf>, retrieved on 2016/3/28

thought out a new fundamental problems of life and existence resulted in a vigorous reorientation of the religious life and two fold reactions ensued.”<sup>70</sup>

The first reaction ensued in the form of the emergence of thinking class of ascetics who devoted themselves in the search of truth or “higher knowledge (*parā vidyā*) which is indestructible (*aksharam*). And the philosophical mind of the *Upanishads* turned to *Vedanta* while revolting against the sacrifices. This introduced a new element of enlightenment (*Jñāna mārg*) through meditation (*Dhyān*) instead of the traditional approach of the sacrificial work (*Karma mārg*).”<sup>71</sup> Resultantly, the notion of meditation received great prominence during the emergence of new philosophical systems. “Jainism and Buddhism, among others, reflected a powerful systematic and philosophical departure from the massive and elaborate Vedic sacrifices and ceremonies.”<sup>72</sup>

The second reaction ensued in the form of the development of “monotheistic movements which denied the necessity, if not also the reality, of the Vedic gods together with the pre-eminence of the Brahmins in spiritual matters and accepted devotion (*bhakti mārg*) as the way of pleasing Gods such as Vishnu and Shiva.”<sup>73</sup> The new philosophical system emphasized on meditation and ascetic way of life was critical of the prevalent hierarchy of ancient Indian society and particularly the dominion of Brahmin class over other classes was called by “the defenders of tradition and orthodoxy as “heterodox” thinkers.”<sup>74</sup> The heterodox thinkers presented a new outlook of human life and its problems. The concept of meditation and life of celibacy were at the heart of their teachings. The heterodox thinkers, instead of relating worldly problems to gods, provided a rational account of all human problems. They offered a systematic and rational approach towards life and its complications. They preached the practise of meditation to overcome the evils of human life. With the emergence of heterodox system of thought, the traditional Vedic practices of sacrifice and ceremonies began to retrograde. The heterodox system of thought brought forward the notions of self-realization, emancipation, freedom of the individual from his self-laid boundaries, true bliss etc. The central thought carried by

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. P. 3

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. P.3

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. P.4

heterodox schools was the integration of man through the realisation of his inner most self freed from mundane attachments and aversions.<sup>75</sup>

The notions such as emancipation, self-realisation, strong asceticism and enlightenment etc. were inherited by two major heterodox schools, i.e., Jainism and Buddhism. Both the schools were logical in their character and systematic in their preaching. Jainism and Buddhism schools of thought shifted the problems of mundane life from god and brought it towards man himself. The schools revolutionize the old conception that only by the knowledge of the supreme, the abstruseness of the world could be overcome. Both the schools presented their different conceptions of the world and provided the path of salvation without entertaining the notion of God.

“Jainism contains the traces of the earliest developments of philosophical thinking in the history of mankind. According to the traditional Jaina literature, there have been twenty four *Tīrthankara* who reinstated the religious order at various time. The historical details of the first twenty-two *Tīrthankara* are not known, although traditional account of them found in Jain literature is not altogether insufficient to understand the line of Jaina thought. According to traditional information, Jainism was propagated by the *Kshatriya* of warrior class princes. It repudiated, explicitly or implicitly, the brāhmanical claims that Vedas were infallible sources of spiritual truth and the rituals prescribed in them, the means of salvation.”<sup>76</sup> The factual evidences of the preaching of last two-*Tīrthankara* are available which demonstrates a systematic growth of ethical and religious spread of Jainism. The Jainism school of thought is not merely a modification into the orthodoxy of religious thoughts; rather it is conceived as an altogether different strand of thought.

The Jaina tradition admits the teachings of twenty four *Tīrthankaras*, and the first among them is lord “*Rishabhdev*, who preached the ethical doctrine of nonviolence prior to the advents of Aryans in India, last of these was lord *Mahāvīr*, who lived from 599 B. C. to 529 B.C. He revealed the doctrine of nonviolence as

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<sup>75</sup> Here, it is important to make it clear at the outset that heterodox schools that preached asceticism and meditation to overcome the complications of life, are; Buddhism and Jainism. Though, *Cārvāka* is also considered as a heterodox school, but it does not consider austerity and meditation to be essential to live a blissful life.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.jainworld.com/pdf/A%20PANORAMIC%20VIEW%20OF%20JAINISM.pdf>, retrieved on 2016/3/28. P. 5

preached by lord *Rishabhdev.*<sup>77</sup> Lord *Mahāvira* during his spiritual quest developed great compassion and love for all creatures. He realized the sanctity of human life and developed toleration towards all religious outlooks. Lord *Mahāvira*'s anti-essentialistic perspective of reality gave rise to the theory of *Anekāntvāda*. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* refers to multiplicity of viewpoints and advocates equal reverence for all standpoints. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* represents a world-view that demonstrates that knowledge does not belong exclusively to one community, nation, religion, caste or creed. Knowledge is boundless and what we comprehend is only a part of it. The *anekāntvāda* of Jainism asserts that different viewpoints represent different aspects of reality and if taken together can form an absolute knowledge of reality.

According to the doctrine of *anekāntvāda*, truth is one but it is perceived differently by different people and no single view can be taken as absolute for it represents only an aspect of the multifacet reality. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* is also known as the doctrine of relativism, for it presupposes that the realization of truth is absolute and expression of truth is relative. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* also asserts that reality cannot be apprehended by our faculty of senses for whatever is given to senses is merely an appearance of the complex reality. An individual's comprehension of reality is dependent upon his ability to grasp it in a certain way. Thus, one standpoint alone cannot be regarded as absolute and in order to understand the true nature of reality, we are required to see it from all perspectives.

The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* denotes the metaphysical pluralism of Jaina philosophy. It is both realistic and relativistic in character; the Jaina metaphysics regards "matter (*pudgala*) and spirit (*Jīva*) as separate and independent realities. According to Jainism, there are innumerable material atoms and innumerable individual souls which are all separately and independently real. And each atom and each soul possesses innumerable aspects of its own."<sup>78</sup> Hence, it is unlikely for us to discover them all through finite capacities of our senses. Thus, *anekāntvāda* is the doctrine of non-absolutism which preaches tolerance and veneration for every standpoint. *Anekāntvāda* asserts that human knowledge is inevitably limited, relative and judgmental. The conditioned nature of knowledge is called *Syādvāda*. The

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid. P. 6

<sup>78</sup> Sharma, C. D., 2013, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 50.

doctrine of *Syādvāda* is an epistemological and logical upshot of Jaina's metaphysical doctrine, *anekāntvāda*. Both *anekāntvāda* and *syādvāda* are inter-dependent on each other for their legitimacy and the latter is a by-product of the former. The legitimacy of the former proves the validity of the latter. While, *anekāntvāda* presents the many-sidedness of reality; *syādvāda* signifies the logical and relative aspect of reality.

Jainism holds that a substance possesses many qualities and it exists independently. "It persists through all attributes and modes. Substance is defined as that which possesses qualities and modes. Out of the innumerable qualities of a substance some are permanent and essential, while others are changing and accidental. The former are called attributes (*guṇa*) and the latter are called modes (*prayāya*)."<sup>79</sup> A substance is indistinguishable from its attributes, because attributes form the essence of a substance and the latter cannot be imagined without it. But the modes of a substance are always changing and momentary, they are called accidental qualities of a substance. When a thing is viewed from the point of view of a substance, it seems permanent, static and real; while viewed from the point of view of modes, the thing appears impermanent, ephemeral and unreal. "Substance, therefore, is also defined as that which possesses the three characteristics of production, destruction and permanence. Substance has its unchanging essence and therefore is permanent. But it also has its changing modes and therefore is subject to origination and decay. To mistake any one-sided and partial view as the whole truth is to commit the fallacy of *Ekāntvāda*. As Jainism takes into account all these partial views, it is called *anekāntvāda*."<sup>80</sup>

Hence, the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* signifies multifacetedness of reality. It also advocates respect for plurality. It depicts the fundamental reality of life that plurality is inevitable, thus, we must welcome divergent opinions. Though *anekāntvāda* propose approbation for divergent viewpoints and practices but it does not suggest that vexatious and perverse views and actions are also welcomed. Jainism by the virtue of toleration and the process of argumentation paves the way for modification. Modification of ideas, thoughts and practices is essential for it helps us to reform, alter and sometimes change our views to reach the truth. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* stresses on the exercise of one's freedom of expression. It teaches us tolerance and

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid. P. 51

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

veneration towards others ideologies, practices and religion to promote harmony and peace in the society. It does not neglect viewpoints that do not match with a set ideology; on the contrary, it welcomes plurality of viewpoints. It stresses on the fact that no viewpoint is absolute; nothing is without error and also one should not blindly follow the set standard, instead one should challenge them with reasonable arguments and try to modify that which does not allow the promotion of justice. “*Anekāntvāda* holds that a substance has so many aspects in it that it is impossible to exhaust them all. And contradictions can and have to co-exist. Co-existence of opposites is the most fundamental principle of *anekāntvāda*. In fact, *anekāntvāda* argues that it is the opposites that keep life intact. Life will disappear with the disappearance of opposites as black exists as long as white is there; black will no longer exist if white disappears.”<sup>81</sup> As *ācharya Mahāprajna* rightly said;

“Our life is based on opposing pairs. If the opposition between pairs was to disappear, so would life. According to Hatha yoga, life is defined as the combination of inhalation and exhalation. There are five types of *prānas*. Of them, one is *prāna* and other is *aprāna*. As long as the opposing directions are maintained, there is life. When this order is broken, life is broken. The breaking of life or death means the expulsion of both these energies. When opposing movements, or when the two directional movements become one, life comes to an end.”<sup>82</sup>

Hence, opposition is the regulating principle of life. It would not be absurd to hold opposites as equally important because life would be void if we eliminate opposites from it. Non-absolutism is a way of life, and it must be appreciated. Regarding the multidimensional character of reality *ācharya Mahāprajna* further says;

“*Anekānta* stands for the right vision. It enables us to comprehend the true nature of an object, which is possessed of the infinite attributes of reality. According to Jaina, reality is multidimensional. It has many facets and qualities. So it is very difficult to comprehend the true nature of reality in its entirety. Accordingly, only a particular aspect of an object is comprehended by an onlooker. He, therefore, gives an estimate of reality from a particular standpoint.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Goyal, Sanjay, 2013, “Anekantvada, Post-structuralism and Multiculturalism”, p. 250.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. P. 250

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. Pp. 250-251.

Jaina āchāryas proposed *Anekānta* on the grounds of certain premises<sup>84</sup>:

- 1.) The premises of identity and difference.
- 2.) The premises of one and many.
- 3.) The premises of existence and non- existence.
- 4.) The premises of permanence and impermanence.
- 5.) The premises of universal and particular.

All of these premises are propounded to explain the importance of contradiction in *Anekāntvāda*. Concomitance of contraries is the fundamental principle of *Anekāntvāda*. *Āchrya Mahāprajya* shows this connection as;

“The earth is a substance and a pot is its mode. A pot is made of earth and as it cannot be produced without it, it is identical with the earth. The earth cannot exercise the function of holding water before it is transformed into a pot, which therefore is functionally different from earth. A pot is a product and earth is its material cause, in other words earth is the substance of which the pot is a mode. The relation between the substance and its mode is identity cum difference. It therefore follows that an effect and a cause are related through identity and difference.”<sup>85</sup>

The above quotation signifies that identity and difference are inseparable. An object possesses certain feature and these salient features make it distinguish from other objects. Difference from other objects is its identity. For example, to describe what is a ‘Right’ action we need to take into account the notion of ‘Wrong’, without differentiating wrong action from the right ones, we cannot describe what is right. Hence, identity and difference cannot be set apart from an object. An object bears both identity and difference. It would be an error to say that an object lacks both identity and difference because in the absence of identity it would be difficult to speculate what an object is. And without the presence of difference an object would be plain and it would be difficult to relate it with anything.

Both identity and difference make an object what it is. They are not contradictories; in fact, they are complimentary to each other. Without identity, difference cannot be figured out and without difference, identity cannot be formed.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid. P. 256

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

Thus their mutual presence in an object defines that object. Same is the case with existence and non- existence, an object can be said to have existence from one point of view and non-existence from another point of view. To say, that existence alone is real and non- existence is not is absurd because the very idea of existence requires and implies non-existence. Without non-existence, existence would have no meaning. We cannot assign any value to existence if non –existence does not exist. Satkari Mookerjee clarifies the concept in the following lines;

“The parts (of which the pen is made up) do not, taken by themselves, possess the pen character, but the pen is not absolutely different from the parts, as it has no being outside them. As viewed in other relations the pen is not a pen. The pen is a substance but substance is not the pen. The terms “being” and “non-being” as elements in formula have thus to be understood in a very restricted sense i.e. only in relation to a definite context which can be known from experience alone. ... Experience certifies the dual nature of entities, viz., existence in terms of its own individuality and non-existence apart from and outside this nature.”<sup>86</sup>

“Looking from another point of view, one understands that “change” can be perceived only when one is at rest. When everything is changing continuously, change will not be perceived. To “perceive” change, at least one point should be at rest. If one sits on a train and look at the trees, one feels as if the trees are moving fast. As a matter of fact, they are stationary. Only the movement of the train makes it appear so.”<sup>87</sup> Movement cannot be identified when everything is moving; it can be identified only when one point is at rest. If everything is unremittingly changing then it is unlikely to identify rest. Hence, rest is essential to comprehend change. Resultantly, Jainism asserts permanence and impermanence as two essential features of reality. As *Acharya Mahāprajna* writes;

“Non-absolutism however does not admit the absolute validity of any one of these alternatives. According to it, neither permanence independent of impermanence nor impermanence independent of permanence is the whole truth. Both are true relatively. There is no creation, according to kundakunda, without creation and no creation cum destruction

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid. Pp. 1258-259.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. P. 259



without continuity or eternity. The synthesis of the three i.e. creation, destruction and continuity is the truth.”<sup>88</sup>

Hence, *Anekāntvāda* admits all discordant views. The *Anekāntvāda* claims that every aspect of reality holds a portion of truth and we must synthesize all portions of truth in order to reach at the greater truth. The synthesis of many views is a step forward towards wisdom. “The association of one and many is followed by the concomitance of permanent and impermanent. A particular object is one from the point of view of entity. But the entity consists of so many things. The oneness of an entity came to pass because of its identity cum difference as an entity and manyness of the entity came to pass because of the ingredients, which gave birth to the entity as such. So looking at from one angle i.e. the angle of entity one may say that the entity is one. But when one looks at from the point of view of what it consists of, one has to say that it is many.”<sup>89</sup> Hence, both oneness and many-ness reside in the same object. *Ācharya Mahāprajya* puts it in the following way;

“The universal is two-fold –the horizontal and the vertical. The proposition, “I am one”, refers to the horizontal universal, which is the experience of unity, pervasiveness and essence. The proposition I am many in respect of the successive functions of my consciousness represents the vertical universe. There is experience of before and after in it. The horizontal universe is the essence pervading through the different contemporary states, which establishes their unity. The vertical universe consists in successive changes that are similar, which establishes a unity running through the past, present and future.”<sup>90</sup>

When an entity is seen as a substance, it seems one, but when we look at the parts of which it is composed of, it seems many which suggests that one and many both coexist in the same object. Hence, *Anekāntvāda* admits plurality and contradictions of standpoints. The theory believes in the mutual coexistence of different ideologies, culture, and systems. The doctrine teaches us to be tolerant towards other cultures, religions and ideologies. Jainism is a perfect example of tolerance.

Jaina’s metaphysical theory of reality is called *anekāntvāda* which proposes multi-facet characterization of reality and *Syādvāda* and *Nayavāda* are the two other

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. Pp. 259-260.

<sup>90</sup> Acharya Mahaprajna, (2002), *Anekānta the Third Eye*, p. 13.

doctrines of Jainism that provide *Anekāntvāda* with more detailed logical structure and meaning.

### ***Syādvāda***

“*Syādvāda* is also called *Sapta-bhaṅgī-naya* is the theory of relativity of knowledge. *Sapta-bhaṅgī-naya* means ‘dialectic of the seven steps’ or ‘the theory of seven-fold judgements’. The word *syāt* literally means probable, perhaps and may be.”<sup>91</sup> *Syādvāda* is a doctrine of conditional predications. It is a theory of relativity of judgements or propositions. The theory explains the multi-facetness of reality through the qualifier *Syād*. *Anekāntvāda* refers to infinite qualities of an entity and *naya* reveals only an aspect of reality. But the synthesis of multiple viewpoints is achieved by the theory of conditional predications (*syādvāda*). *Ācharya Samantbhadra* describes its indispensability through the following lines:

Affirmation, when not in conflict with negation, yields the desired result of describing truly an object of knowledge. Only when affirmation and negation are juxtaposed in mutually non-conflicting situation, one is able to decide whether to accept or reject the assertion. This is how the doctrine of conditional predications (*syādvāda*) establishes the truth.”—*Āptamīmāṃsā (Verse 113)*<sup>92</sup>

Jaina epistemological and logical doctrine, *syādvāda* asserts that the affirmation propositions are either about existence, or non-existence, or inexpressible nature of reality. The various combinations of these three results into *Saptibhaṅgī*; the theory of seven conditioned predications, these are<sup>93</sup>;

- 1) *Syādasti*: relatively, a thing is real.
- 2) *Syādnāsti*: relatively, a thing is unreal.
- 3) *Syādasti nāsti*: Relatively, a thing is both real and unreal.
- 4) *Syādavaktavyam*: relatively, a thing is indescribable.
- 5) *Syādasti cha avaktavyam*: relatively, a thing is real and is indescribable.
- 6) *Syādnāsti cha avaktavyam*: relatively, a thing is unreal and is indescribable.
- 7) *Syādasti cha nāsti cha avaktavyam*: relatively, a thing is real, unreal and indescribable.

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<sup>91</sup> Sharma, C. D., 2013, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 52.

<sup>92</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anekantavada>, retrieved on 2016/3/26

<sup>93</sup> Sharma, C. D., 2013, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 53-54.

Each of the above mentioned seven conditioned propositions enquires into the complex and multi-facet aspect of reality which is conditioned by the modes of its appearance, i.e. time, space, substance etc. The phrase, ‘relatively’ (*syāt*) refers to a particular standpoint of expression; “from the point of view of one’s own substance, everything is, while from the point of view of other’s substance, everything is not. We can know a thing in relation to its own matter, form, space, and time as a positive reality, while in relation to other’s matter, form, space, and time it becomes a negative entity. When we affirm the two different standpoints successively, we get the third judgement, i.e. a thing is both real and unreal. If we affirm or deny both existence and nonexistence simultaneously to a thing, if we assert or negate the two different aspects of being and nonbeing together, the things baffle all description. It becomes indescribable, i.e., either both real and unreal simultaneously or neither real nor unreal. This is the fourth judgement. Rest of the judgements are combinations of the fourth with the first, second and third respectively.”<sup>94</sup>

Jainism asserts that both *syādvāda* and *kevaljñāna* are foundational elements of knowledge. The view is described by *ācharya Samantbhadra* in the following way;

“*Syādvāda*, the doctrine of conditional predications, and *kevalajñāna* (omniscience), are both illuminators of the substances of reality. The difference between the two is that while *kevalajñāna* illumines directly, *syādvāda* illumines indirectly. Anything which is not illuminated or expressed by the two is not a substance of reality and hence a non-substance (*avastu*).” — *Āptamīmāṃsā* (Verse 105)<sup>95</sup>

Hence, *syādvāda* expresses reality relatively. A thing ‘is’ when viewed from a point of view of its own substance and a thing ‘is not’ when viewed from the point of view of other’s substance, time and mode. Hence, the doctrine of *syādvāda* represents conditional and relative feature of reality. Jainism holds that a thing has innumerable aspects and its appearance is bound by its attributes and modes and further conditioned by space and time in which a thing is given. Jaina asserts that due to the conditional appearance of a thing, it is bound to origination, sustentation and destruction. Jainism further asserts that we cannot comprehend an object in its entirety due to the finite capability of our organs of senses. Hence, what we comprehend is only an aspect of the complex reality; this partial comprehension of reality from a

<sup>94</sup> Sharma, C. D., 2013, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 54.

<sup>95</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anekantavada>, retrieved on 2016/3/26.

particular point of view is called Nayavāda. The doctrine of *Nayavāda* provides a logical foundation for the doctrine of *syādvāda*.

### *Nayavāda*

*Nayavāda* is knowledge of a thing in its relation to its own mode, substance, time and place. *Naya* is knowledge of a thing from a particular standpoint. In Jainism, knowledge is divided into two kinds, namely, *pramāna* and *naya*. “*Pramāna* is knowledge of a thing as it is. And *naya* essentially means knowledge of a thing in its relation. *Naya* means a standpoint of thought from which we make a statement about thing. Partial knowledge of one of the innumerable aspects of a thing is called ‘*naya*’.”<sup>96</sup> Partial knowledge of infinite modes of an entity is called *naya*.

*Nayavāda* is a method of arriving at a particular inference through a particular standpoint. For example, when we talk of a super hit movie, we generally talk about the actors, their dialogues and their acting. But this does not imply that the movie was devoid of camera man, light man, spot boy, director, producer and various other stuffs that are essential to make a movie. Similarly, *nayavāda* represents our particular observation about a certain thing. Hence, *nayavāda* allows us to unravel reality one by one.

Jainism has classified *naya* into two categories, namely, *artha naya* and *shabda naya*. *Artha naya* refers to knowledge of a thing by its meaning. And *Shabda naya* denotes knowledge of a thing achieved by words. Jaina further divided *Artha-naya* into four categories, these are; *Naigam-naya*, *Saṅgraha-naya*, *Vyavahāra-naya*, and *Rjusūtra-naya*. *Shabda naya* is also further divided into three categories, *Shabda-naya*, *Sambhirūda-naya*, and *Evambhūta-naya*. These seven *nayas* are described in the following lines;<sup>97</sup>

***Artha-naya***; it refers to knowledge of an entity from the point of view of its meaning. It is of three kinds;

**1. *Naigam-naya***; from this standpoint, we look at a thing as having both universal and particular qualities and we do not distinguish between them. It becomes

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<sup>96</sup> Sharma, C. D., 2013, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 49.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. 49-50

fallacious when both universals and particulars are regarded as separately real and absolute.

2. ***Sañgraha-naya***; here, we emphasize the universal qualities and ignore the particular where they are manifested. It becomes fallacious when universals alone are treated as absolutely real and particulars are rejected as unreal.
3. ***Vyavahāra-naya***; here, things are taken as concrete particulars and their specific features are emphasized. It becomes fallacious when particulars alone are viewed as real and universals are rejected as unreal.
4. ***Rjusūtra-naya***; here the real is identified with the momentary. The particulars are reduced to a series of moments and any given moment is regarded as real. When this partial truth is mistaken to be the whole truth, it becomes fallacious.

Among the *nayas* which refers to words the first is called *Shabda-naya*, and the second is called, *Sambhirūḍa-naya* and the third is called *Evambhūta-naya*. Their functions are as follows;

1. ***“Shabda-naya***; it means that a word is necessarily related to the meaning which it signifies. Every word refers either to a thing or quality or relation or action.
2. ***Sambhirūḍa-naya***; it implies a restricted meaning of a thing. Here, the meaning of a thing is restricted to its roots only. “For example, the word ‘*Pañkaja*’ literally means ‘born of mud’ and signifies any creature or plant born of mud. But its meaning is conventionally restricted to lotus only.
3. ***Evambhūta-naya***; it is a specialized form of the second. According to it, a name should be applied to an object only when its meaning is fulfilled For example, a cow should be called ‘*gauh*’ only when it moves and not when it is lying down.”<sup>98</sup>

Each *naya* or standpoint describes only one of the innumerable features possessed by a thing. When a particular stand point is taken as an absolute truth, we commit the fallacy of *ayābhāsa*.

Both *syādvāda* and *nayavāda* serves as a logical basis for the doctrine of *anekāntvāda*. *Anekāntvāda* depicts the non-absolutistic and pluralistic view of reality. The theory also represents ethical views of Jainism by preaching the doctrine of tolerance. Jainism apart from its metaphysical doctrine, *anekāntvāda*, and epistemological and logical doctrines, *syādvāda* and *nayavāda* respectively, is also

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid. P. 50

known for its doctrine of *ahiṃsā*. Jainism gives utmost importance to the virtue of *ahiṃsā*. Jainism considers all lives as sacred and holds the view that every creature preserves the right to live fearlessly to their highest capacity. *Ahiṃsa* and tolerance are interrelated. *Ahiṃsa* without tolerance is impossible to achieve. One cannot be tolerant and violent at the same time. We can be nonviolent as long as we are tolerant towards others. Hence, *anekāntvāda* and nonviolence are inter-related. *Anekāntvāda* alerts a knower about multi-facetness of reality, it also makes the knower aware of his own limitations in grasping knowledge. It prevents us from falling into dogmatism. It prevents one to claim that his knowledge alone is absolute and precise. And eventually, it saves us from falling into the trap of egoism. Egoism prevents an individual from respecting others views as much as he respects his own views. This gradually leads him to defend his partial knowledge as absolutely true. By claiming his own knowledge to be absolutely true, he tries to subjugate other's standpoints and this leads to indirect violence (emotional, verbal, and mental) on his own self and others as well. The person who inflicts the indirect violence on the other may not realize that by doing so he is also harming his very own self because violence on others is also violence on oneself for it impedes the soul's ability to attain salvation. But when a view is presented in a form of *Syādavāda*, it always paves the way for modification for the person involved in disagreement never feels suppressed by the other party involved in a conflict. Hence, intellectual tolerance towards multiple standpoints promotes harmony in society.

### ***Anekāntvāda* influence on M.K. Gandhi;**

M. K. Gandhi borrowed his doctrine of nonviolence from Jainism and Buddhism. Jainism helped Gandhi to develop an element of passivity in accepting pain and suffering for the betterment of others. Gandhi's religious pluralism and anti-essentialistic perspective is also an outcome of the doctrine of *anekāntvāda*. Gandhi held that all religions are true because they all contain a part of truth and offers different ways to reach the ultimate truth, i.e. God. Gandhi at a very tender age got acquainted with the virtues of *ahiṃsā* (nonviolence), *aprigraha* (non-possession) and the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* by his mother. These notions had a lasting influence on him and thus contributed in structuring Gandhi's moral and spiritual character.

“According to Gandhi, his seeming contradictory positions are a result of his experiment with truth, and his faith in the doctrine of *Anekāntvāda*. According to Gandhi, it is a duty of a *satyāgrahi* to act accordingly to his relative truth but at the same time, he is also required to learn from the truth of the adversaries.”<sup>99</sup> Gandhi in response to a friend’s query on religious tolerance responded in the following lines;

“I am an Advaitist and yet I can support Dvaitism (dualism). The world is changing every moment, and is therefore unreal, it has no permanent existence. But though it is constantly changing, it has a something about it which persists and it is therefore to that extent real. I have therefore no objection to calling it real and unreal, and thus being called an *Anekāntavadi* or a *Syādvādi*. But my *Syādvāda* is not the *Syādvāda* of the learned, it is peculiarly my own. I cannot engage in a debate with them. It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. And this knowledge saves me from attributing motives to my opponents or critics. The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view, and wrong from the point of view of one another, and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant. I very much like this doctrine of the manyness of reality. It is this doctrine that has taught me to judge a Musulman from his standpoint and a Christian from his. Formerly I used to resent the ignorance of my opponents. Today I can love them because I am gifted with the eye to see myself as others see me and vice versa. I want to take the whole world in the embrace of my love. My *Anekāntvāda* is the result of the twin doctrine of *Satyagraha* and *ahimsā*.”<sup>100</sup>

Hence, *anekāntvāda* is not just a theory of relative reality; it also prepares ground for tolerance. In contemporary world, people are becoming more hostile and intolerant towards each other’s ideologies and religions, the cause of such intolerance lies in asserting any particular ideology or standpoint to be absolutely true. In order to get rid of such dogmatism, we are required to deploy the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* in our lives. We must hold veneration towards others ideologies because by doing so we can contribute in promoting good for all. Gandhi followed the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* in its truest sense and formulated his theory of nonviolence and *satyāgraha*. Gandhi rightly said that the true is one and it appears differently to

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<sup>99</sup> Sonnleitner, M. W., (1985). *Gandhian Nonviolence: Levels of Satyagraha*, p. 14

<sup>100</sup> Gandhi, M. K., *Young India*, 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 1926.

different persons. But this does not imply that truth is not absolute, it is absolute when it is perceived from all standpoints. Gandhi's veneration and approbation for various religions clearly demonstrates the influence of *anekāntvāda* on him. Gandhi like lord *Mahāvira* also emphasized on the cultivation of compassion and kindness towards all creatures.

The doctrine of *Anekāntvāda* is characterized on the principles of tolerance, acknowledgement and reverence for others ideologies. The most astonishing feature of the doctrine is that a sincere effort is made to understand the position of the adversary. The theory acknowledges the different ideologies that prevail in the world. The doctrine promotes inter-religious, inter-cultural, and inter-national tolerance, and stresses upon the reduction of violence that may arise from disagreements among the people of various ideologies. As H. R. Kapadia rightly observes;

“.....this doctrine of *Anekāntvāda* helps us in cultivating the attitude of tolerance towards the views of our adversaries. It does not stop there but takes us a step forward by making us investigate as to why and how they hold a different view and how the seeming contradictories can be reconciled to evolve harmony. It is thus an attempt towards syncretism.”<sup>101</sup>

If people from different backgrounds with different ideologies are given a framework through which they can learn to tolerate and appreciate each other's standpoints then peace and harmony can prevail. According to Jainism, the world is divided into living (*jivas*) and non-living (*ajivas*) beings. The living beings possess innumerable modes through which we can acknowledge them. Not all of us are capable of seeing reality in its totality, what we comprehend is a finite aspect of a thing. Hence, one's view about a thing is never complete. But this does not suggest that we should discard that view, rather, it stresses that we need to explore, analyse and contextualize the standpoint in light of Jaina doctrine. Today, we are witnessing various kinds of religious, cultural and intellectual intolerance in the world. People with different ideologies are not ready to accept each other's standpoints. They hold their own ideology to be absolutely true and hence try to subjugate the other by means of violence. Crisis in Syria is the current example of such a situation. What we need to do today is to have interreligious dialogues between various cultures and communities.

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<sup>101</sup> Kapadia, H. R., 1940, *Introduction to Haribhadra's Anekāntasya Patka*, p.CXIV.



From the above discussion, we have found that Gandhi's spiritualism, intuition and insightfulness are an outcome of religious, intellectual and cultural pluralism of Indian culture. Pluralism of Indian tradition helped him contour his ideals of truth, nonviolence, compassion and love. The four Purusharthas had lasting influence on Gandhi's life. For Gandhi, the pursuit of Purusharthas provides us with meaning and significance of life. He appreciated the *āshram* system for it presents a systematic division of human life. The *Bhagvad-Gitā*, life of Buddha and Jainism provided him with abundant spirituality. *Rāmāyana*, the ancient epic *Mahābhārata*, Buddhism and Jainism had the lasting influence on him. The *Jaina Anekāntvāda* helped Gandhi to apprehend the many-sidedness of reality. Gandhi believed that essence of all religion is the same for there is no religion in the world that does not preach compassion and love for others. Gandhi being a Hindu possessed strong faith in Vedas and Upanishads. He like a genius infused the teachings of the *Gitā* with that of Buddhism and Jainism, and the outcome are his ideals of nonviolence, compassion, truth, peace, harmony, etc. Gandhi's anti-essentialistic and pluralistic perspective is an outcome of Jaina philosophy. *Anekāntvāda* of Jainism helped him to develop reverence for various ideologies and cultures. *Anekāntvāda* recommends such a state of mind which is free from prejudices and is ready to accept whatever seems rational to it. This state of mind is ideal to create harmony and peace in the society. Here, differences are solved with rational arguments and there is always a room for modification of ideas. Jainism paves the way for interreligious dialogues between various cultures. It preaches intellectual tolerance to solve conflict of opinions and ideologies between groups, communities and nations. The virtue of tolerance must be cultivated by everyone for it is essential to establish peace in the society. The modern thinkers believe that the Jain philosophy and mainly *Anekāntvāda* can provide us solutions to various problems currently prevailing in the world. According to Kamla Jain, the right to freedom of speech, democracy, and secularism reflect in the doctrine of *Anekāntvāda*. She further says, the theory of *Anekāntvāda* with its emphasis on intellectual ahimsa is capable of solving the issue of intolerance, terrorism, harassment of natural resources, religious intolerance etc., and the doctrine of relativity of reality can be prove very helpful in providing solutions to various problems that arise from dogmatic and mistaken knowledge.<sup>102</sup> Hence, *anekāntvāda*

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<sup>102</sup> Jain, Kamla, (2004): "Anekāntvāda in present day social life", pp. 113–122.

is essential to penetrate into the multi-facet character of reality. Anekāntvāda stresses on voluntary tolerance towards various ideologies.

## Chapter II

### Gandhi's Notion of Nonviolence and the Recognition of the Other

This chapter is an exploration into the uniqueness of Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence as an important tool for recognizing and embracing the other. Gandhi's political methods, his innovative techniques achieved him great reward worldwide. Gandhi never restricted his struggle exclusively to India's independence from the yoke of British imperialism; but the very motive underlying the struggle was emancipation from degradation of humanity in terms of caste hierarchy, corruption of moral values, politics without principles etc. His political ideology holds great reverence for humanity, the comprehensive and determinate nature of his methods have imparted a whole new meaning to political endeavours. The political manoeuvres he employed were backed by his moral and religious principles with a strong determination to weed out injustice and discrimination from all sections of the society.

In section I, I'll try to develop his political philosophy *Satyāgraha*, or truth-force or soul-force as an ethical philosophy to fight against social and economic injustice against the poor or the downtrodden sections of the society. Under the same section, I shall also discuss the notion of *karunā* in Buddhism as embracing 'the other'. Buddha's teachings of compassion and tolerance had immensely influenced the life and works of Gandhi. According to him, Buddhism and Jainism are an offshoot of Hinduism.<sup>103</sup> He says: "Many friends consider that I am expressing in my own life the teachings of the Buddha. I accept their testimony and I am free to confess that I am trying my level best to follow these teachings."<sup>104</sup> We found the central aim of Gandhi's philosophy is moral autonomy and liberation of man from his own lower self. Gandhi devoted all his life to make an ideal social order where man can exercise his moral autonomy in an enlightened manner. Section II, is aimed to discuss the role of European enlightenment in forming Gandhi's notion of autonomy and dignity. The European enlightenment era put forth the concepts like, freedom, individual rights, democracy, autonomy and dignity of man. Though, Gandhi opposed modernity which is a by-product of enlightenment, but the concepts like, individual rights, autonomy

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<sup>103</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1999, *Collected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 167.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. Vol.31, p.300.

and dignity of man etc. held great importance in Gandhi's political and ethical endeavours.

## Section I

### Principles of *Satyāgraha* and *Karunā* as Recognizing the Other

#### *Satyāgraha*

Gandhi once said:

“The fight of *satyāgraha* is for the strong in spirit, not for the doubter or the timid. *Satyāgraha* teaches us the art of living as well as dying.” (*Harijan*, 7.4.1946, CWMG, Vol.90, p.81)

The notion of *Satyāgraha* plays a vital role in Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. It not only strengthened his political manoeuvres but also showed him the path of victory through peaceful struggle. The human race has witnessed many wars fought in the name of peace but the result has always been destructive to the whole humanity, the precise example of which can be sought from the United States' nuclear bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II. The consequences of the bombing were so dire that its indentations can be seen even today. The bombing did not only cause the physical damage to the country but left psychological damages on the survivors of the attack. Hence, a violent exercise can never met with peaceful consequences. According to Kautilya, the writer of the *Arthaśāstra*:

“Peace is that which allows the enjoyment of results achieved without disturbance”.<sup>105</sup>

Peace is that which brings joy to the soul and it can never be achieved through violent means. The term, *śānti* in Indian context signifies not only peace, but also means quietness of mind, serenity and inner peace.<sup>106</sup> According to Gandhi, there is no force mightier than the force of nonviolence that is “the reason why he opted for nonviolence because he is convinced that man is essentially good. The goodness,

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<sup>105</sup> Subramanian, V. K., 1990, *The Maxims of Chanakya*, p. 176.

<sup>106</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 25.

according to Gandhi, is the truth in man. Such goodness always prevails over the evil.”<sup>107</sup> Peace and *Satyāgraha* are intertwined in a way that the application of the latter presupposes an exercise of the former. For Gandhi, in order to seek Truth one must always be dedicated to nonviolence for the former approaches the latter. Nonviolence as an altruistic practice brings oneself near the truth which in turn helps the individual to know his inner self.

### **The Rise of *Satyāgraha* in South Africa**

The movement was first started when Transvaal government deprived Indians of their right to equality. In 1881 the European traders launched an anti-Indian campaign through newspapers and articles and submitted petitions against Indian traders in parliament demanding to expel them from trade and land. Though through various efforts made by Indian traders they were given the permission to trade and acquire land but under humiliating conditions. But when in 1894 the Natal legislative assembly under the title of ‘Indian franchise’ was planning to disfranchise Indians from the little rights which they were then enjoying, an organization called Natal Indian Congress under the leadership of Gandhi was founded in May 1894.<sup>108</sup> The work to secure the rights of Indians under the organization proceeded vigorously throughout the year which resulted in Lord Ripon’s rejection of disfranchising bill. Though this was a small victory but it doubled the confidence and zeal in Indians. But the Struggle of Indians in South Africa did not end there; the struggle became a movement in 1906 when the Transvaal Gazette submitted a draft of ordinance to the state legislature. A brief summary of the draft is as follows:

“Every Indian men, women or child of eight years or upwards, entitled to reside in the Transvaal, must register his or her name with the registrar of Asiatic and take out a certificate of registration. They were asked to surrender their old permits to the registrar, and state in their application, their names, caste, age, residence etc. They were ordered to submit to finger printing and receive a certificate which they required to carry with them at all times and

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid. P. 29

<sup>108</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1968, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, pp. 27-50.

failing to do this would lead to losing their right to residence. They would further be liable to imprisonment, fine or even deportation from Transvaal.”<sup>109</sup>

Gandhi united the Indians in Transvaal and named the ordinance as ‘Black Act’. This was the first time when thousands of Indian took part in a nonviolent cooperate act. Thousands of Indians boycotted the bill and refused to accept permits contemplated under the ordinance. The movement led by Gandhi was called passive resistance by Mr. Hosken, one of the magnates of Johannesburg. But Gandhi did not like the use of the word ‘passive resistance’ and rather defined it as soul-force. Gandhi, through his paper, the Indian opinion, declared a prize for anyone who could offer an effective terminology to this form of resistance. Maganlal Gandhi, a nephew of M. K. Gandhi, suggested the term *Sadāgraha* which meant firmness in a good cause. Gandhi stated that:

“I liked the word, but it did not fully represent the whole idea I wished it to connote. I therefore, corrected it to ‘Satyagraha’. Truth (*Satya*) implies love, and firmness (*āgraha*) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement ‘Satyagraha’, that is to say the Force which is born of truth and love or nonviolence...”<sup>110</sup>

Gandhi draws a watertight distinction between the term *Satyāgraha* and passive resistance. The distinction is given in the following lines:

“There is no scope of love in passive resistance, on the other hand, not only has hatred no place in *satyāgraha* but is a positive breach of its ruling principle . While in the passive resistance there is scope for the use of arms when a suitable occasion arrives, in *satyāgraha* physical force is forbidden even in the most favourable circumstances. Passive resistance is often looked upon as preparation for the use of force while *satyāgraha* can never be side by side with the use of arms. *Satyāgraha* and brute force, being a negation of the other, can never go together.”<sup>111</sup>

According to Gandhi, *satyāgraha* being a moral force, or soul-force or nonviolent force, should be used by the individual to fight against all the social, economic as well as political injustices prevailing in the society. He points out:

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid. P. 98.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. P. 106

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. Pp. 110-111.

“A *satyāgrahi* will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, *hiṃsā* by *ahiṃsā*.”<sup>112</sup>

*Satyāgraha* is Gandhi’s way to approach to a conflict and resolve it by inflicting self-suffering. It is both a moral and a logical force to deal with large scale injustices and evils in the society. While passive resistance, on other hand, is a practice of civil disobedience whose aim is to embarrass and harass the adversary. Passive resistance aims at defeating the adversary by employing violence, while *Satyagraha* by its context itself is a philosophical, moral and psychological assumption concerning human behaviour and situation. Thus, we find that though both *satyāgraha* and passive resistance are ways of dealing with aggression or injustices of the adversary by settling conflicts and bring about socio-political changes. But they both differ fundamentally in their application. Passive resistance, on the one hand, does not promote compassion and love for the adversary, hatred, on the other hand, has no place in *Satyāgraha*. The most elementary and fundamental principle of *Satyāgraha* is nonviolence and Truth.

The features such as civil disobedience and nonviolence are mere corollaries of the term *Satyāgraha*. The need of *Satyāgraha*, according to Gandhi, arises when;

“On the political field, the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the law-giver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you do not wish to submit to error, is to compel him by physical force to yield to you or by suffering in your own person by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence *Satyāgraha* largely appears to the public as Civil Disobedience or Civil Resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.”<sup>113</sup>

Gandhi in his letter to P.K. Rao, Servants of India Society, rubbished the proposition that *Satyāgraha* is an adaptation of H. D. Thoreau’s work entitled “*Resistance to Civil Government*”.

The statement that I had derived my idea of civil disobedience from the writings of Thoreau is wrong. The resistance to authority in South Africa was well advanced before I got the essay of Thoreau on civil disobedience. But the movement was then known as passive resistance.

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<sup>112</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1929, *Young India*, 8<sup>th</sup> August.

<sup>113</sup> Duncan. R., 1951, *Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 67.

As it was incomplete, I had coined the word *satyāgraha* for the Gujarati readers. When I saw the title of Thoreau's great essay, I began the use of his phrase to explain our struggle to the English readers. But I found that even civil disobedience failed to convey the full meaning of the struggle. I therefore adopted the phrase civil resistance. Non-violence was always an integral part of our struggle."<sup>114</sup>

According to R. R. Diwakar, the term *Satyāgraha*, is a remarkable contribution of Gandhi to the Indian vocabulary, which he stated in the following terms;

“*Satyāgraha* is not merely a new word but a new way of life as well as unique technique for using soul force in man.”<sup>115</sup>

He further defines it as:

“The word *Satyāgraha* is now loaded with so much meaning that it amounts to a philosophy, but it is practical philosophy of life, of action, of self, and co-realization.”<sup>116</sup>

At the heart of Gandhi's notion of *Satyāgraha* lies his compassion and love for all, for the theory aims at transforming the antagonists by way of love and not by seeking triumph over them by violent means. The notion keeps the path of friendship open to both the oppressor and the oppressed. There are various euphemisms used to refer the terms *Satyāgraha*, such as, soul-force, love-force, and “universal force” etc. Martin Luther King Jr. also described it as “soul-force” during his popular “I Have a Dream” speech. The notion implies equal treatment for everyone with no exceptions at all.

### ***Satyāgraha* in India:**

After the success of *Satyāgraha* in South Africa, Gandhi moved to India in 1915. Gandhi through his unique weapon *Satyāgraha* mobilized the masses and used the technique to fight against the injustices of British Government. He advocated and practised the moral theory i.e. *Satyāgraha* to make people believe that by infusing the

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<sup>114</sup> M. K. Gandhi, 1935, *letter to P. K. Rao*, in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 400.

<sup>115</sup> Diwakar, R. R., 1969, *Saga of Satyagraha*, p. 2.

<sup>116</sup> Diwakar, R. R., 1969, *Satyagraha – A Philosophy of Life*, p. 42.



power of soul-force, each and every individual is capable of bringing the change they want to see in the society. *Champaran Satyāgraha* was the first Satyagraha, Gandhi undertook in his fight against injustice. *Champaran Satyāgraha* turned out to be a success which ignited the strength of the suffering masses by invoking in them a sense of dignity, self-reliance and confidence. The *Champaran Satyāgraha* shook the foundation of the British Raj for it was the first time when a peaceful struggle turned out to be a huge success against the exploitation of Indians under British Governance. The second use of the political weapon *Satyāgraha* by Gandhi was in 1918, when he fought for the rights of Ahmedabad textile mill workers. During this *Satyāgraha*, Gandhi for the first time introduced the principle of fasting as an important rule of *Satyāgraha*. Like the former one, this movement also tasted success for the movement made the mill owner agree to the demands of workers after considerable and arbitrary negotiations. Later, in the same year Gandhi launched *Kheda Satyāgraha* for the rights of the peasants of Kheda.

The doctrine of *Satyāgraha* has its roots in *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Ramayana*, *Gita*, *Quran*, *Bible* and almost every religion of the world has it in some or the other way. As far as Hinduism is concerned, there are many instances where *satyāgraha* in one form or the other has been practiced. *Prahlad*, the son of *Hiranyakashipu* was perhaps the first who took the path of *Satyāgraha* to fight against the brutality of his father. *Rāma*, *Krishna*, *Christ*, *Muhammad* and many others great religious saints and seers practiced the doctrine of *Satyāgraha* in their own manner. Gandhi's ethical philosophy and political astuteness was due to his great interest in Hindu philosophy. In ancient *Vedic* era, the concept of truth as moral force that regulates the universe is explained by the notion 'Ṛta'. *Ṛta* generally stands for the moral order which is responsible for the regulation of the entire universe. But *Dharma*; a manifestation of moral law *Ṛta* overshadowed it in later and early Hindu literature. The term *Dharma* is also used synonymous to the term truth for whatever is righteous or truthful is moral. And Gandhi's *Satyāgraha* is a method to fight for whatever is righteous and truthful. The concept of Truth, love, compassion and nonviolence was further developed in the Hindu epic *Ramāyana*. The holy book *Ramāyana* teaches us to follow the right path even if the path is full of hardships and sufferings. The Hindu god *Rāma* is worshipped for his compassion, love and nonviolent nature. The epic *Ramāyana* describes *Rāma* as a just full and a benevolent king who looked after his

people like his own children. Gandhi's borrowed his notion of Swaraj from the epic *Ramāyana* which can be illustrated from the following lines;

“A just administration implies an era of truth or swaraj, Dharamaraj, Ramrajya or people's raj or democracy. Under such a government the ruler would be the protector and friend of his subjects. Between his way of life and that of the poorest of his subjects, there would not be such a gulf as there is today.”<sup>117</sup>

Similarly another Hindu epic, i.e. *Mahābhārata*, preaches us to perform our 'duty for duty sake', the concept is described in the following verse:

“To action alone you have a right and never to its fruits. Let not be your motive be the fruits of action; nor let there be in you any attachment to inaction.”<sup>118</sup>

The spiritual book, *Gītā* had been Gandhi's moral as well as spiritual guide. Gandhi later added the concept of *anāsakti* or non-attachment as a quality of a *satyāgrahi* which he borrowed from Jainism. Gandhi illustrates the influence of Jainism on him in the following lines:

“By birth, I am vaishnavite and was taught Ahimsa in my childhood; I have derived much religious benefit from Jain religious as I have from scriptures of the other great faiths of the world. They are a part of my life.”<sup>119</sup>

Both Buddhism and Jainism taught Gandhi the path of nonviolence. In Jainism nonviolence is practiced in an absolute way with the rule of non-killing even of the smallest insects. Gandhi's opinion that a true *satyāgrahi* should refrain from killing even the most subtle insects and should practice nonviolence in thought, words and deeds clearly projects the fact that Jaina philosophy spilled the beans of his notion of *Satyāgraha*. Gandhi also included the principles of Buddhism in the vows of *satyāgrahi*. Like Buddha, he too emphasized on compassion and love for all. He too practiced and preached infliction of soul-suffering for the betterment of humanity. Like Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, Islam too influenced Gandhi by insisting on conscience, soul-force, tolerance and fellow feeling. Christianity had an altogether distinct impact on Gandhi's ideas and philosophy. The very life of Jesus was a lesson

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<sup>117</sup> [http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/28374/10/10\\_chapter%205.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/28374/10/10_chapter%205.pdf) retrieved on 2016/4/3

<sup>118</sup> B. Srinivasa Murthy, 1991, *The Bhagvad Gita*, p. 45.

<sup>119</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1999, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 251.

to him in soul-suffering. He seems to have adopted the law of love, nonviolent resistance and efficacy of self-suffering from Christianity.

Besides religious saints and seers, western thinkers like Leo Tolstoy and Ruskin also contributed in shaping up Gandhi's ideals. Referring to Leo Tolstoy's influence on him, Gandhi wrote to a friend from Sabarmati āshram that:

“There is no doubt that Tolstoy's writing had a powerful effect on me. He strengthened my love of nonviolence. He enabled me to see things more clearly than I had done before.”<sup>120</sup>

Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, was the one book that brought about an instant and practical change in his life. To this he wrote, “I translated it later in Gujrati entitling it *Sarvodya* (the welfare of all).”<sup>121</sup> It was this work that inspired Gandhi him to establish the Phoenix Settlement on the principles of bread and labour and the responsibility of the community to provide for the physical welfare of its workers. He also derived the principles of moral regeneration of man and moralization of politics and economics from Ruskin's thoughts and ideas.

For Gandhi, in a large scale conflict, a *Satyāgrahi* (the one who follows the path of *Satyāgraha*) must undertake necessary training in order to ensure discipline. He in his own terms states it as; “only when people have proved their active loyalty by obeying the many laws of the State that they acquire the right of Civil Disobedience.”<sup>122</sup>

He therefore, laid the following requirements to be filled by a *Satyāgrahi*;

- 1.) “A *Satyāgrahi* must appreciate the laws laid by the government and obey them voluntarily.
- 2.) Should tolerate the laws even when they are uneasy and inconvenient.
- 3.) Be willing to undergo suffering, loss of property, and to endure the suffering that might be inflicted on family and friends.”<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1999, *Collected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol.34, p. 380.

<sup>121</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1948, *An Autobiography: The story of My Experiments with Truth*, p. 365.

<sup>122</sup> Gandhi, M. K., *Pre-requisites for Satyagraha*, *Young India*, 1 August 1925.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

It is only after meeting with above requirements a person can be called a *Satyāgrahi*. The obedience towards the principal of *Satyāgraha* need not to be an ordinary one but has to be an extraordinary;

“...an honest, respectable man will not suddenly take to stealing whether there is a law against stealing or not, but this very man will not feel any remorse for failure to observe the rule about carrying headlights on bicycles after dark.... But he would observe any obligatory rule of this kind, if only to escape the inconvenience of facing a prosecution for a breach of the rule. Such compliance is not, however, the willing and spontaneous obedience that is required of a *Satyāgrahi*.”<sup>124</sup>

Besides these three basic requirements to qualify as a *Satyāgrahi*, Gandhi laid the following principles (Yamas in Yoga Sutra)<sup>125</sup> to be obeyed by a *Satyāgrahi*;

- 1) Nonviolence: The first and the foremost principle to be obeyed by a *satyāgrahi* is the principle of nonviolence. Gandhi devoted all his life in preaching and practising nonviolence. Nonviolence held an important place in *satyāgraha*, it is not only limited to refrainment from physical injury but it also includes avoidance of injury even in thoughts and words.
- 2) Truth: Gandhi equated truth with god. For Gandhi nonviolence is the soul of truth with truth being the end and ahimsa is the means. He points out:

“With Satya combined with ahimsa, you can bring the world to your feet. Satyagraha in its essence is nothing but the introduction of truth and gentleness in the political, i.e., the national, life.”<sup>126</sup>

Hence truth and nonviolence are the engines on which Gandhi’s ideal of *Satyāgraha* moves.

- 3) Non-stealing; the rule of non-stealing signifies that a *satyāgrahi* should be free from the negative desires such as greed and lust which makes man sinful.
- 4) *Brahmacharya* or Chastity; by this rule Gandhi advised Satyagrahis to live a frugal and austere life and not to indulge in materialistic possessions.

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<sup>124</sup> Gandhi, M.K., 1940, *An Autobiography: The story of My Experiments with Truth*, p. 570.

<sup>125</sup> Gandhi, M. k., 1951, *Non-violent Resistance (Satyagraha)*, p. 37.

<sup>126</sup> Prabhu, R. K., & Rao, U. R., (eds.), 1966, *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 166.

- 5) Non-possession; it is a form of non-cooperation. The reason behind the strategy of non-possession was to impress upon the British government that it cannot by any means threaten the people to cooperate with it or obey its commands for there is nothing that the government can forcibly seize or confiscate from the *satyāgrahi*.
- 6) Bread-labour or body-labour; Gandhi's borrowed the ideal of bread-labour from Tolstoy's writings on bread-labour. According to Gandhi, "God created man to work for his food, and said that who ate without work are thieves."<sup>127</sup> Gandhi's reason behind adding this rule as a compulsion for a *satyāgrahi* was to remove the gap between the capital and the labour class. According to Gandhi, if all, the rich and the poor work for their bread the distinction between them would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustee of their property and would use it mainly in the public interest.<sup>128</sup>
- 7) Control of the palate; according to this rule, food needs to be taken as a medicine, i.e. without thinking whether it is tasty or otherwise. The rule is closely connected with the observance of celibacy.
- 8) Fearlessness; besides the three major concepts of truth, nonviolence and self-suffering, fearlessness was one such necessity to practise *satyāgraha*. Fearlessness as a moral principle is indispensable from the virtues of nonviolence and truth. Fear arises from untruth or unjust actions resulting in a cowardice which in itself is a form of violence. Gandhi always said that fear has no place in *Satyāgraha* because the moral weapon *Satyāgraha* is not for the doubter or the timid. It is the practice of the brave, the fearless and not of the coward.
- 9) Equal respect for all religions; Gandhi held that all religions are same for there is no religion in the world which does not preach love and compassion for all. And to qualify as a *satyāgrahi* one must hold equal veneration for all religions to avoid any sort of communal violence.
- 10) Economic equality such as boycotting the exported goods. Gandhi's *Satyāgraha* is another name for peaceful non-cooperation coupled with truth and justice. The main purpose of non-cooperation is to make the masses independent in the regulation of their own life in all social, economic and political affairs. Boycott is also a part of *satyāgraha* which sometimes means punishment. According to Gandhi, boycotting is a useful method not only to lodge complaint but also to

<sup>127</sup> Gandhi, M. K., *Young India*, 13 October 1931.

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.mkgandhi.org/momgandhi/chap40.htm>, retrieved on 2016/04/12.

generate pressure on the adversary to seek redressal of grievances. By employing the concept of boycott of foreign goods, Gandhi wanted to bring about economic independence to the people.

Later on, he included seven more rules defining them as essential for every *Satyāgrahi* in India<sup>129</sup>;

- 1) Must possess a living faith in God.
- 2) Must have faith in the notion of Nonviolence and Truth, must believe in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by suffering in *Satyāgraha* effort.
- 3) Must be leading a chaste life, and be willing to die or lose all his possessions.
- 4) Must be a habitual Khādi wearer or spinner.
- 5) Must refrain from alcohol and other intoxicants.
- 6) Must willingly carry out all the rules of discipline that are issued.
- 7) Must obey the jail rule unless they are specially advised to hurt his self-respect.

Besides the rules mentioned above, Gandhi laid 19 more rules to be followed by a *Satyāgrahi* during their resistance campaign<sup>130</sup>;

- 1) Harbour no anger.
- 2) Must be ready to suffer the anguish of an adversary.
- 3) Should never retaliate to assaults or punishments; but do not submit, out of fear of punishment or assault, to an order given in anger.
- 4) Voluntarily submit to arrest or confiscation of your own property.
- 5) If you are a trustee of a property defend, the property (non-violently) from confiscation with your life.
- 6) Do not curse or swear.
- 7) Do not insult the opponent.
- 8) Neither salutes nor insults the flag of your opponent's leader.
- 9) If anyone tries to insult or assault your opponent, defend your opponent (non-violently) with your life.

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<sup>129</sup> Gandhi, M.K., 1999, The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 48, p. 340.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

- 10) As a prisoner, behave courteously and obey prison regulations (except any that are contrary to self-respect).
- 11) As a prisoner, do not ask for special favourable treatment.
- 12) As a prisoner, do not fast in an attempt to gain conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to your self-respect.
- 13) Joyfully obey the orders of the leader of the civil disobedience action.
- 14) Do not pick and choose among the order you obey; if you find the action as a whole improper or immoral, sever your connection with the action entirely.
- 15) Do not make your participation conditional on your comrades taking care of your dependents while you are engaging in the campaign or in the prison; do not expect them to provide such support.
- 16) Do not become a cause of communal quarrels.
- 17) Do not take sides in such quarrels, but assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right; in the case of inter- religious conflict, give your life to protect (non-violently) those in danger in either side.
- 18) Avoid occasions that may give rise to communal quarrels.
- 19) Do not take part in processions that would wound the religious sensibilities of any community.

All the rules mentioned above in some way or the other is bound by the notions of love, compassion, nonviolence and fearlessness. Gandhi used this genius tactic of self-suffering to move his opponents by way of nonviolence. The basic idea behind imposing self-suffering is to attain an insight into the notion of truth. The methods adopted by Gandhi for the political freedom of India are very much relevant even today. Gandhi in all his methods and practices against the adversaries never give up on his belief in humanity. He like a warrior stood against all the odds with firmness and determination. He never used his methods to cause any kind of quarrel among the various communities of India. As a theist, the divinity he experienced in himself, he found it in others too. He was very much aware of the fact that India being a land of plurality with people from various religious ideologies and practices could be bead in one thread only by way of nonviolence and love, for these two are the laws of humanity. A very important thing to notice is that during his struggle, he made sure that his methods are formed in such a way as they do not cause any insult to a person

or religious identity. Though there were people who were not satisfied with Gandhian practices and methods but those exceptions remain as minor.

Gandhi used the method of *Satyāgraha* in major public activities that includes; Champaran *Satyāgraha*, Ahmedabad labour strike, and Kheda *Satyāgraha*. Out of these three, I would mention only *Champaran* and *Kheda satyāgraha* as these two proved to be a turning point in India's freedom struggle.

### ***Champaran Satyāgraha;***

The first use of *Satyāgraha* occurred in *Champaran*, a district of Bihar in 1917. The peasants of *Champaran* were constantly facing exploitation under the British government's exploitative system known as *Tinkhatia* system. Under the system, peasants were forced to grow indigo on three twentieth of their lands. They were also forced to grow indigo on the best part of their land; "He has been obliged to give his best time and energy to it, so that little time has been left to him for growing his own crops – his means of livelihood against their will."<sup>131</sup> Hence the system had caused the peasants a great deal of financial hardship. According to Bipin Chandra, "the exploitation of farmers in *Champaran* begins in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, German synthetic dye forced indigo out of the market and the European planters were keen to release the cultivators from the obligation of cultivating indigo tried to turn their necessity to their advantages by securing enhancement in rent and other legal dues as a price for release."<sup>132</sup> The movement started in 1908 as well but it went unnoticed till the time when Gandhi joined it. Gandhi after arriving at *Champaran* investigated into the matter and tried to study the viewpoints of each party involved in the matter. Gandhi found that truth is on the peasant's side and therefore decided to help them with all his efforts. He first began with instilling hope and fearlessness into the hearts of despaired farmers. He advised them not to go to court and handle the matter with fearlessness. Both the landlords and Government officials were unhappy to observe Gandhi's presence in the district. Hence, Gandhi wrote a letter to Government officials stating that he has come there at the request of the peasants to find the truth. After clearly investigating

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<sup>131</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1999, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 387.

<sup>132</sup> [Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/.../11/11\\_chapter%206.pdf](http://Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/.../11/11_chapter%206.pdf), p.139 retrieved on 2016/4/16



into the matter, Gandhi with the help of his assistants succeeded in getting testimonials of nearly eight thousand farmers. And by that time, on the orders of Viceroy Lord Chelmsford, an Agrarian Enquiry Committee was set up by the Government of Bihar, Sir Edward Gait in order to investigate the local tenancy system and Gandhi was offered a seat on it. As the result, committee recommended the landlords to return 25 per cent of the money they had illegally acquired from the farmers.<sup>133</sup> Thus, the campaign was successful in demolishing the oppressive 'Tinkhatia System'. The campaign also succeeded in instilling hope into the poor and the oppressed farmers and made them believe in their own strength to stand up against the evil. Hence, the movement was a big success in terms of winning over the evil forces by nonviolent method. The movement inspired many others to fight for their self-respect against the evils of the society.

### **Kheda *Satyāgraha*;**

The Kheda *Satyāgraha* also known as non-tax peasant struggle was launched in March 1919, in Kheda district of Gujrat under the leadership of Gandhi, Shankerlal Parekh, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and many others.<sup>134</sup> The struggle was the result of peasants demanding the suspension of revenue assessment for the year as their crops suffered a famine like condition and the peasants were unable to pay off the tax. But the local officials of the Kheda district were pressurising the peasant to pay off the revenue assessment for the year. An inquiry conducted by Gandhi and N.J Patel found that the damage was far more than the three fourth of the production of the entire year.<sup>135</sup> But government was not listening to the grievances of the peasants, that is when Gandhi decided to spoke on behalf of them: "we do not demand that the government should accept what we say and yield. What we ask is that we our case is proved justice should be done to us. We asked for the appointments of arbitrators, but government turned down even that request."<sup>136</sup> Gandhi with the help of the Servants of India society, the Gujarat Sabha, and Vallabhai Patel made a thorough enquiry and confirmed the validity of the peasants' case.<sup>137</sup> Gandhi, in the name of Gujarat *Sabhā*,

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid. Pg. 141.

<sup>134</sup> <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/sociology/summary-of-kheda-peasant-struggle-1918/31987/> retrieved on 2016/4/16

<sup>135</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1999, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 289.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. P. 343

<sup>137</sup> [shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/.../11/11\\_chapter%206.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/.../11/11_chapter%206.pdf), p. 142-43 retrieved on 2106/4/16

sent many telegrams, letters of appeal to the government asking them for the redressal of the farmers' grievances but the government as usual turned them down. This is when Gandhi along with many others announced their struggle against the oppressive system of the government; "this is not a struggle merely to escape payment for the revenue this year"; "it is our duty to know and safe guard our rights. This is a struggle to compel the government to respect popular feelings and acknowledge their rights."<sup>138</sup> Gandhi asked the peasants to take a vow to not pay to the government the tax for the year even if they are put through various kind of torture. Gandhi named the struggles as peoples fight and call upon the power of India's womanhood to take part in the struggle. The campaign moved the intelligentsia to form contact with the real live of peasants. The struggle received great number of supports around the country. The struggle filled courage and fearlessness in the minds of the people. It is during this struggle Gandhi laid principles to be followed by a *Satyāgrahi*. The moral instructions filled the hearts of the followers with courage, self-sacrifice and love. Gandhi and his supporters moved from village to village to arouse awareness and the feeling of self-respect in the minds and hearts of the people. The movement awakened the peasants as well as educated public workers to come forward and fight for the right. Moreover, the peasants became aware of their rights and this awareness led to the inculcation of fearlessness in them.<sup>139</sup> The effect of the struggle made the government to declare that, "if the well-to-do patidars paid up, the poor ones would be granted suspension."<sup>140</sup> So the termination of the movement was celebrated as victory. It was a victory for it was a signal of compromise from British officials. The main and most significant aspect of the movement was that it inculcated the real sense of fearlessness in the minds of the people. It had helped the people to gain "a full understanding of their rights and what is meant by *Swaraj*. This is the issue of democracy."<sup>141</sup> In reply to the success of Kheda *Satyāgraha* Gandhi said:

"It is a mere trifle that we have won on the issue of land revenue but ...The more important gains are fearlessness and the feeling that we are the equals of even the highest officers and in no way inferior to them. I hope this struggle evil have made you permanently conscious of

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid. Pp. 314-315.

<sup>139</sup> [Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/.../11/11\\_chapter%206.pdf](http://Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/.../11/11_chapter%206.pdf), pp. 145-47 retrieved on 2016/4/16

<sup>140</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1945, *An Autobiography or My Experiments With Truth*, p. 537.

<sup>141</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1999, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 361.

your strength to employ *Satyāgraha* at any time. Once the flame is kindled, it cannot be extinguished but burns ever more brightly.”<sup>142</sup>

Thus, Gandhi gave confidence to the workers and made them realize their basic rights. The movement was a success because it united both the intelligencia and the toilers. Gandhi’s methods and practices are very distinctive and effective. He emphasized on the unity of people to fight for the social cause. He always stood up for the rights of people and guided them through all his efforts. His firm adherence towards nonviolence and his love for humanity has been appreciated by people around the globe. In the *Champaran* case, he studied the situation thoroughly from all angles and took the sides of the peasants for truth was on their sides. And in the Kheda case, he not only fought for the wrong but also awakened the mass through his moral inspirational thoughts. He made them realize their rights and prepared them to fight for them. He filled the hearts of the people with fearlessness and love.

*Satyāgraha* is perhaps the most significant doctrine of Gandhi in terms of practical application of truth and nonviolence. His entire doctrine of *satyāgraha* can be summarised in one sentence given by E. S. Johnes in his book entitled, “*Gandhi*’ as “The quintessence of Gandhism is Satyagraha”<sup>143</sup> Through *Satyāgraha*, Gandhi showed the world that resistance of evil is possible through nonviolent means. *Satyāgraha* as a weapon in the war against the injustices prevailing in a society is like a double edged sword in a way that it delivers peace to both,; the one who practise it and the one on whom it is practised. Through *Satyāgraha*, Gandhi evolved his noble technique of resisting evil. For Gandhi, *Satyāgraha* is far more than a political manoeuvre for it is not only limited to attain a particular political agenda but it can also be applied to various phases of life. It is the law of the righteous, truthful and fearless. It teaches us to be fearless in our endeavours. For Gandhi, its true meaning can be observed only by constantly practicing it. It aims at the conversion or transformation of the adversary by way of inflicting self-suffering. Love, compassion, nonviolence, truth, bravery etc. are its components which make it an undefeatable technique. An application of *satyāgraha* would perhaps be the most potential and significant means out of the unending strife teaching up the world.

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid. Pp. 461-42.

<sup>143</sup> Johnes, E. S., 1948, *Gandhi*, p. 82.

## ***Karunā* as the Principle for Embracing the Other**

In this section, I offer the notion of *karunā*/compassion in Buddhism as a tool for realizing our inner most self with reference to realizing the others. The notion of compassion has been developed by almost every school of Buddhism but their interpretation of the notion varies. “In early and *Therāvāda* Buddhism, compassion is a power for deep purification, protection and healing that supports inner freedom. In *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, compassion becomes the primary means to empower and communicate a non-conceptual wisdom in which self and others are sensed as undivided. In *Vajrayāna* Buddhism, unconditional compassion radiated forth all-inclusively as a spontaneous expression of the mind’s deepest unconditioned nature.”<sup>144</sup>

There are three teachings which are the core of Buddhism;

1. The three universal Truths.
2. The four Noble Truths
3. And the Noble Eightfold path.

The three universal truths are;

1. Nothing is lost in the universe.
2. Everything changes.
3. And the law of cause and effect.

Buddhism believes in the philosophy of impermanence of reality. According to Buddhism, each and every thing which exists in this world is bound to change. Everything is said to be bound by the eternal law of *karma*. Behind everything there is a cause and behind every effect a cause must exist. Buddhists associate the evil of suffering to the law of *Karma*, according to them; our sufferings are the result of our deeds, as we sow so shall we reap. Buddhism also advocates the concepts of reincarnation and rebirth. In Buddhism, Reincarnation is different from rebirth.

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<sup>144</sup> Marakansky, John, 2012, *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, Ch.4, p. 1.  
(source: [www.johnmakransky.org/downloads/Compassion\\_in\\_Buddhist\\_Psychology.pdf](http://www.johnmakransky.org/downloads/Compassion_in_Buddhist_Psychology.pdf))

Buddhist asserts that, in reincarnation a person is born again and again, whereas, as per the notion of rebirth, the recurrence of an individual on earth never happens in the same entity again. For example, when a withering leaf falls off a tree, a new leaf eventually replaces the old one, but the new leaf which looks similar to the old one is never identical to the original leaf.

### **Compassion in *Therāvāda* Buddhism**

The philosophy of Buddha has been manifested in his teaching of four noble truths and noble eight-fold path and the doctrine of dependent origination, i.e. *pratītyasamutpāda*. The four noble truths are; a) there is suffering, b) there is a cause of suffering, c) there is a cessation of suffering and d) there is a way leading to the cessation of suffering. With reference to four noble truths and noble eight-fold path, I aim to describe the doctrine of compassion in *Therāvāda* Buddhism in the following way;

**1.) There is suffering (duḥkha):** According to the first truth, life is full of sufferings and miseries. Even the momentary pleasures are fraught with pain. Although we may not experience the pain all the time but we always unknowingly suffers from the suffering of self-centred conditioning. The *Therāvāda* Buddhism describes three levels of suffering; a) obvious Suffering, b) the suffering of transience and c) the suffering of self-centred conditioning.<sup>145</sup> The obvious suffering refers to physical as well mental sufferings that we face in our everyday life such as poverty, disease, old age, mental anguish, grief etc. “The suffering of transience is the futile attempt to get, have and hold onto pleasant things as if they could be a stable source of security and well-being. The passing things to which our minds cling for happiness and security transform into conditions of suffering as we lose them throughout life and inexorably approach death.”<sup>146</sup> The suffering of self-centred conditioning underlies the former two. This form of suffering is caused by mind’s subconscious attempt of forming from the impermanent impressions of things, a stable, unchanging image of the self and the world. “The mind’s on going attempt to fabricate such a reified, unchanging impression of the self and the world, in turn, conditions numerous anxious patterns of thought and reaction: clinging to whatever seems to affirm a fixed, unchanging self

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<sup>145</sup> Marakansky, John, 2012, *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, Ch.4, p. 2.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. P. 3

and its world, fearing or hating whatever seems to threaten it. To oscillate uncontrollably through such feelings in reaction to our mental constructs of self and others is the suffering of self-centred conditioning.”<sup>147</sup>

In our everyday life, we are not fully aware of transient and self-centred suffering because they arise from mind’s subconscious attempts to cling onto impermanent things. These two are present even when the obvious sufferings are not. All these three sufferings were made vivid to Buddha through his process of awakening. “The Buddha’s compassion, in wishing persons to be free from suffering, focused on all three levels, the last two of which are present even when obvious sufferings are not. For this reason, Buddha’s compassion extended to all beings equally. The teaching of impartial, all-inclusive, unconditional compassion Buddha imparted to his followers.”<sup>148</sup>

**2.) There is a cause of suffering (*duḥkha-samudya*):** Everything that exists must have a cause. Nothing comes from nothing. Every event in this world is caused by something. “Suffering being a fact, it must have a cause. It must depend on some conditions.”<sup>149</sup> “The inmost causes of suffering diagnosed by the Buddha, the illusion of a reified fixed, unchanging self and the deluded reactions of attachment and aversion that constellate around it.”<sup>150</sup>

According to Buddha, the key of awakening is mindfulness. “To cultivate mindfulness is to cultivate conscious awareness of present experience without judgement.”<sup>151</sup> The transient and self-centred sufferings which operate in the backdrop of our subconscious mind get illumined by the mindfulness and we become conscious of anxiety and ill of ease generated from the clinging towards passing things. Hence, “compassion and sympathy for self and others emerge with increasing power of mindfulness as we gained insight into the impermanent and constructed nature of self.”<sup>152</sup> Such a powerful insight into the impermanent nature of things helps us to increase compassion and sympathy into the conscious as well subconscious suffering of others. Once we develop this powerful insight in ourselves, the illusion of

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<sup>147</sup> Marakansky, John, 2012, *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, Ch.4, p. 3.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Sharma, C. D., 1960, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 71.

<sup>150</sup> Marakansky, John, 2012, *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, Ch.4, p. 4.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

permanent, unchanging self eventually weakens and we are able to sense others as fundamentally ourselves, and develop strong sympathy for them.

**3.) There is a cessation of suffering (*duḥkha- nirodha*):** The cause being present the effect is bound to arise, likewise, if we remove the cause, the effect also ceases to exist. Similarly, if we remove the cause of suffering the effect also ceases to exist. When one becomes free from the illusion of reified fixed self, which is the innermost cause of suffering, *nirvāna* is attained. *Nirvāna* is the absolute freedom from the self-grasping. The attainment of freedom from self-grasping nature of ourselves makes us conscious of the commonality of self and other in their underlying potential for such inner freedom. “The compassion that emerges from the liberating insight, therefore, is not discouraged or depressed by the layers of sufferings it senses in beings, but holds them in their potential for deep freedom from suffering. Such compassion does not just uphold others in their underlying potential, but also challenges aspects of thought and actions that hide their potential.”<sup>153</sup>

**4.) There is a way leading to the cessation of suffering (*duḥkha-nirodh-gāminī pratīpat*):** by following the noble eight fold path the cessation of suffering is possible. Compassion is implicitly associated with mindfulness and insight which has been manifested in Buddha’s noble eight paths for liberation. “The first two are *right mindfulness* and *right understanding*. The other six are also implicitly related with compassion in terms of *right thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort and concentration*. *Right thought*, informed by insight into selflessness, is thought directed away from grasping, cruelty and ill-will toward compassion and love.”<sup>154</sup> Such *thought* is the power of intent that motivates *right speech, right action* and *right livelihood*.<sup>155</sup> Right concentration is attained through focused attention on the object of meditation. “To accomplish such concentration, besides other objects of meditation, “the Buddha frequently taught intensive meditations of love (Pali *metta*), compassion (*karunā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkha*).”<sup>156</sup>

The *Therāvāda* Buddhism emphasizes on the cultivation of above mentioned four immeasurable attitudes, namely; love, compassion, sympathetic joy and

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<sup>153</sup>Ibid. P. 5

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

equanimity. “In the meditative cultivation of love that *Buddhaghōṣa* describes, the wish of love is directed first to oneself, since to accept one-self deeply is crucial to the deep acceptance of others, all of whom are like oneself in their layers of suffering and their wish to be happy. First, we generate positive wishes and feelings of love and acceptance for our self by repeating phrases such as: “May I have well-being and happiness; May I be free from enmity and danger.” When the wish and feeling of love becomes established in regard to our self, then recognizing how others also wish to be happy, it feels natural to extend the same wish to others”<sup>157</sup> who are dearer to us, then we extend it to a stranger and lastly to someone who has been antagonist. The cultivation of the feeling of love leads to cultivation of compassion in our hearts which undercuts the feelings of cruelty and enmity in us. “It should not be confused with sadness about suffering since what it wishes for beings is their inner freedom from suffering is seen as a real possibility within the Buddha’s path of awakening.”<sup>158</sup> The cultivation of love paves the way for cultivation of compassion in a person’s heart. So, first we need to love ourselves in order to extend this love to all beings. The third attitude which we need to cultivate in us is the feeling of sympathetic joy; love and compassion for living beings naturally evoke our joy in their happiness and good fortune, and so the next cultivation is that of *sympathetic joy*. Sympathetic joy, which takes quiet joy in the happiness of others rather than becoming overexcited or giddy—undercuts tendencies toward jealousy and aversion when others may be doing better than us.

The last cultivation is the cultivation of the feeling of equanimity in us. It is the state of “peaceful calmness in the face of ups and downs, highs and lows that all beings on earth undergo, recognizing that their potential for happiness and sufferings is conditioned by their own patterns of intentions and reaction to experiences.”<sup>159</sup> Equanimity is the feeling that imparts equality and impartiality in all the living beings. Thus, making them feel the pain as well the happiness of each other.

Hence, beginning from acknowledging the fact that there is suffering, Theravada Buddhism offers a deep purification of mind through establishing compassion as a tool for healing and protection of the self that supports its inner

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid. P. 6

<sup>158</sup> Ibid. P.7

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. P. 8



freedom. Theravada Buddhism held compassion as the most important attitude towards realizing oneself as well as others.

### **Compassion in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism**

From the discussion above, we notice that in Therāvāda Buddhism, compassion is implicitly associated with each path leading to the awakening of wisdom or insight. Although, as noted above, it is implicitly related to each stage of the process of attaining wisdom, yet it was not offered the same importance as wisdom. But the *Mahāyāna* school of Buddhism gives compassion the central importance as wisdom. *Mahāyāna* school of thought offers a fresh understanding on the notion of awakening that the Buddha had gained that sets him apart from other *arhats*. The chief difference between the teachings of *Therāvāda* Buddhism and *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is that the former school of thought is “modelled on practices of accomplished disciples of Buddha known as arhats; those who are said to have attained nirvana, inner liberation from suffering.”<sup>160</sup> While, the later school of thought, i.e. *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is modelled on the teachings and practices of Buddha himself and those who choose to follow Buddha’s path of awakening are called Bodhisattvas.

The *Māhayāna* school of thought is known for its doctrine of *Shūnyatā*. The school asserts that reality is relative and inter-dependent. The doctrine of *Shūnyavāda* essentially means Indescribable (*avāchya*) as it is beyond the four categories of intellect (*chatuskoṭi-vinirmukta*).<sup>161</sup> In *Mahāyāna* tradition, compassion is inextricably linked with wisdom of impermanent and undivided nature of phenomena. The *Mahāyāna* tradition teaches the wisdom of cultivating compassion for others “not only through the insight into their conditions but also through realizing the ultimate undivided and relative nature of all that exists.”<sup>162</sup> According to this school, not only the nature of things is impermanence but also they are incapable of any sort of independent existence. The tradition holds this view because it asserts that due to the

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid. P. 9

<sup>161</sup> Sharma, C. D., 2013, *A Critical survey of Indian Philosophy*, p. 86.

<sup>162</sup> Marakansky, John, 2012, *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, Ch.4, P. 11.

impermanent nature of things they are beyond reification into “me” or “mine”. So for example, a wooden table initially appears as a self-dependent entity which exists independent of the prior causes and conditions and as if it had no relation with the maker or the observer’s mind. But upon further investigations, we find that no such independently existent entity can be found, instead, the table can be divided into parts and can be further analysable into numerous causes and conditions that had helped it come to an entity. As far as the question of appearance is concerned, the *Mahāyāna* school asserts that many factors contributes to the table’s appearance; for example “a carpenter, woods, trees, soil water, earthworms, sunlight etc. and each of which exists in dependence upon further innumerable causes and conditions that finally relate each thing to all other things, and each sentient being to all other beings.”<sup>163</sup>

According to *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, the insight into the empty nature of self-existent phenomena cuts even more deeply into the reifying causes of suffering than wisdom of the impermanent nature of reality. The insight into emptiness of self-dependent existence of things fully deconstructs our habit of reifying and clinging to experiences which are impermanent and devoid of self-existence. “To thus realize the empty nature of phenomena is to go beyond even the reified conceptual construct of a separate “observer” and “observed,” to relax into a non-conceptual, non-dual awareness that recognizes the entire world and its beings as ultimately like undivided space.”<sup>164</sup> This can’t be called a form of nihilism, for things keep on persisting through their inter-dependent modes of existence and mankind continue to suffer reifying, clinging to things, and reacting to each other, as if they were all inherently separate and self-existent as if they were not empty. “Rather the insight into emptiness recognizes all beings as undivided from oneself in the empty, inter-dependent ground of all things (*dharmadhātu*), which supports an all-embracing, unconditional compassion for all creatures.”<sup>165</sup> To realize the empty nature of phenomena is to realize nirvana in a way that everything that exists is inter-dependent and continue to change through their different modes of inter-dependent existence. Insight into the empty essence of experiences changes one’s perception and participation into the ever changing nature of world and hence helps one realize their inner freedom to engage in worldly activities without developing clinging towards them. It thus, helps the

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid. P. 11

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. P. 12

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. Pg. 12.

practitioner to develop “an unconditional compassion for all creatures which suffers from reification, clinging, and reacting to their own concretized projection of self and others as self-existent.”<sup>166</sup>

### **Compassion in *Vajrayāna* Buddhism**

“The “*Vajrayāna*” Buddhism (“Diamond Vehicle”) emerged in India around eighth century CE. The *Vajrayāna* tradition became central within the spread of Buddhism to Tibet and Himalayan regions of Asia.”<sup>167</sup> The tradition is modelled on *Buddha nature* in relation to which the teachings and causes of suffering are reinterpreted. Partially based on the teachings of the schools mentioned above, this school of thought laid special emphasis on our inner capacity to realize the path of awakening to develop wisdom and compassion which is already present deep inside our minds.

The school asserts that we by birth possess the attributes of awakening which has been weakened by our individual and social conditioning patterns of reification and grasping.

“According to *Vajrayāna*, our fundamental awareness prior to patterns of self-centred clinging is essentially unconditioned, pure and undefiled. Our basic awareness is a limitless expanse of emptiness and cognizance, like boundless space pervaded by sunlight, already endowed with all-encompassing wisdom and compassion.”<sup>168</sup> Hence, “to cultivate compassion and wisdom, therefore, is not to generate new states of mind and make them grow stronger but rather to help the mind relinquish its deluded tendencies so that it’s innate, unconditioned power of boundless compassion and wisdom, its *Buddha nature*, can spontaneously manifest.”<sup>169</sup>

“The deep primordial nature of mind, *Vajrayāna* thus asserts, contains all positive energies and qualities of awakening in potential. When a person’s attention is habitually caught in patterns of self-centred thought and reaction, those innate energies become patterned into deluded emotions like fear, possessiveness and

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid. P. 17.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid. P. 18

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

aversion—into inner causes of suffering.”<sup>170</sup> In order to be free from individual and social conditioning and to realize our innate potential of awakening wisdom and compassion, *Vajrayāna* Buddhists emphasize on meditating upon our deepest nature to realize the emptiness of all our experiences. Once we realize this emptiness of our cognizance we get freed from our confused emotions and thus liberate ourselves from the bondage of reification of “me” or “mine” and clinging. The awareness of our innate insight into the emptiness of all our experiences as expressions of our own empty cognizance freed us from the distorted patterning of our thoughts to manifest unconditioned compassion for all. “Compassion is thus understood as an intrinsic capacity of fundamental awareness; an innate quality of primordial mind that is unleashed automatically when the mind is freed from its habitual patterns of self-centred conceptualization and reaction.”<sup>171</sup> According to *Vajrayāna* tradition, we all share this innate capacity to realize spontaneous awakening by practising the *Buddha nature*, hence, “*Vajrayāna* practitioner can know other beings not only in their sufferings but also in their incalculable dignity, innate purity and inherent potential. Hence, the one who practise his/her *Buddha nature*, then, communes with the unactualized *Buddha nature* in other persons mirroring their deepest potential back at them and thereby helping to evoke it in them. Awakening to one’s own innate potential becomes infectious.”<sup>172</sup>

The ethical and religious philosophy of Buddhism is compassion and love for all. The notion of compassion has been developed by all Buddhist traditions. In Buddhism the cultivation of compassion is associated with the attainment of wisdom. The three leading Buddhist traditions, namely, early and *Therāvāda* Buddhism, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism and *Vajrayāna* Buddhism, describe wisdom and compassion as intrinsically related to each other. According to *Therāvāda* tradition, compassion cultivated by wisdom paves the way to mental purification which thereby leads us to the realization of inner freedom. Hence, in *Therāvāda* Buddhism, compassion illumines our inner freedom. And in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, compassion is described as a tool for realizing non-conceptual wisdom, which is an insight into the undivided experience of self and others. And the *Vajrayāna* Buddhism asserts compassion to be

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. P. 19

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

an unconditional quality of the self which get unleashed in the process of the awakening of *Buddha nature*. Given all the primary views on compassion, we found that compassion is the quality essential to mankind should be cultivated by all. The cultivation of compassion, purify the mind from confused emotions and constructive feelings of resentment, ill-will, greed, hatred etc.

The life of Buddha and his teachings had a great influence upon Gandhi's thoughts and actions. Central to the teachings of Buddha that had greatly influenced Gandhi, were his teachings of tolerance, love, and compassion for all beings. According to him, Buddha was "saturated with the best that was in Hinduism, and he gave life to some teachings that were buried in the Vedas and which overgrown with weeds."<sup>173</sup> There is no doubt that Gandhi's teachings borrowed a lot from Buddhism and other religion. Buddhism being the religion of tolerance, love, and compassion had an immense effect on Gandhi's political as well as ethical spheres of life.

## SECTION II

### Autonomy and Dignity

The notions of autonomy and dignity came into prominence during the enlightenment era of 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Before the enlightenment era, these two notions were never rendered much importance because the era before enlightenment was regulated by renaissance or traditional doctrines and dogmas of Roman Catholic churches. Churches were regarded as the supreme authority and everything written in the holy books was practiced unequivocally. The age of enlightenment also called as "century of lights"; and in German *Aufklärung*, (literally translated as Enlightenment)<sup>174</sup> was a period of various philosophical and political movements that dominated the Europe in 18<sup>th</sup> century. The era of enlightenment also named as the era of scientific revolution brought a major change in the world of ideas. The enlightenment era transferred the emphasis from religious orthodoxy to rationality and scientific reasoning. The era is marked by tremendous contribution of mid-17<sup>th</sup> and

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<sup>173</sup> Prabhu, R. K., and Rao, U. R., (eds.), 1960, *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi: Encyclopedia of Gandhi's Thought*, p. 95.

<sup>174</sup> "Enlightenment", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 2016, retrieved on 2016/6/13

18<sup>th</sup> century philosophers and political writers. The philosophers that contributed in the making of enlightenment are “Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza and John Locke. Followed up by them, Cesare Beccaria, Voltaire, Denis Diderot, Jean- Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, and Immanuel Kant were also regarded as major figures of enlightenment era.”<sup>175</sup> The philosophers and political writers of enlightenment argued for a society based on reason and rationality. They argued for a social order where man can exercise his natural rights in the light of scientific rationality.

Out of the many philosophers and political reformists of enlightenment, I shall here discuss only two viz. John Locke and Immanuel Kant and compare their ideas with that of Gandhi.

### **John Lock on Tolerance**

John Locke (1632-1704) in his work entitled; *Letter Concerning Tolerance* (1689-92) tried to revolutionize the conservative unilateral system of thought regularized by Catholic Churches of 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Through his letters on tolerance, he argued for religious tolerance regarding various Christian denominations. His interpretations on the nature of state and religion are contrary to the views of social contract theorist, Thomas Hobbes. Unlike Hobbes, Locke argued that prevention of proliferation of different religious practices causes civil unrest. For him, more religious groups and identities prevent civil unrest. The primitive goal of his writings was the separation of civil government from religious authorities, i.e. churches.

As he writes:

“I esteem it above all things necessary to distinguish exactly the Business of Civil Government from that of Religion, and to settle the just bounds that lie between the one and the other. He further identifies the domain of civil interests as being; “Life, Liberty, Health, and Indolency of Body; and the Possession of outward things, such as Money, Lands, Houses, Furniture, and the like.”<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age\\_of\\_Enlightenment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment), retrieved on 2016/6/13

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. P. 26

He further argues that one's religious choice should not be a matter of concern to the magistrate and civil authorities should not interfere into the domain of religion. On dwelling upon the matter of religious freedom, he further subdued the role of churches by taking religious practices as a voluntary action and not a coercive one, as he writes; "a voluntary society of men, joining themselves together of their own accord, in order to the public worshipping of God, in such a manner as they judge acceptable to him, and effectual to the Salvation of their Souls."<sup>177</sup>

Thus, he offered a secular model of a state free from religious coercion and dogmas. He quite vigorously emphasized upon the religious tolerance among different religious denominations. As he writes;

"No private Person has any Right, in any manner, to prejudice another Person in his Civil Enjoyments, because he is of another Church or Religion."<sup>178</sup>

He further strengthens his conviction on religious tolerance by professing the view that no one can ever be saved by a religion, he possess no faith in;

"The principal Consideration, and which absolutely determines this Controversy, is this. Although the Magistrates Opinion in Religion is sound, and the way that he appoints is truly Evangelical, yet if I be not thoroughly persuaded thereof in my own mind, there will be no safety for me in following it. No way whatsoever that I shall walk in, against the Dictates of my Conscience, will ever bring me to the Mansions of the Blessed. I may grow rich by an Art that I take not delight in; I may be cured of some Disease by Remedies that I have not Faith in; but I cannot be saved by a Religion that I distrust and by a Worship that I abhor. It is in vain for an Unbeliever to take up the outward show of another men Profession. Faith only and inward Sincerity are the things that procure acceptance with God. [...] In vain therefore do Princes compel their Subjects to come into their Church-communion, under pretence of saving their souls. [...] men cannot be forced to be saved whether they will or no. And therefore, when all is done, they must be left to their own Consciences."<sup>179</sup>

For Locke, the question of the reliability of one's religious beliefs purely relies on the practitioner who possesses it for the matters of religious faith are an upshot of inward sincerity and devotion towards god. Thus, according to Locke, all religions should be given equal reverence as they are all based on faith and not reason.

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid. P. 28

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. P. 31

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. P. 38

Apart from Locke's notable contribution to religious tolerance, Locke is also credited with the title of "Father of Empiricism" due to his tremendous contribution in the development of epistemology, determining the limits of human understanding as what can be said to be known in the domain of human experiences. Locke in his work entitled; *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) argues that at birth our mind is a blank slate which is later filled by our experiences of the world. He is also credited with the title of "father of liberalism" due to his contribution in the domain of political philosophy. John Locke's notable contribution in the world of political philosophy is implicit in his work entitled; *Two Treatise of Government*, published anonymously in 1689.<sup>180</sup> The first treatise is a direct attack on Robert Filmer's work entitled; *Patriarcha* (1680), where he firmly rejected Filmer's claim that God had made us all naturally subject to a monarch.<sup>181</sup> Locke argued that men by nature are free and possess rights towards their life and freedom. Locke in his second treatise on government presents a view on state of nature where all men are free and are under no obligation to be abided by others. Locke describes the state of nature as;

"To properly understand political power and trace its origins, we must consider the state that all people are in naturally. That is a state of perfect freedom of acting and disposing of their own possessions and persons as they think fit within the bounds of the law of nature. People in this state do not have to ask permission to act or depend on the will of others to arrange matters on their behalf. The natural state is also one of equality in which all power and jurisdiction is reciprocal and no one has more than another. It is evident that all human beings – as creatures belonging to the same species and rank and born indiscriminately with all the same natural advantages and faculties – are equal amongst themselves. They have no relationship of subordination or subjection unless God (the lord and master of them all) had clearly set one person above another and conferred on him an undoubted right to dominion and sovereignty."<sup>182</sup>

Here, Locke argues for the basic rights of men i.e., right to life, liberty and property. Locke in his second treatise on government contends against the political dictatorship/tyranny, and disposes the idea of democratic elected government as a representative of peoples will. He also proposes the right to revolution against the elected government in case of it's failing to meet peoples' interest in the democracy.

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<sup>180</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two\\_Treatises\\_of\\_Government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two_Treatises_of_Government), retrieved on 2016/6/15.

<sup>181</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke-political/>, retrieved on 2016/ 6/15.

<sup>182</sup> *Two Treatises on Government, 2009: A Translation into Modern English*, ISR/Google Books, p. 70.



So, the above are the views of Locke on an individual's right to live a dignified and autonomous life in terms of securing religious freedom and right to life, liberty and property. For Locke, man by nature is autonomous and possesses the right to live a life of dignity.

### **Immanuel Kant: Human Reason and Autonomy**

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is a prominent figure of 18<sup>th</sup> century whose works on ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, political philosophy, aesthetics, etc. continues to dominate the world of ideas till today. He synthesized two entirely contrary torrents of thoughts, i.e. empiricism and rationalism. He retained what these two streams of thoughts affirm and denied them in what they deny. Kant in his major work entitled; *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), strived to establish the relation between human reason and experience as he contends that human understanding is the source of general laws of nature that contours all our experiences; and that "human reason give itself the moral law, which is our basis for belief in God, freedom and immortality. Therefore, scientific knowledge, morality and religious beliefs are mutually consistent as they all rest on the same foundation of human autonomy."<sup>183</sup>

The fundamental aim underlying Kant's "Critical Philosophy" namely; *the Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, 1787), *the Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), and *the Critique of Judgement* (1790) is moral autonomy of man. "Autonomy" literally means giving up the law to oneself and on Kant's view; our understanding provides laws that constitute the apriori framework of our experiences."<sup>184</sup> "Our understanding does not provide the matter or content of our experience, but it does provide the basic formal structure within which we experience any matter received through our senses. Kant's central argument for this view is the transcendental deduction, according to which it is a condition of self-consciousness that our understanding constructs experience in this way. So, we may call self-consciousness the highest principle of Kant's theoretical philosophy, since it is (at least) the basis for all of our a priori

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<sup>183</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant/> retrieved on 2016/6/16.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

knowledge about the structure of nature.”<sup>185</sup> Kant’s moral philosophy is positioned on his notion of autonomy. For him, reason alone supplies us with the moral law. According to him, if reason is to be trailed completely, it will always guide us to do an act of duty. The act of duty which is regulated by reason alone, Kant calls it, Categorical imperative. According to Kant, “categorical imperative requires that moral agents act only in a way that the principle of their action could become a universal law.”<sup>186</sup>

“For Kant, the moral law is the product of reason, while the basic laws of nature are product of our understanding. Kant regards understanding and reason as different cognitive faculties. The categories and therefore, laws of nature are dependent on our specifically human forms of intuition while reason is not.”<sup>187</sup> For him, the moral law is dependent on reason for an act of duty ought to be guided by the faculty of reason alone and if it is in any way mingled with any instinct of pleasure or pain; it ceases to be an act of duty. As he writes; “the purity of the moral principle can be clearly shown by removing from the incentives of the action everything which men count as a part of happiness.”<sup>188</sup> “Kant in his work entitled; *“Groundwork of the metaphysics of Morals”* (1785), proposes to adopt a practical moral view point to decipher the concerns of morality. According to Kant, morality must be hold as apriori because moral actions must be held absolutely necessary and universal. He sought to disperse genuine morality from empirical experiences for he believes that all our moral actions or “dutiful actions” ought to be relied on the faculty of reason alone. The reason behind extricating morality from empirical considerations is to save the domain of morality from falling into the domain of anthropology which studies empirical truths about human nature. He further maintains;

“Everyone must admit that a law, if it is to hold morally, i.e., as a ground of obligation, must imply absolute necessity; he must admit that the command, "Thou shalt not lie," does not apply to men only, as if other rational beings had no need to observe it. The same is true for all other moral laws properly so called.”<sup>189</sup>

Again, Kant makes it out clearly that a dutiful action ought to be performed by reason alone and empirical considerations must be subdued as they hinder the path of

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundwork\\_of\\_the\\_Metaphysic\\_of\\_Morals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundwork_of_the_Metaphysic_of_Morals), retrieved on 2016/6/16

<sup>187</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant/> retrieved on 2016/6/16.

<sup>188</sup> Wood, A. W., 2002, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

achieving universal morality. Kant distinguishes between the “act of duty” and “act in accordance with duty” by the notion of “goodwill.” According to Kant, goodwill is that which is free from humanly proclivities such as pleasure and pain. As he states; “Nothing in the world--indeed nothing even beyond the world--can possibly be conceived which could be called good without qualification except a good will.”<sup>190</sup>

To understand the notion of goodwill, let us consider an example given by Shandon, L. Guthrie: “Someone who saves the life of a woman from a murderous man so that he may rob her may be considered to act only in accordance with duty in regard to her deliverance from the murderer. He did not act out of the “Good Will” since his motivation was to rob her. Therefore, to take both intent and motivation into account in order to do the right thing considers one to be acting morally or dutifully. This act is said to proceed from that universal “Good Will”.”<sup>191</sup>

Kant provides us with the method of judging whether a particular action is morally right or not. The method is called “categorical imperative.” A categorical imperative as Kant describes, is a source of moral justification of a particular action. Kant differentiates between two kinds of imperatives, namely, hypothetical and categorical in the following way;

“If now the action is good only as a means to something else, then the imperative is hypothetical; if it is conceived as good in itself and consequently as being necessarily the principle of a will which of itself conforms to reason, then it is categorical . . . .”<sup>192</sup>

According to him, the act of categorical imperative ought to be good in itself and in conformity with reason. Kant’s assertion that a moral law must be universal and absolute in nature and it ought to be free from any outer consideration whatsoever, leads us to the first formulation of his notion of categorical imperative;

“Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction.”<sup>193</sup>

By introducing this maxim, Kant points it out that a categorical imperative is that imperative which can be made absolute and universal when it is applied to rational beings. According to him, it is our duty not to act by that maxim which contradicts itself when we attempt to universalize them. Consider for example, “the moral proposition A; “it is permissible to steal”, would result in a contradiction upon

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid. P. 9

<sup>191</sup> Guthrie, S. L., 2001, “*Immanuel Kant and the Categorical Imperative*”, p. 4.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid. P. 5

<sup>193</sup> Kant, Immanuel. (1785), *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. by Ellington, James W., (1993), p. 30.

universalization as the notion of stealing presumes the existence of a property and if A were universalized there would be no property, hence the proposition would result in self-negation.”<sup>194</sup> Having clarified the universal and non-contradictive nature of categorical imperative, Kant moves to his second formulation which he derived from the first categorical imperative;

“Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end.”<sup>195</sup>

Kant through his second categorical imperative assures the right use of free will for to treat free will as a subjective end makes it conforming to some sort of hypothetical imperative that an individual may take up. In order to make a maxim in line with categorical imperative, we ought to treat others as an end in itself. Here, Kant argues in favour of an equal treatment to all. He asserts that we must not see others as an object to achieve our desired ends, rather we ought to see them in their own persons and treat them as an end in itself. The first two maxims lead him to the formulation of third maxim which is;

“Therefore, every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a legislating member in the universal kingdom of ends.”<sup>196</sup>

For Kant, we as rational beings possess an autonomous will which ought to be in conformity with our reason, and hence, our will should not be subjugated to any other laws except those that we make for ourselves, which we at the same time, will to be followed by others as well.

Hence, Kant’s assumption that a free play of human reason can furnish us with morality and is capable of imparting right knowledge is the basis of his moral philosophy. According to Kant, rational wills are the only autonomous wills as they are free from external influences and are bound by their own laws which they aim to universalize. Kant’s conception of an autonomous will positioned with reason paves the way for his political philosophy which conceives individuals as their own law makers in conformity with the absolute universal law.

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<sup>194</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical\\_imperative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_imperative), retrieved on 2016/6/17

<sup>195</sup> Kant, Immanuel. (1785), *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. by Ellington, James W., (1993), p. 36.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. P. 43

## **M. K. Gandhi on Autonomy and Dignity**

The concept of autonomy, dignity, liberty, freedom, rights of individual etc. has been manifested in Gandhi's political and ethical endeavours. Gandhi got acquainted with European ideology or particularly with the ideas and concepts that enlightenment brought during his stay in England. Gandhi during his stay in England explored new ideas and read many books which later became the foundation of his political and ethical philosophy. Though, Gandhi irreconcilably opposed "modernity" which is a by-product of enlightenment but he was never opposed to the concept of autonomy, dignity, freedom, etc. which are enlightenment manifested. One may find that he never accepted any idea as it is, in fact, he altered it and infused in it his own understanding and beliefs about it. Same is the case with enlightenment manifested concepts; he appreciated whatever fell down in the realm of human welfare and altered them according to his own conception of them.

Like Locke and Kant, Gandhi too offered his own ethical as well as political views which later imparted a whole new meaning to political and ethical endeavours. It wouldn't be hyperbolic to say that Gandhi's ideology, writings and actions brought the same revolution as the philosophers and political writers of 18<sup>th</sup> century enlightenment brought. Gandhi's ethical views and social agendas can be gleaned from his weekly journals and social programmes, namely, *Harijan*, *Young India*, *Hind Swaraj*, *Sarvodya*, *Satyagraha*, *trusteeship* etc. Gandhi adherence to spiritual and ethical tool nonviolence to fight against the evils and injustices in the society evidently reflects his great admiration for humanity.

## **Gandhi's Ethical and Political Ideas**

Gandhi's notion of *Swaraj* and *Sarvodya* are building blocks of his ethical, economic and political philosophy as both the notions are aimed to appreciate and escalate human potential by rightest means. His aim of uplifting the destitute is quite explicit in his political endeavours. Gandhi through his notion of *Sarvodya* initiated to serve the dispossessed as well as other societies of India. For him, by the virtue of truth and nonviolence the essence of *Sarvodya* or 'universal welfare' can be achieved. Gandhi's *Sarvodya* is not merely a Gujrati translation of Ruskin's work entitled,

'*Unto This Last*', but also it reflects his vision of social and economic emancipation of all. The ideal also contains moral resurrection of all as Gandhi emphasized more on the aspect of duty than on rights.

Gandhi's political ideas are explicit in his work entitled; *Hind Swaraj (1909)*, where he offered a robust criticism of modern civilization naming it a "nominal" democracy. For Gandhi, *Swaraj* stands for both "self-rule" and "self-government", and its realization by all.<sup>197</sup> For Gandhi, the aim of *Swaraj* is to make each and every individual their own ruler. In Gandhi's view, the aim of *Swaraj* is not merely the political independence of India from the yoke of British imperialism but it is more substantive in terms of providing freedom to individuals to regulate their lives on moral grounds.

Gandhi stated that "the *Purna Swaraj* ideal is to be achieved on Earth and had to be created and nurtured with *Sarvodya* beliefs."<sup>198</sup> Through the ideals of *Sarvodya* and *Swaraj*, Gandhi was determined to achieve the spiritual heritage of India which has its roots in the villages, thus, upliftment of villages is another important goal of these two movements. The ideal of *Sarvodya* traces its origin back to the ancient Indian ideology where the world is conceived as "*Vasudev Kutumbh*" which signifies the whole world as one family. Hence, *Sarvodya* is upliftment of all as one family. For Gandhi, *Sarvodya* begins with imparting equal rights to tribes, *Harijans*, *Adivasis* and backward classes of the society.

The aim of *Sarvodya* was the equal distribution rather than mass production and it strives to elevate the small businesses by the decentralization of power. For Gandhi, "production must be determined by the social necessity rather than greed of a section of people. If genuine social needs of people are neglected, then there is no social progress. The expression "social progress" is a comprehensive term in Gandhian philosophy. It encapsulates everything that is worthy of dignified human existence. Gandhian approach to economic order is essentially revolutionary and constructive."<sup>199</sup> For Gandhi, economic equality is essential to abolish the wide gulf between rich and the poor class. Unless and until the gap between the poor and the

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<sup>197</sup> See, *Hind Swaraj* in Penguin Gandhi reader, pp. 37-38.

<sup>198</sup> Veltickal, T, 2002, *Gandhian Sarvodaya: A Realistic utopia*, p. 8.

<sup>199</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 61.

rich is abolished, the ideal nonviolent social order can't be achieved. As Gandhi stated;

“Economic equality is the master key to nonviolent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour class. It means the levelling down of the few rich whose hands is 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 nonviolent system of government is clearly an impossibility, so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists...”<sup>200</sup>

Gandhi proposed the ideal of trusteeship to rule out the gulf between capital and labour class. For Gandhi, the notion of trusteeship would prove helpful in establishing an ideal social order by demolishing the economic equality among various sections of society. “Gandhi's trusteeship is an ideal arrangement aimed at transforming the existing capital order into an egalitarian society.”<sup>201</sup> Gandhi appealed to the capitalist class to act as trustees of their property as the property they acquire is the fruit of the hard work of the labouring class. To quote Gandhi in this context:

“I am inviting those people who consider themselves as owners today to act as trustees, i.e., owners, not in their own right, but owner in the right of those whom they have exploited.”<sup>202</sup>

Regarding the theory of trusteeship, there arises the question of its practicality, is it practically possible to employ this theory? Will it survive in the long run? To these questions Gandhi gives the following answer;

“I am not ashamed to<sup>203</sup> own that many capitalists are friendly towards me and do not fear me. They know that I desire to end capitalism, almost, if not quite, as much as the most advanced Socialist or even Communist. But our methods differ, our languages differ. My theory of trusteeship is no make-shift, certainly no camouflage. I am confident that it will survive all other theories. It has the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it. . . . No other theory is compatible with non-violence.”<sup>204</sup>

The foundation of Gandhi's theory of trusteeship is his idea that everything belongs to god and was from god and whatever is god given belongs to all and not to a particular individual. Hence, in Gandhi's eyes we are all trustees of our properties, and we must give it up for the welfare of all. Gandhi's *Sarvodaya* on the one hand, is

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<sup>200</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1944, *Constructive Programme*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>201</sup>Ray, Niharranjan, (ed.), 1969, *Gandhi: Theory and Practise, Impact and Contemporary Relevance*, p. 8.

<sup>202</sup> Gandhi, M. K., *Young India*, 20 august 1925.

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<sup>204</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 16<sup>th</sup> December 1939, p. 376

an attempt to elevate the downtrodden and less privileged sections of the society and provide them with equal rights in order to make them capable of exercising their freedom in an enlightened manner. His notion of Swaraj, on the other hand, is an endeavour to establish “self-rule” with the aim of integrating politics and morality, nonviolence and participatory democracy.

Besides advocating trusteeship, *sarvodya* and *swaraj*, Gandhi also proposed ‘Constructive Programme’ to promote welfare of the all sections of society. The aim of Gandhi’s constructive programme was to rule out the evils of inequality, child marriage, alcoholism, filthiness and idleness. Gandhi appealed to the people of India to come together and join hands in the reformation of nation. Through the constructive programme, Gandhi emphasized on eighteen items; “ communal unity, removal of untouchability, khadi, prohibition, village industries, village sanitation, basic education, adult education, women, health and hygiene, provincial languages, national languages, economic inequality, farmers, labours, adivasis, lepers and students.”<sup>205</sup> For Gandhi, the reformation of India is possible only through the achievement of above mentioned elements.

Though Gandhi appreciated the enlightenment manifested concepts such as, freedom, liberty, rights of individual, autonomy and dignity of people, etc. yet he criticized the western model of development. For Gandhi, the West’s model of development is satanic and “it cannot be implied in India as the need of Indian culture and economy is different from that of West. For him, the western model of development reflects the evils of greed, power, self-indulgence, multiplication of wants etc.”<sup>206</sup>

Gandhi’s political ideals are an outcome of Ruskin’s *Unto This Last* which according to him is based on three principles<sup>207</sup>;

- 1). The Good of the individual is contained in the good of the all.
- 2). That a lawyers 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 handicraftsmen is the life worth living.

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<sup>205</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1948, *Constructive Programme, Its Meaning and Place*, p. 28.

<sup>206</sup> [odisha.gov.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/2010/October/engpdf/36-39.pdf](http://odisha.gov.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/2010/October/engpdf/36-39.pdf), retrieved on 2016/6/24.

<sup>207</sup> [http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/gandhi\\_sarvodaya.html](http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/gandhi_sarvodaya.html), retrieved on 2016/6/25.



Out of these three, the first one is more significant in the eyes of Gandhi for the latter two are contained in the first. Following are some of the objectives of Gandhian notion *Sarvodya* and *Swaraj*;

1. Formation of self-supporting villages.
2. Decentralization of power.
3. Moral upliftment of man.
4. Equality among all sections of society.
5. Establishment of small industries.
6. Moral autonomy of man etc.

Gandhi pioneered the concept of trusteeship in order to eliminate the exploitation based on property and to rule out social discrimination grounded on wealth. He enunciated this theory to put an end to the gap between capital class and labour class and to promote bread by labour so that both the classes can work in harmony with each other;

“Supposing I have come by a fair amount of wealth – either by way of legacy, or by means of trade and industry – I must know that all that 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 community.”<sup>208</sup>

Thus, we have found that the central aim of Gandhi’s political and ethical philosophy is the moral upliftment of man. Though the concepts such as liberty, autonomy, dignity, etc., are enlightenment manifested, yet Gandhi imparted a whole new meaning to these concepts by infusing his spiritual and moral philosophy in them. Gandhi time and again emphasized on moral values and gave preferences to means over ends. Gandhian concepts of *Sarvodya*, *swaraj*, trusteeship are abided by his eternal faith in humanity. “It is a mistake to conclude that Gandhi opposed science and technology. He opposed all forms of scientific and technological innovations that benefit industrialist alone.”<sup>209</sup> He held that: “Machinery has a place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour.”<sup>210</sup> Perhaps, Gandhi could anticipate the evils of modernization which led him to criticize it. For

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<sup>208</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1939, *Harijan*, p. 145.

<sup>209</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 70.

<sup>210</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1925, *Young India*, 5 January.

Gandhi, modernization through industrialization deepens the gap between labour and capital class.

Locke through his essays on toleration built up a milestone in subduing the role of religious authorities in dictating the life of individuals. He also provided an early model for the departure of religious authorities from civil authorities. His political drudgery provided us with a democratic model of government where he argued for government by consent of the ruled to protect “life, liberty and property”. Followed up by Locke, we have discussed Kant’s contribution to the enlightenment era. Kant through his critical Philosophy brought forward the notion of moral autonomy of man and positioned it with reason. He introduced three categorical imperatives, namely, “universal law”, “end in itself” and “kingdom of ends” to provide a solution to the problem of morality. And Gandhi, through his notions of *Sarvodya* and *Swaraj* proposed a nonviolence democratic model of the state.

The notions of autonomy and dignity are quite explicit in the writings of these three thinkers. Locke being the “father of liberalism” addressed the rights of individuals in a democratic state and Kant through his systematic writings gave a rational solution to all problems whether moral or political. Gandhi being the votary of nonviolence presented quite distinct yet powerful methods to address the autonomy and dignity of man. Though Kant and Gandhi both argued for Individual’s autonomy in setting up rule for themselves yet they differ in their approaches, Kant, on the one hand, emphasized on the free play of reason to provide the act of duty for the individual, Gandhi, on the other hand, stressed upon the innate goodness of man. Gandhi emphasized more on the moral character of man, while Kant gave the utmost preference to reason over everything. Both Kant and Locke laid more emphasis upon the role of rationality in shaping up human Knowledge but Gandhi gave equal reverence to both rationality and spirituality. Like Locke, Gandhi also emphasized upon religious tolerance to promote peace and prosperity in society. And like Kant Gandhi too thought that individual is capable of setting laws for him and those laws should be of such kind that they never become a source of humiliation for others. Unlike, Locke Gandhi asserted that ownership of property bridges the gap between labour and capital class, and thus it leads to exploitation of the poor. Hence, he proposed trusteeship to abolish the gap between rich and poor. Gandhi differs from Kant in allotting preference to ethics over reason.

To be precise and clear, we have explored in this chapter, the moral and ethical and political philosophy of *Satyāgraha*, *Swaraj* and *Sarvodya* as means to realize the self and the other. Gandhi through his theory of *Sarvodya* and *Swaraj*, aimed to elevate the dispossessed sections of the society. Gandhi through his notion of *Sarvodya* was determined to bring economic equality to all sections of society. Gandhi pioneered *satyāgraha* to fight against the evils and injustices of the British government. Gandhian *satyāgraha* is aimed to transform the oppressor by inflicting soul-suffering upon oneself. Through *satyāgraha* Gandhi approached to nonviolent way of solving conflicts. Gandhi's firm faith in nonviolence and compassion as means to transform the adversary are certainly an outcome of Buddhism. Buddhism preaches compassion for all living beings. In Buddhism the compassion alone can provide us with wisdom.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Gandhi on Unity of the Self and the Other**

My aim in this chapter is to study Gandhi's active struggle to establish unity of the self in diversity with others through promoting peace and harmony among various traditions, cultures, languages and religions in India as well as in the world. Gandhi, a votary of nonviolence, had always emphasized on the oneness of mankind. For Gandhi, there is no religion in the world that does not preach the virtues of nonviolence, love, compassion and tolerance. Gandhi preferred nonviolence over every other tool to deal with conflicts; demonstrates his reverence for humanity. Nonviolence works as a monologue between the parties involved in a conflict, whereas, violence inculcates the negative feelings of resentment, bitterness and enmity in the heart of a person who is annihilated. Gandhi's political and ethical ventures explicate his endeavours to bead different cultures, traditions and ideologies of India in one thread. He strived to unite different cultures of India by preaching nonviolence and tolerance to them. Gandhi was very appreciative of the cultural pluralism of India and had always worked towards the establishment of unity in diversity through promoting peace and harmony among various traditions. Though, Gandhi was a proud and devout Hindu, yet he considered other religions as equally sacred as his own. Gandhi was a man of principles; he held utmost faith in humanity which reflects in his teachings of nonviolence, tolerance and brotherhood. The testament of Gandhi's life describes his struggle for the emancipation of humanity in terms of establishing peace with oneself and the other.

This chapter is divided into two sections, in Section I, I'll try to demonstrate the cultural and religious pluralism of Indian society. Under the same section I'll also demonstrate Gandhi's view on plurality and his struggle to establish unity in diversity through promoting tolerance and nonviolence among various cultures and traditions. And in Section II, I'll study and examine Gandhi's doctrines of nonviolence,

*satyāgraha* and *Sarvodya* as means to establish peace and harmony in society. I'll also study Gandhian model of peace in light of current states of affairs.

## Section I

### Unity in Diversity

“I do not believe ... that an individual may gain spiritually and those who surround him suffer ... I believe in the essential unity of man and, for that matter, of all that lives. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent.”

M. K. Gandhi

*Young India*, 4<sup>th</sup> December 1924

Individual and society are inseparable, an individual is born within a society, his ideologies, way of living gets fashioned within a society and he enjoys his rights within the bounds of society. Both the individual and society are interdependent on each other for their existence. A society is comprised of individuals who decide to form a friendly association with each other by way of common interest. “The term society is derived from a French word, *société*, which in turn has its origin in the Latin term *societas*, meaning, “companion, comrade, business partner etc. Essentially the term denotes a group of people who share some mutual concern or interest, a common objective, common characteristics, and often a common culture.”<sup>211</sup> “According to Edward Burnett Tylor, an English cultural anthropologists, “culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Whereas, according to Clifford Greetz, an American cultural anthropologist, society is the actual arrangement of social relations

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<sup>211</sup> <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Society>, retrieved on 2016/4/27

while culture consists of beliefs and symbolic forms.”<sup>212</sup> Hence, a society is comprised of individuals who share common goals, interests and sometimes a common culture. Philosophically, the notions of the self and the other get their significance in the process of the emergence of identity. This identity could be of many types, for example, self-identity, national identity, cultural identity, ethnic identity etc. “A cultural identity is the one that people inherit. They either consciously adopt it or reflectively revise it in some rare cases. Human beings are culturally embedded in the sense that they grow up and live within a culturally structured world and organize their lives and social relations in terms of a culturally derived system of meaning and significance.”<sup>213</sup> Culture could be apprehended by the notions of affinity and diversity. The affinitive aspect of culture gives rise to identity in the spheres of language, geography, art, architecture, history, etc. and by the virtue of identity culture creates diversity with other cultures or ‘the others’.<sup>214</sup> Our identification with a particular culture shapes our identity as Self-identity. And our diversification with other cultures forms their identity as others. To understand the pluralism of Indian culture, we need to revise the historical background of India and the factors that led to the development of this plurality.

“India having more than 10,000 distinct communities (caste and tribes), several religious sects and sub-groups, over a hundred major linguistic categories is unique in the name of diversity.”<sup>215</sup> The diversity among various religions, cultures and ideology gives rise to the notion of hierarchy. The system of hierarchy is inevitable in large scale societies based on plurality. “Diversity poses problems to society in two ways; first differences imply a commitment of different groups to different styles of living and to different value framework and questions often arise about which life style to prevail. Besides this, diversity has also a way of giving rise to disparities, to unequal access to opportunities and to an unequal share in the power

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Singh, R. P., 2011, “Understanding Diversity/ Plurality in Multiculturalism, fusion of Cultural Horizons”: *World of Philosophy: A Harmony*, pp. 185-187.

<sup>214</sup> Kroeber, A. L., & Clyde Kluchohn, (1952), *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, Cambridge Mass. Peabody Museum of American Archaeology. In 1952, A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluchohn have given 164 definitions of cultural aspects of human beings comprising of the content and the intent of culture, the universalistic character of culture, the hierarchical status of culture and the pluralistic features of culture

<sup>215</sup> Roy, Babul, 2011, “Understanding India’s Sociological Diversity, Unity in diversity and Caste System in Contextualizing a global conservative Model, p. 441.

structure of society.”<sup>216</sup> Due to the unequal access to opportunities, inequality prevails in societies. The hierarchy not only gives rise to various kind of social and economic disparity to the lower societies, it is also proved conducive in giving rise to tolerance and sometimes promotion of plurality in terms of different groups living and working together. It leads to “promotion of differentiation in the ways of living of the different groups as long as they do not claim equal access to a society’s resources. Groups related to lower strata could be prevented from adopting the life-styles of the higher strata and persuaded the legitimacy of this arrangement.”<sup>217</sup> The Indian hierarchical system is based on *Varna-Jāti* system. The *Varna* system of Indian tradition signifies the social division based on labour in human beings. Division based on labour is essential for any social organization to work methodically. The ancient Indian sages and seers proposed triple four civilizational division of Indian society to formulate a methodical system based on people’s interest and pursuit in life. The triple four civilizational divisions are represented by the social systems of *Varna*, *Āshram* and *Purushārtha*. All of these social systems depict the role and aim of man in life. For example, the *Varna* system demonstrates the division based on labour in human beings. The purpose of the *Varna* system is to divide the work among people on the basis of their capabilities and interest. The social division on which the *Varna* system operates is demonstrated by four classes of Indian society, i.e., *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaiśeya* and *Shudra*. The *Brahmin* class under the *Varna* system was offered to regulate and govern the administrative and educational departments of the state. And the *Kshatriya* class or the class of warriors was offered to govern and protect the nation. The *Vaiśeya* class was given the charge of trade and commerce and the *Shudra* class was rewarded with the power of labour. Though, the division among classes is based on capabilities and interest of its people yet it inevitably gives rise to hierarchy in social space. Similarly, the *āshram* system also signifies different steps in the journey of life. The system proposes four stages of human life, i.e., *Brahmacharya*, *Grihasta*, *Vānaprastha* and *Sanyāsa*. All these four stages describe four passages in human life, for example, the *Brahmacharya āshram* (24) signifies the student life. Here, a student is required to gain knowledge and live a life of celibacy. In the *Grihasta āshram*, which starts right after the end of *bramacharya āshram*, a person is advised to live a married life and perform his duty towards his family and society. The

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<sup>216</sup> Gore, M. S. 1996, “Unity in Diversity”, p. 31.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

time span of this *āshram* is 24 to 48 years. In *Vānaprastha āshram* (48-72), an individual is advised to perform *Sādharma* and renounce all his mundane attachments. And lastly in *Sanyāsa āshram* (72+), an individual is required to renounce all his material bonds and live a life of austerity with the aim of achieving liberation. The *Purushārtha* system, on the other hand, signifies four means of human life, i.e. *Dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *moksha*. *Dharma* refers to act of righteousness, *artha* refers to worldly possessions, *kāma* refers to sensuous desires and *moksha* refers to liberation from worldly life and attachments. Hence, the triple four civilizational concept of ancient Indian Hinduism proposes a systematic division of social and individual life with the aim of achieving harmony among various stages of life. But, in the later development of Hinduism, these concepts lost their essential meanings and *Varna* system which was proposed to divide labour among men on the basis of their capabilities became the source of exploitation to the people of lower strata. Besides the triple four civilizational systems, Jainism and Buddhism also contributed in shaping up the ideologies and lives of Indian people.

“Prior to the emergence of Islam and, later, Christianity, the main religious doctrines were those of the Vedic religion, which gradually gave place to Brahmanism, and of Jainism and Buddhism. Our Knowledge of the period is limited but the general impression that one gathers is that for a long time after the death of lord Mahāvira and Gautam, Jainism and Buddhism continued to be regarded as philosophies or ‘matas’ and not as distinct religion.”<sup>218</sup> But in the course of time, both Jainism and Buddhism left a deep impression on Indian religious ideology. The notion of compassion and love weakened the inhuman sacrificial religious activities and “nonviolence towards all sentient forms of life came to be an important value in the Indian tradition. Jainism must also have straightened, if not introduced, the element of mortification of the flesh as a way of self-purification and spiritual progress and Buddhism probably underlined the centrality of moral conduct in spiritual life and the unity of the secular and the spiritual aspects of life.”<sup>219</sup>

“The Vedic religion allowed for the coexistence of a variety of philosophic, metaphysical and teleological doctrines. This diversity seemed to have continued even during the centuries in which Brahminism with its *Varna* social structure asserted

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<sup>218</sup> Gore, M. S. 1996, “Unity in Diversity”, p. 32.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid. P. 33



itself. The diversity manifested itself in the simultaneous existence of six schools of philosophy, the four paths to spiritual salvation, and a pantheistic faith which could accommodate all the gods, deities, and divine beings worshipped by the various communities that were thrown together.”<sup>220</sup>

Soon after the arrival of Muslim invaders in India, Islam too began to spread its wings and became one of the most important religions in India during the Mughal rule. “Islam did not come to the country at one point of time but through diverse groups and several waves at various point of time between the seventh century when first the Arabs came and the sixth century when Mughals entered India. In between the Turks, the Ghazanavids, the Ghurs and the Afghans and other had invaded India and had established their kingdoms or sultanaest as far East as the Ganges and as far South as the Kaveri. The Persians also came to India albeit in smaller numbers but their influence must have been strong enough for Persian to have become the preferred court language in later years.”<sup>221</sup> Those who adopted Islam as their religion were not analogous groups. The differentiation between various Islamic groups prevailed on the basis of those who have come earlier to India, and “those who came part of the conquering group or could claim affiliation to that group and those who had been converted to Islam from within the local communities, and finally those who were Muslims and those who were not.”<sup>222</sup> Again, the difference between various Muslims communities on the basis of their contiguity and difference to ruling Muslim class and on their social and economic status gave rise to hierarchy within the Muslim communities. “ Muslims who could claim purity of descent from the original ethnic groups of Turkish, Afghan and Persian origin were at the top of the hierarchy, those who were of mixed origin occupied a lower rank and those who were of pure local origin were at the bottom. Among them, again, those who had been converted from the higher caste probably occupied a higher status than those who had converted from among the middle and the lower caste. To this extent the assumption is valid that the Muslim internal hierarchy developed, consciously or unconsciously, a caste structure of its own. That there is caste structure among the Muslims in India is an accepted fact but whether its development followed the pattern indicated above is a matter of

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid. P. 32

<sup>221</sup> Ibid. P. 34

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

examination.”<sup>223</sup> After the emergence and spread of Islam in India, Brahminism lost its sovereignty and its place as the sole advisor to kings. “The Kāyastha became an important pool from which the Muslim recruiters recruited their non-Muslim advisors and bureaucrats. By comparison, in the south the Brahmins maintained their social hegemony.”<sup>224</sup> Besides this, economic and occupational inequality also gave rise to hierarchy among all communities in India. The mutual interaction among the two different torrents of religious ideologies is significant to the time of the most influential Mughal emperor Akbar. Akbar brought together the best thinkers, politicians, and advisors from all over India and attempted to develop a common faith among them. Though, the attempt did not succeed and was later discarded by his successors but it somehow encouraged tolerance among various communities. “But there was another level where the two major religions of India seem to have interacted. Islam seems to have strengthened the de-ritualizing and egalitarian trends in Hinduism while Hindu philosophy seems to have strengthened the mystical spiritual strain in Muslim religious thought. It could be an accident that during the long period of Muslim rule the Bhakti movement gathered strength in Hinduism and the Sufi saints gathered considerable following in Islam. Neither of these variants in the two religions could be said to owe their origin to the other religion. The Bhakti movement emerged within Hinduism among the Alwar and Nayanar saints in the extreme south of the country much before Muslim rule established in India and similarly Sufism arose outside India and could not be said to have been the result of contact with Hinduism. But the Bhakti movement which indirectly weakened the hold of priesthood and de-emphasized religious rituals and status hierarchy among the followers must have found strength in the context of Islam and Muslim dominance. Similarly, the mystic and devotional strain in Islam must have found a responsive Indian Muslim. The saints of the Bhakti movement gathered considerable following among the middle and the lower caste in the Deccan and in the north between the twelfth and sixteenth century which was the major period of strong Muslim dominance. This was also the period of the spread of Sufism in India through the teachings of Chisti saints.”<sup>225</sup> But albeit of the differences of ideology between the two religions “in music and the arts Hindu-Muslim continue to participate actively and

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid. p. 35

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. P. 36

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. Pp. 36- 37

independently of their religious proclivities. North Indian music was nurtured at the Muslim courts, in the Hindu temples, and in the 'kotha'. Hindu sang at the courts and Muslims have sung bhajans at the Hindu temples."<sup>226</sup> Hence, albeit of difference between various ideologies of India, interaction between them prevailed through the medium of arts and music.

Hence, pluralism has been part of India in regulating and restructuring the lives of its people. The ancient Indian *Purushārtha* system also signifies the internal unity between different stages of life. It emphasizes on all aspects of human life and strives to establish harmony between them. Though, Buddhism and Jainism preach different paths of salvation yet they both stress upon the moral character of man to achieve liberation. Religion, heredity, cultural practices gave rise to hierarchy in Indian society.

Indian tradition is not a homogenous tradition, in fact it has played host to several religions and tradition from various parts of the world. "For example, the *Lokayata* and *Tantra* tradition of India came in contact with Jewish religion, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Islam over the millennia and recently with the *Bahai's* faith. It has the feature of colossal continuum of contact, conflict and confluence. There have been conflicts regarding the fundamental beliefs, practices, myths and rituals. But there is no conflict so far as the absolute concepts of particular faiths are concerned. It is the harmony, cohesion or confluence, which has prevailed and sustained all through the ages. Different religions have all preserved their identities, maintained their rituals, propagated their beliefs and value systems and cherished their culture."<sup>227</sup> Trade and commerce have also played vital role in bringing the different civilizations together. "King Solomon of Palestine and his ally King of Syria sent Phoenician sailors to trade with India and their contacts were mostly with the South. The flourishing spice trade was an avenue for many contacts between the southern- Indians and their trade partners in the Middle East."<sup>228</sup> Different cultures and civilizations influenced Indian culture and formed its distinct and mixed ideology. Islam brought Sufism and "its Influence can be found on Sikhism too. Out of 36 contributors of *Gurugrantha Sahib* only 6 are Sikhs, others are

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid. P. 38

<sup>227</sup> Singh, R. P., 2011, "The Notion of Harmony in Religion", p. 11.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

*Bhakti* poets, Hindus and 7 are Muslims. All contributors including Shekh Farikh, Bhikhan, Namdeva, Ravidas were involved in practical life but they were speaking interfaith harmony as the only voice of truth. In a nutshell, it can be said that all the religions of the world emerged in Asia and all Asian religions can be found at one place i.e., India.”<sup>229</sup>

Hinduism also contributed in the disciplines like” *Vyakaran or shabda shastra, Hetu Vidya* or Argument, *Chikitsa Vidya, Shilpa Vidya*, Astronomy, Mathematics, Grammar, Values, Hermeneutics, Aesthetics, etc. Hinduism as a philosophy, as a way of life, revolves around these areas.”<sup>230</sup> Hinduism believes in the sanctity of all that exist. “By its origin and development, it has a collection of thought that encompasses all aspects of not only human existence but also of the existence of plants, insects, animals, rivers, mountains, moon, sun, etc., including the climates, seasons and everything. It is essentially cosmo-centric as against anthropocentric of European thinking. The very fact that Hindus worship an entire pantheon of gods and goddesses means that the faith is an all-inclusive one. There is always a room for dissent and digression and the freedom of choice. In fact, the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* do not preach a particular religion, nor do they spell out a list of do’s and don’ts. The *Rg Veda* says that *Aano bhadrah kritavo yantu visvatah* or ‘let noble thoughts come to us from everywhere.’”<sup>231</sup>

Gandhi was appreciative of the pluralism of Indian culture and had always emphasized upon the unity of various cultures. Gandhi like a genius infused the teachings of various religions and formulated his theory of nonviolence and *satyāgraha*. Though, Gandhi was appreciative of Indian pluralism, yet he was aware of the internal stiffness among various religious sects. He strived to harmonize different religions and cultural groups by preaching the virtue of love and tolerance to them. According to Gandhi, tolerance should be our goal to avoid religious conflicts. As he says;

“According to my Muslim friends, I, born idol-worshipper, a believer in incarnation and rebirth, must necessarily cultivate tolerance for Muslims who do not believe in idol-worship, who do not believe in incarnation and perhaps in rebirth. I, a believer in incarnations, do not

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid. Pp. 12

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

think that Christ alone was God, or that he alone was the son of God. Nevertheless, I should tolerate the fact that my Christian friends look upon Christ as God and, similarly, Muslims and Christians should tolerate the fact that I bow in reverence to Kanyakumari and Jagannath. I can see that the age of tolerance is dawning in my own lifetime, because tolerance is at the root of the dharma of ahimsa. That very same tolerance is also at the root of the dharma of truth. Truth, like God, has a thousand diverse aspects. I cannot therefore insist that my view about the nature of truth is the correct one, and of others wrong...’’<sup>232</sup>

Gandhi approached people to examine every religion from the point of view of the practitioner who uphold it. According to him, the more we develop tolerance towards others’ ideologies and religion, the more we become capable of knowing ourselves better. He wanted to see India to be a land of different religions existing in peace and harmony with each other. To quote Gandhi in this context;

“I do not expect India of my dream to develop one religion, i.e., to be wholly Hindu, or wholly Christian, or wholly Musalman, but I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another.”<sup>233</sup>

According to Gandhi, tolerance plays a vital role in accepting and appreciating other cultures and religions. The notion of tolerance and multiplicity of stand points, Gandhi adopted from *Jain Anekāntvāda*. *Jain Anekāntvāda* is a doctrine of multifacetness of reality. According to this doctrine, truth is one but it is perceived differently by different people and no single view can be taken as absolute for it represents only an aspect of the multi-facet reality. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* is also known as the doctrine of relativism, for it presupposes that the realization of truth is absolute and expression of truth is relative. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* also asserts that reality cannot be apprehended by our faculty of senses for whatever is given to senses is merely an appearance of the complex reality. An individual’s comprehension of reality is dependent upon his ability to grasp it in a certain way. Thus, one standpoint alone cannot be regarded as absolute and in order to understand the true nature of reality, we are required to see it from all perspectives.

The Jaina illustrates the many facets of reality by using the parable of *andhagajanyāyah*, i.e., “blind men and an elephant”. According to the story, each of

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<sup>232</sup> National Integration Sub-Committee of the National Committee for Gandhian Centenary, 1968, *Gandhi’s India-Unity in Diversity*, p. 24.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid. P. 26

the six blind men touches a part of an elephant (trunk, leg, head etc.) and claimed to know the true appearance of the elephant. But they could not succeed properly because the elephant as a whole was altogether different from what they felt.

“A group of blind men heard that a strange animal, called an elephant, had been brought to the town, but none of them were aware of its shape and form. Out of curiosity, they said: "We must inspect and know it by touch, of which we are capable". So, they sought it out, and when they found it they groped about it. In the case of the first person, whose hand landed on the trunk, said "This being is like a drain pipe". For another one whose hand reached its ear, it seemed like a kind of fan. As for another person, whose hand was upon its leg, said, "I perceive the shape of the elephant to be like a pillar". And in the case of the one who placed his hand upon its back said, "Indeed, this elephant is like a throne". Now, each of these presented a true aspect when he related what he had gained from experiencing the elephant. None of them had strayed from the true description of the elephant. Yet they fell short of fathoming the true appearance of the elephant.”<sup>234</sup>

The story depicts that plurality is inevitable and different viewpoints represents different aspects of the complex reality. Thus, we must welcome divergent opinions to understand the reality in its totality. Though *anekāntvāda* propose approbation for divergent viewpoints and practices but it does not suggests that vexatious and perverse views and actions are also welcomed. Gandhi held that all religions are true because they all contain a part of truth. Gandhi at a very tender age got acquainted with the virtues of *ahiṃsā* (nonviolence), *aprigraha* (non-possession) and the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* by his mother. These notions had a lasting influence on him and thus contributed in structuring Gandhi’s moral and spiritual character. “According to Gandhi, his seeming contradictory positions are a result of his experiment with truth, and his faith in the doctrine of *Anekāntvāda*.”<sup>235</sup>

In contemporary world, people are becoming more intolerant towards others’ religions, cultures, ideologies and practises, and what we need today, is to deploy the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* in our lives. We must respect others’ religions and ideologies because by doing so we are promoting good for all. Gandhi followed the doctrine of *Anekāntvāda* in its truest sense and advised others to remain tolerant towards various

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<sup>234</sup> Hughes, Marilyn, (2005), *The voice of Prophets*, pp. 590–591.

<sup>235</sup> Sonnleitner, Michael W (1985). *Gandhian Nonviolence: Levels of Satyagraha*, p. 14

ideologies and religious beliefs. Gandhi's spiritualism, intuition and insightfulness are an outcome of religious, intellectual and cultural pluralism of Indian culture.

In order to light up the spirit of humanity in all of us, we need to cultivate tolerance and reverence towards others' ideologies, religions, cultures, etc. Prosperity and progress of a nation depends upon the mutual harmony among its various cultures and societies. To promote humanity and peace among people, traditions, and nations, we need to adopt the virtues of nonviolence and tolerance. Tolerance and nonviolence complement each other in the growth of humanity. To believe that only one ideology or culture should prevail over other ideologies or culture is to fall into dogmatism. Truth is one and so as god. For Gandhi, truth and God are identical to each other. Our comprehensions of truth are finite. But this does not imply that truth as absolute cannot be grasped rather it implies that we are all unique and possess different qualities and the level of spiritualism and devotion is different in all of us, hence, we must cherish the difference among all of us. According to Gandhi, the need of the era is not to have just one religion rather the need is to develop reverence and tolerance towards all ideologies and practices;

“.. .The need of the moment is 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. Any attempt to root out traditions, effects of heredity, climate and other surroundings is not only bound to fail, but is a sacrilege. The soul of religions is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms. The latter will persist to the end of time. Wise men will ignore the outward crust and see the same soul living under a variety of crusts. For Hindus to expect Islam, Christianity or Zoroastrianism to be driven out of India is as idle a dream as it would be for Musalmans to have only Islam of their imagination rule the world. But if belief in One God and the race of His Prophets in a never ending chain is sufficient for Islam, then we are all Musalmans, but we are also all Hindus and Christians. Truth is the exclusive property of no single scripture.”<sup>236</sup>

According to Gandhi, a nation does not exclusively belong to the people who are in majority, but it also belongs to even the smallest tribes, and culture who are born and bred there;

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<sup>236</sup> National Integration Sub-Committee of the National Committee for Gandhian Centenary, 1968, *Gandhi's India-Unity in Diversity*, p. 23.

“...Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.”<sup>237</sup>

It is a mistake to drag religious matters into politics for the matters of religion are spiritualistic and subjective, whereas political matters are objective hence religion should not be treated as a political tool for maximising votes. Gandhi not only preached reverence towards all religions or cultural practices, but he was equally critical of ineffaceable blots of religions that they carry with themselves. For example, in India the untouchables are regarded as inferior to other sects of Hinduism; they are given less or no respect. Their right to life with dignity has been snatched from them by the higher authorities of religion. Gandhi, calls it inhuman to treat others poorly, he also says that untouchability is a curse on Hinduism that it is carrying today;

“There is an ineffaceable blot that Hinduism today carries with it. I have declined to believe that it has been handed to us from times immemorial. I think that this miserable, wretched, enslaving spirit of "untouchableness" must have come to us when we were in the cycle of our lives, at our lowest ebb, and that evil has still stuck to us and it still remains with us. It is, to my mind, a curse that has come to us and as long as that curse remains with us, so long I think we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred land is a fit and proper punishment for this great and indelible crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his calling passes one's comprehension...”<sup>238</sup>

Though Gandhi possessed great reverence for Hindu culture yet he criticised the inhumanly practices and poor treatment of untouchables in Hinduism. Gandhi, being the humanitarian had always worked to elevate the dispossessed and downtrodden sections of society. The suffering and misery of the lower caste Hindus provoked him to take a stand for the upliftment of untouchables and he started

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid. P. 29

<sup>238</sup> Ibid, p. 30



working towards the reformation of Hindu society to provide the untouchables their share of benefits in society. The ill-treatment of untouchables in Hindu community made him a staunch critique of the rigid caste system. In his work for *Harijans* Gandhi criticizes the caste system of Indian society as well as its rigid mind-set towards untouchables. Thus, to respond to the problems of injustice and exploitation within society, he advocated the *Varna* system instead of caste system in his later philosophy. Gandhi calls the curse of untouchability as Hydra-headed monster;

“... Untouchability is a hydra-headed monster. It is therefore necessary, each time the monster lifts its head, to deal with it. To stories told in the Purānas are some of them most dangerous if we do not know their bearing on the present conditions. The Shāstras would be death-traps if we were to regulate our conduct according to every detail given in them or according to that of the characters therein described. They help us only to define and argue out fundamental principles. If some well-known character in religious books sinned against God or man, is that a warrant for our repeating the sin? It is enough for us to be told, once for all, [that] Truth is the only thing that matters in the world, that Truth is God. It is irrelevant to be told that even Yudhishtira was betrayed into an untruth. It is more relevant for us to know that when he spoke an untruth, he had to suffer for it that very moment and that his great name is no way protected him from punishment. Similarly, it is irrelevant for us to be told that Adi-Shankara avoided a chandala. It is enough for us to know that a religion that teaches us to treat all that lives as we treat ourselves cannot possibly countenance the inhuman treatment of a single creature, let alone a whole class of perfectly innocent human beings.”<sup>239</sup>

Hence, for Gandhi, there is no point in observing those practices which in any way turn down humanity. To observe any practice which includes the dehumanisation of individuals in any form must be abolished. Gandhi reasonably argues in favour of the eradication of untouchability from Indian culture, the argument that he puts forth is; “if the untouchables are the outcastes of the Aryan society, so much the worse for that society. And if the Aryans at some stage in their progress regarded a certain class of people as outcastes by way of punishment, there is no reason why that punishment should descend upon their progeny irrespective of the causes for which their ancestors were punished that there is untouchability even amongst untouchables merely demonstrates that that evil cannot be confined and that its deadening effect is all-pervading. The existence of untouchability amongst untouchables is an additional

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<sup>239</sup>National Integration Sub-Committee of the National Committee for Gandhian Centenary, 1968, *Gandhi's India-Unity in Diversity*, p. 33.

reason for cultured Hindu society to rid itself of the curse with the quickest despatch.”<sup>240</sup> Gandhi further argues that “if the untouchables are treated so because they kill animals or have to deal with flesh and blood, then every nurse and doctors should become an untouchable and so should every Musalman, Christian and so called high-class Hindus.”<sup>241</sup> Untouchability, for him, is a sin against both god and man; moreover it is a slow poison that is diminishing the vitality of Hinduism. Hence, it should be opposed unto one’s death. According to Gandhi, if the curse of untouchability is removed from Hindu culture, it would help us to achieve harmony and peace among various sub-religions of Hinduism.

Gandhi greatly emphasized upon the Hindu-Muslim unity during India’s independence. He was aware of the fact that intolerance between these two communities can lead to disastrous consequences. He strived to unite them by way of forming friendship between them. Gandhi writes;

“That unity is strength is not merely a copybook maxim but a rule of life is in no case so clearly illustrated as in the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. Divided we must fall. Any third power may easily enslave India so long as we Hindus and Musalmans are ready to cut each other's throats. Hindu-Muslim unity means not unity only between Hindus and Musalmans but between all those who believe India to be their home, no matter to what faith they belong.”<sup>242</sup>

According to Gandhi, the Hindu-Muslim unity can survive only on the foundation of friendship. There are always two sides for a dispute to arise, if one party commits an error, it is the duty of other party to remain calm. It is the basis of friendship. “But to think that to remain good provided the other party remains good- there is no law of friendship or of war. In friendship there is no room for bargaining. Friendship can exist only between brave parties and bargaining between weak parties. We are both weak and strong. Consequently, the relationship of Hindus and Muslims is both one of friendship and of bargaining.”<sup>243</sup>

Gandhi’s political and ethical methods explicate his reverence and love for humanity. His political and ethical endeavours distinguish him from those political

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid, pp. 33-34.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid. P. 33

<sup>242</sup> Ibid. P. 52

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

leaders who operate their political means by dividing people on the basis of their caste, creed and nationality. It had always been easy for political opportunists to divide people and rule. But Gandhi was different and unique in his actions; he opted to revolutionize the masses by means of creating love in their hearts for their fellow beings. Gandhi saw plurality not as a dividing principle instead he looked up to it as another way of living. For Gandhi, it is the law of love and compassion that differentiates man from animal. He always stressed upon the inherent goodness of man and tried to cultivate it through nonviolence. Gandhi advocated voluntary tolerance to achieve unity in plurality. Gandhi held that the law of tolerance is essential for every *satyāgrahi* in the process of bringing change in the heart of the adversary. For Gandhi, differences among religions arise from their complex practices but their underlying unity is the same as he held that all religions worship the same God in different forms. Gandhi once said, “it is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize 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 even purifies.”<sup>244</sup> Hence, “religion is not sectarianism, it is a belief in the ordered moral government of the universe...this religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. It harmonizes them and gives them reality.”<sup>245</sup> The above view clearly explicates Gandhi’s idea that all religions have a common god and thus there is unity in plurality.

## Section II

### Peace and Harmony

It is important to admit at the outset that Gandhi never systematically formulated his theory of peace, however, the notions such as nonviolence, peace, elevation of the dispossessed takes great prominence in his life and works. The central aim of Gandhi’s political as well as spiritual tool nonviolence is the realization of peace both within oneself and in the world. His political manoeuvres such as *Satyāgraha* and *Sarvodaya* evidently explicate his determination to establish a peaceful

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<sup>244</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1969, *The Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, (ed.), Shriman Narayan, Vol.6, P. 263.

<sup>245</sup> Bose, N. K., (ed.), 1948, *Selections from Gandhi*, P. 224.

society where there can be no room for injustice and exploitation grounded on hierarchy or inequality of wealth.

Gandhi's doctrine of *Satyāgraha* presents us his unique method of resolving conflicts and fighting against injustice. Through *Satyāgraha*, he offered a distinctive technique of handling disputes whether between the communities, or with each other or within the state by means of soul suffering and love. And his notion of *Sarvodya* explicates his ideal of a just society in terms of abolishing exploitation based on caste, creed, religion, inequality of wealth etc. Thus, his doctrines and teachings are beset by peace. But the realization of peace is not an ordinary task. For Gandhi, it requires right mind-set, determination, adherence to nonviolence which is inextricably linked with truth and spirituality. "Gandhi treated peace as an embodiment of spirituality where the former presupposes the latter."<sup>246</sup> In order to execute our inquiry into the notion of peace and harmony, let us first understand how the notion of spirituality is related to the notion of peace.

The conception of spirituality varies from people to people, culture to culture and religion to religion. Though spirituality is a varied notion, it is universal and ubiquitous which has remarkable impact on the lives of people who practise it. It is often identified or used synonymous with the term "religion" which "underscores the prevalent distinction between the two."<sup>247</sup> While religion on the one hand, is a cultural system of behaviours and practices, world views, sacred books, holy places, ethics, and societal organizations denoting an order of existence.<sup>248</sup> Spirituality, on the other hand, is not a set pattern of things, nor can it be realized by performing rituals or sermons, one cannot find it outside of himself such as in holy books or places, in fact, its realization is purely innate, though religious practices may presuppose spirituality but it may not be carried out in their exercise. One might be spiritual but not religious at the same time. Hence, both the terms should not be used interchangeably as their scope differs. People due to the western influence or their obsession with science often treat spirituality as irrational but Indian culture holds an altogether different approach towards the concept. "According to Indian tradition, science and spirituality are two sides of the same coin. Natural and supernatural are inseparable from each

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<sup>246</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 24.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion>, retrieved on 2016/6/30.

other. This is evident from our day to day life. Spirituality is guided by a belief in what may be called the transcendent aspect of Being.”<sup>249</sup> According to Gita, spirituality contains;

“fearlessness, purity, steadfastness in knowledge and concentration, charity, self-restraint, worship, study of one’s scriptures, austerity, uprightness, nonviolence, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, compassion, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness, energy, forgiveness, fortitude, absence of hatred and absence of pride.”<sup>250</sup>

We can say that Gandhi had more or less possessed all these qualities of spirituality which he had manifested in his political and ethical endeavours. Thus, nonviolence and spirituality are intrinsically related to each other for one cannot be spiritual unless he is at peace with oneself. After demonstrating peace as an embodiment of spirituality, we move to our second inquiry, i.e. how can peace be achieved. Since, violence and peace are adversative to each other, it is important to dwell upon the issue of violence, what are its causes and what is Gandhian solution to avoid it.

We live in a world full of inter-dependence, in order to regulate our lives; we in some or the other way seek help or mutual cooperation from others. But over the past 100 years, the scenario has little changed as we have become more dependent on machines and technology to regulate even the meagre activities of our lives. However, this does not make any difference to our reliance on others for the regulation of our lives. Since, the inter-dependence is a common phenomenon; the conflicts that arise from it are also unavoidable. The world is becoming more hostile and violent than ever shows that the people are not at harmony with each other. The disagreements and differences between individuals, communities, and nations are resulting into massacres. Current example of this can be sought from civil unrest in Iraq and Syria due to major massacres caused by a terrorist group named, ISIS. What the world requires today is an earnest effort from all nations to abolish the peace disturbing activities. But before setting up the task of the abolishment of violent activities, it is equally important to work on the causes of violence. According to Buddhism, the attainment of peace is vested in the abolishment of the causes of violence. “In

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<sup>249</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, “*Gandhi the Pacifist*”, p. 25.

<sup>250</sup> Bhagvad-Gitā, XVI, p. 1-3.

Buddhism the causes of violence and conflict are arrayed in to three domains; the external, the internal and the root.<sup>251</sup> According to Buddhism, inflicting harm or injury either by words, thoughts or deeds on others is the external cause of violence/conflict. “If people want to live an ultimately happy life with no harms toward themselves at all, the Buddha teaches, they should start with avoiding causing harm to others, physically and verbally at the personal level, since people are afraid of physical violence and resent harsh words; and the physical and verbal harm we inflict upon others usually leads to hate and conflicts that, in turn, would bring harm to us and cost our happiness.”<sup>252</sup> Hence we should refrain from inflicting harm to others to be at peace with oneself. As it is stated in one Buddhist scripture:

All fear death.

None are unafraid of sticks and knives.

Seeing yourself in others,

Don't kill don't harm

(Dhammapada, 18; translated by the author from Taisho 4: 210).

Bad words blaming others.

Arrogant words humiliating others.

From these behaviours

Come hatred and resentment.

... Hence conflicts arise, rendering in people malicious thoughts

(Dhammapada, 8; translated by the author from Taisho 4: 210).<sup>253</sup>

Hence, violence whether verbal or physical destroys the inner peace for it produces a sense of resentment in others and thus creates a fear for life or degradation of respect in assailant's heart which give rise to the feeling of anxiety or uneasiness. The inner cause of violence, Buddhism contends is people's inner mind operations. According to Buddhism, though infliction of physical or verbal harm on others and

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<sup>251</sup> Theresa Der-lan Yeh, 2006, “The Way to Peace: A Buddhist Perspective, p. 94.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid. P. 94-95.

(Source: [http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol11\\_1/11n1Yeh.pdf](http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol11_1/11n1Yeh.pdf), retrieved on 2016/6/30.

injustice of the society are causes of conflicts/violence, but “these behaviours and structures originate all from the state of human mind, since the violence and injustice are responses toward external stimuli produced by people’s inner mind operation.”<sup>254</sup> Thus, the causes of external conflicts lay inside our mental oppressions within each being. “For example, confronted with the threat of physical and verbal harm, it is natural for us to feel fear, dislike, resentment, anger or hate. Out of this negative caste of mind, we would again resort to a violent response, and hence a conflict arises.”<sup>255</sup> According to Buddhism, even if we are not confronted with any fear to our life then also conflicts may occur. This kind of conflict arises from two major mental attachments, i.e., attachment to subjective views and attachment to material pleasures. The attachment to one’s opinions refers to insistence on the absoluteness of one’s own views and refusing to acknowledge others’ views would lead to prejudice, intolerance, polarity and hence results in extreme kind of violence. The second cause of violence, i.e. attachment to material pleasures refers to endless longing for material pleasures which would lead in self-indulgence and greed for mundane attachments. The greed for more materialistic enjoyments and pleasures puts individuals, communities and nations into competition with each other to gain more and more followed by conflicts and wars as it is depicted in *Vibhash-Śāstra*;

For the sake of greedy desire, kings and kings are in conflict,

So are monks and monks, people and people, regions and regions, states and states

(The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, Taisho 28: 1547).<sup>256</sup>

According to Buddha, the competition for materialist pleasures further results into a lose- lose situation:

If we win, we incur resentment toward ourselves.

If we lose, our self-esteem is hurt (Dhammapada, Taisho 4: 210).<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid. P.95.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid. P.96.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

Hence, gluttony for mundane things put us into an endless competition with others followed by conflicts and wars. According to Buddhism, we can overcome such feeling of avarice only through the internal transformation and manifestation of *Karunā* in us. The last and the root cause of violence and conflict Buddhism asserts is *avidyā* or ignorance. According to Buddhism, it is due to the veil of ignorance that “we cannot see the world as it is and see ourselves as such.”<sup>258</sup> It is our ignorance of the cosmic reality that everything in the world is inter-related and interdependent. It is due to this ignorance that “we cast everything into ‘me’ and ‘mine’ and focuses only the harm done to us without analysing the whole series of events conducive to its happening.”<sup>259</sup> The Buddha discerned the causes of violence and its solution in his four noble truth and noble eight fold path respectively. According to the first noble truth, *duḥkha-satya*; suffering and discontentment are inevitable in life. Everything in this universe has a cause, suffering being a fact, must have a cause; and the cause of suffering Buddha describes is our desire or craving for material pleasures (*duḥkha-samudya satya*). The third and four noble truths offer us the path of cessation of sufferings. According to the third noble truth, *duḥkha-nirodha satya*; the cessation of sufferings our possible by removing the cause of suffering, i.e. desire or inclination towards mundane relations and possessions. This led us to the fourth noble truth, i.e. *duḥkha-nirodh-gāminī pratipat*: which describes the cessation of suffering by manifesting eight noble paths in us.

Hence, Buddhism not only provides us with the solutions to our problems but also guides us to hunt them within ourselves. Like Buddhism, Jainism also offers us with the solution to the problem of violence by preaching nonviolence and the life of sanctity and right temperament. *Ahiṃsa* is the cardinal virtue on which the edifice of Jainism stands. Jainism holds that violence cannot be an answer to violence. “Lord *Mahāvira*, the 24<sup>th</sup> Jain *Thirthankāra* has emphatically declared in *Acharanga Sutra* that one weapon is stronger than and superior to the other, but the path of *Ahimsa* or peace remains unsurpassed. Real peace can only be established by creating good-will in an individual soul towards other fellow beings on the basis of equality and sanctity of life.”<sup>260</sup> According to Jainism, when one begins to live a life of sanctity, and

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid. P.97.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Jain, Prithviraj, “Jainism and World Peace,  
<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralsm/affiliates/jainism/article/peace.htm> retrieved on 2016/07/1.



righteousness, our perception towards others gets changed and we gradually start caring for others life and happiness. Jaina scriptures say that blood-stained cloth cannot be washed off with blood, we need water for that. ‘To achieve world peace, we have to stop the race of armaments and have unbiased faith *Samyag Darśna* in the effective force of Ahimsa.’<sup>261</sup> Hence, according to Jainism, *Ahimsa* is the solution to violence.

Gandhian notion of nonviolence is the outcome of the notions of *karunā* and *Ahimsa* of Buddhism and Jainism respectively. Gandhian proposed the cultivation of nonviolence and tolerance and love to win over violence. For Gandhi nonviolence is;

“A force mightier than the force of arms however powerful... The armaments give to defend rights is nothing compared to the power that nonviolence gives to do the same thing and that too with better show of reason.”<sup>262</sup>

Gandhi offered nonviolence and positive toleration as solutions to violence. But in order to demonstrate how nonviolence can make us achieve peace in conflicting situations, we need to look back to his two revolutionary political theories, i.e. *Satyāgraha* and *Sarvodya*. Gandhi offered *Satyāgraha* or soul-suffering to win the opponent by inflicting suffering upon oneself. In *Satyāgraha*, the opponent is not perceived as an adversary rather he is looked upon with love and pity. And the aim of *Satyāgraha* is to bring change of heart in the opponent. Gandhi’s ideology behind resorting to *Satyāgraha* is the ultimate unity of man. Gandhi’s essential belief that all men are one and love is the law of humanity inspired him to adhere to nonviolence even in situations of conflicts and war. Gandhi’s another unique model *Sarvodya* explicates his concern for humanity. The upliftment of the dispossessed and establishment of equality with the aim of achieving peace and harmony in society was at the beset of Gandhi’s political manoeuvres. For Gandhi to bring peace and harmony in the world, one needs to rediscover the right mind and the eternal moral values without which no social order can function. “Gandhi worked for the rediscovery of the right mind which would reach out to unity, love, peace, emphasizing that forever there are, and will be certain eternal values, i.e. ethical, spiritual, universal which human beings have needed everywhere which they acquired in the past and without

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<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Gandhi, M. K., Harijan, 14<sup>th</sup> October 1939, p. 234.

which no 'human society' can live"<sup>263</sup> Hence, the cultivation of moral and ethical values in one's life is quite important in Gandhian ideal of peace.

To quote Bharat Kumarappa in this context;

"While pacifism hopes to get rid of war chiefly by refusing to fight and by carrying on a propaganda against war, Gandhi goes much deeper and sees that war cannot be avoided as long as the seeds of it remains in man's breast and grow and develop in his social, political and economic life. Gandhi's cure is, therefore vary radical and far reaching. It demands nothing less than rooting out violence from oneself and from one's environment."<sup>264</sup>

"The right mind Gandhi envisioned is not the mind of intolerance, accusation and division. Rather it is a mind which strives for peace, unity, that understands others and possess infinite love working for harmony, realization of peace, and not just a recess between war and violence.<sup>265</sup> No theory can achieve us peace unless we set our spirits to work in accordance with the realization of it by ruling out divisions based on hierarchy and positively working for mutual harmony. According to Gandhi, in order to achieve peace in society one first needs to realize it within oneself. It is through the inner realization of peace that we can strive to find and establish it outside. And the path to realize it is spiritual and ethical. One needs to adhere to spiritual and ethical virtues to establish peace within and outside of him. As Morton Deutsch conceived;

"For Gandhi there could be no victory or defeat; there could only be a pursuit of certain values"<sup>266</sup>

For Gandhi, means and ends are same and we must not treat others merely as a means to some goals but as an end in itself. For him, "nonviolence is the means and its ultimate end is truth. Gandhi's conception of nonviolence is neither an emotional religiosity, though it is the outcome of the influence of various religions on him, nor the disavowal of the existence of evil, rather its aim is to bring to light the evil, wrongdoing, injustice and exploitations through which one suffers."<sup>267</sup> For Gandhi, adhering to nonviolence is not an ordinary task, it requires the courage to suffer for the betterment of others, it requires being abide by law of love towards the opponent,

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<sup>263</sup> Bose, Anima, 1981, "A Gandhian Perspective on Peace", p. 159-160.

<sup>264</sup> Kumarrappa, B., 1949, 'Editors Note', in M. K. Gandhi: *For Pacifist*, Ahmedabad.

<sup>265</sup> Bose, Anima, 1981, "A Gandhian Perspective on Peace", p. 160.

<sup>266</sup> Horowitz, I. L., 1963, *Games, Strategies and Peace*, pp. 46-49.

<sup>267</sup> Bose, Anima, 1981, "A Gandhian Perspective on Peace, p. 161.

it strives for the transformation of the opponent by inflicting soul suffering upon oneself, it requires to develop the art of forgiveness to discharge the opponent from his past deeds. According to Gandhi, no one is devoid of sin in this world; hence, we must give equal chance of transformation to all. As Gandhi stated;

“Whenever I see an erring man, I say to myself that I have also erred.”<sup>268</sup>

Hence, Gandhi’s doctrine *Satyāgraha* aims at reforming the opponent by moving him with love and soul-suffering. The motive of *satyāgraha* is not just winning over the tyrant but it also intends to bring change in the heart of the oppressor. Like *Satyāgraha*, Gandhi’s notion of Sarvodya also aims at bringing peace and harmony in the world by ruling out the causes of discrimination. Gandhi’s notion Sarvodya or welfare of all situates the sanctity of human life as its goal and intends to achieve economic equality for all sections of the society by means of trusteeship. With regard to trusteeship, he says;

“I adhere to my doctrine of trusteeship in spite of the ridicule that has been poured upon it. It is true that it is difficult to reach. So is nonviolence difficult to attain.”<sup>269</sup>

Realisation of *Sarvodya* and *Satyāgraha* are corollary in achieving peace and harmony in the society. But it is often contended that Gandhian model of peace cannot work in the present states of affairs in the world. But R. S. Yadav, in his paper entitled; “International Peace and Gandhian World Order” (2005) contends that albeit of the accusations laid against the limitations of Gandhian model of peace, it is equally operative in today’s time as it was in Gandhi’s time. He through his paper offers a deep analysis of Gandhian model of peace in light of modern state of affairs. R. S. Yadav describes six operative models of Gandhian doctrine of world peace. They are as follows:

1.) **Transformation of the individual;** Gandhi held that all individuals are good by nature. Since, individual and society are inter-dependent “the goodness in man reflects must in the society. Due to his good nature he is responsive of love and affection of his fellow beings.<sup>270</sup> Love being the law of humanity is the fundamental virtue of human kind. But inner goodness and love alone cannot

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<sup>268</sup> Gandhi, M. K., *Young India*, June 7 1920.

<sup>269</sup> Bose, N. K., 1957, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 66.

<sup>270</sup> Yadav, R. S., 2005, “International Peace and Gandhian World Order”, p. 447.

bring peace in society, to generate peace in the world, one need to cultivate the virtue of truth along with nonviolence in his nature. The cultivation of love and nonviolence is possible only through right means such as, sanctity, brotherhood, charity, compassion, tolerance, patience, temperance, spirituality etc. Gandhi's doctrine of nonviolence approaches the individual for voluntary suffering in order to bring change in the heart of the opponent. "Thus, Gandhi believed in the basic formations of man for building up world peace. His man was bound by the truth rather than by external conditions imposed on him either by the state or by the environment."<sup>271</sup>

2.) **De-centralized Polity:** "Politically Gandhi considered the state as a soul less entity which perpetuates violence. Through his experience, he visualized the coercive and tyrannical power of the state. Hence, he was in favour of a state which serves the cause of humankind in this context society could play a very vital role."<sup>272</sup> Gandhi believed that too much interference of state in peoples' life would destroy their privacy. He strived for a responsible welfare system where man can work with mutual harmony, cooperation and self-sacrifice for the betterment of others. "Later he extended the similar qualities to the global communities of nations. He felt that centralized, industrial, unresponsive, coercive and imperialized states are not conducive to the development of a cooperative and amicable world order."<sup>273</sup>

3.) **Self-Sufficient Economy:** "Like the political aspects, transformation of economic construction is equally important. Gandhian economy model was based on the decentralization of resources capital through small scale industries and self-sufficiency of the village economy."<sup>274</sup> "Gandhi clarifies that self-sufficiency does not mean narrowness. To be self-sufficient is not to be altogether self-contained. As he said, in no circumstances we would be able to produce what we need. So though our aim is complete self-sufficiency, we shall have to get from outside what we cannot produce in the village; we shall have to produce more of what we

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid. P.447.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid. P. 448

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

can in order to thereby obtain in exchange what we are unable to produce.”<sup>275</sup> “He was against the industrialized model of state and use of big machines. Because he favoured labour intensive development as opposed to the capital intensive model of development which according to him created unemployment.”<sup>276</sup> According to Gandhi, the industrialized model of development causes exploitation and unemployment. In order to lessen the difference between capitalist class and labour class, he offered the model of trusteeship.

4.) **Non-exploitative International Order:** According to R. S. Yadav, “contemporary problem of the establishment of new international economic order (NIEO) by replacing the Brettonwood regimes (IBRD, IMF, and WHO) through the smooth conduct of North-South dialogue was broadly taken care off in the Gandhian idea of trusteeship.”<sup>277</sup> If the Gandhian idea of trusteeship is to be applied at international level, it refers to developing a sense of responsibility among the develop nations to mutually come forward to elevate the less developed and poor nations. And it also “refers to the idea of non-exploitative use of resource, if the develop nations spend according to their needs; the demand of large number of poor third world would be met.”<sup>278</sup> Due to the exploitation of resources and industrialisation, the problem of environmental degradation is surfacing. To put an end to exploitation of resources, one need to adhere to Gandhi’s idea that spent according to your needs and not according to greed.

He summed up the main attributes of Gandhian model of peace in the following lines;

1. The state model that Gandhi presented in his theory of *Sarvodya*, if applied universally would mean that each nation should be self-sufficient in meeting up the demands of their people and hence no one state would be under domination of another state and “there would be no place for imperialism, exploitation, injustice, and disparity among those nations.”<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid. P. 449

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid. P. 450

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid. P. 451

2. “All members of the international system would be given equal status in the international organizations even the smallest state should feel equal to the tallest state.”<sup>280</sup>
3. “The membership of the world federation would be on voluntary basis and members would be ready to serve the cause of humanity at large.”<sup>281</sup>
4. Nonviolence should be the basis of such an organization. All nations should voluntary work with the deep conviction of establishing peace in the world.
5. “The Gandhian model does not consider a mere reform in the existing international bodies. Rather demands for a fundamental departure on the basis of its own value system because Gandhi was critical of both the League of Nations and United Nation system on various counts.”<sup>282</sup>

Moral precepts of Dharma and nonviolence should be the guiding principle for setting down conflicts even if it involves amicable means, like negotiation, mediation and arbitration etc.<sup>283</sup>

5.) **New Nationalism:** Gandhi was sometimes misperceived regarding his idea about Nationalism, as one Noble Prize Committee did not awarded peace prize to him on this pretext in 1937.<sup>284</sup> “But if examined properly, it could be discerned that his conception of Nationalism was steeped in a primordial Internationalism.”<sup>285</sup> Gandhian nationalism was more in terms of cultural traits rather than consolidation of state system. He was not in favour of state and nation-building of plural societies as he considered state as a soulless body against the interest of individuals. Moreover, “consolidation of state power was against his idea of grass root democracy, i.e. establishment of state republics.”<sup>286</sup>

6. **Strategies for Change:** Gandhian strategies are unique and enrooted in his principles of nonviolence and truth. His techniques are applicable both to individuals and to society and could be extended to achieve peace both at the

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<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Oyvind, Tonnesson, “The Missing Laureate”, Frontline 3<sup>rd</sup> March 200.

Also see, The Hindu, 10 November 2002.

<sup>285</sup> For details see, Anandkat, Nalin, 2000, *International Political Thoughts of Gandhi, Nehru, and Lohia*, pp. 53-90

<sup>286</sup> Yadav, R. S., 2005, “International Peace and Gandhian World Order”, p. 452.

domestic and international level. His main strategies of transformation are as follows;

- a.) “His first and foremost political weapon *satyāgraha* which generally referred to as ‘holding onto truth’ is based on basic postulates of truth, nonviolence, supremacy of moral law, faith in God and brotherhood. This can be made explicit in the form of persuasion and negotiations, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, Fasting etc. But Gandhi’s Satyagraha demands higher discipline on the part of the *satyāgrahi*.”<sup>287</sup>
- b.) Gandhi believed in nonviolence to achieve the goal of the world order. “He was opposed to any kind of imperialism and exploitation of nations. Similarly, he felt that till the great powers of the world renounce their imperialistic aims, peace is impossible. It could be realized only if great nations stop resorting to mutual competition and adding to their worldly possession which kill the soul.”<sup>288</sup>
- c.) “Besides nonviolence, there is a need among the states to renounce war as a national policy and resort to disarmament. If disarmament unnaturally adopted by one nation, there would be no fear of destruction and it would be an eye opener for others. This would lead to the true emergence of international body where each nation could participate on equal terms without fear.”<sup>289</sup>
- d.) “Gandhian strategies were based on the basic assumption of the transformation of the individual since Gandhian approach believes in the innate goodness of man and assumes that an aggressor is also a fellow human being who is not without heart. So he could be converted in a good human being by the examples of sacrifice.”<sup>290</sup>

“Gandhi was realistic in his approach to industrialization. His vehement attack on industrialization is not merely an outburst against the modern western civilization. However, he admitted that if industrialization is on the right track and direction then it would be treated as the fountainhead and prosperity of all.”<sup>291</sup> Gandhi was right in asserting the evil of industrialization. Gandhi opposed machinery because he thought that over usage of machinery would give rise exploitation and unemployment. Gandhi

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<sup>287</sup> Ibid. P. 453

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Gandhi, M. K., 1949, *For Pacifist*, p. 68.

See also Harijan 11 February 1939.

<sup>290</sup>Yadav, R. S., 2005, “International Peace and Gandhian World Order”, p. 454.

<sup>291</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 70.

through his theory of *Sarvodya* proposed a nonviolent model of development. He also strived to eradicate inequality by introducing the notion of trusteeship. Gandhian model of peace requires right courage and continuous effort from nations towards the attainment of peace.

Today, the world needs to work on the causes of violence and try to rule it out by establishing great policies. Though, no one can legitimately say what the policies should be, but one thing we can do is bring the change within ourselves that we want to see in the society as change begins with oneself. Gandhi, the great leader was a man action for he never preached anything that cannot be shown in action. He strived to unite the different cultures of India by emphasizing on the prevalent unity among them. Gandhi was no sentimentally religious person rather he made a rational use of religion by using it as a unifying principle to lead the struggle for the liberation of India from the clutches of British Government. Gandhi was both a spiritual and rational. He not only endorsed the virtues such as nonviolence, compassion, love etc. but made an excellent use of them by converting them into his doctrines of *Satyāgraha* and *Sarvodya*. To maintain communal peace and unity Gandhi advocated tolerance and love for others and their cultures and religions. He did not want to see India into pieces; rather his aim was to create a harmonious, evil free society where man can work in mutual harmony with others. His belief in the essential unity of man helped him to develop an equal mindedness towards others. He saw unity in plurality and also tried to achieve it through preaching the virtue of nonviolence. Though the virtues such as nonviolence, love, compassion etc. were presented to us in our religious scriptures centuries before Gandhi, but it was Gandhi who not only rationalize the religiosity embedded in our culture but also used it to unite us. Perhaps, it is because of his unique methods and right motives that he has been titled as “The Father of Nation”. His unique ideas and strong adherence to nonviolence for the upliftment of humanity made him an historical figure. His contribution in India’s independence is remarkable and memorable. His achievements can be measured from the fact that his ideals and thoughts had inspired some iconic personalities to achieve their goals and still inspiring the billions around the globe

Hence, the above discussion shows that Gandhian principle of unity is still relative in modern times. But it is up to the nations what ideology they want to follow towards the development and well-being of their peoples. Though Gandhi’s doctrine



of *satyāgraha* is his unique contribution in the domain of politics yet the questions regarding its legitimacy in contemporary world is unavoidable. The answer to this question is that Gandhian Model of *satyāgraha* too has its limitations. “A case study provided by Juergensmeyer reveals this fact. The tragic resistance of Jews living in the Warsaw Ghetto against the Nazi regime is a testimony to this fact. Gandhi’s letters to the treating leaders advising them to challenge the Nazi’s openly resulted in a disaster. They were shot dead. The view that we have to stay “open to communication and self-criticism” and “regard your opponent as a potential ally” does not work with an opponent with cold mind.”<sup>292</sup>

But even if the principles of Gandhi have limitations, it doesn’t lessen their worth. They are worthy in themselves. It depends on the demand of situation whether it admits the use of such principles or not. If the situation is war like and the exploitation and terror are done on large scale then one may opt for the use of armaments. But if a situation can be handled without causing harm to the other then one should adhere to nonviolent means. Adherence to nonviolence does not make one less courageous or fearful rather it is the most courageous and fearless activity to pursue. Today when world is facing hostility, violence and terrorism, it is important for us to work out on the principle of nonviolence and deeply study the matters that gives rise to violence. Spreading violence to conquer violence is in no way going to help us to establish a peaceful society instead it is pulling us towards the dead end.

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<sup>292</sup> Srinivas, K., 2015, *Gandhi the Pacifist*, p. 45.

## Conclusion

In this study, I have tried to show that Gandhi's anti-essentialistic and pluralistic perspective is an outcome of the pluralism of Indian culture. Pluralism has been a part of India since time immemorial. Indian civilization is a combination of different civilizations, living and working together. The Indian civilization had come in contact with the Kushan, the Sakas, the Tibeto-Burman, Arabs, Ghurs and Persian civilizations through trade and commerce. These civilizations brought their respective cultures and behaviour patterns with them which later got merged with Indian tradition.

In my work, I have also tried to demonstrate that *anekāntvāda* of Jainism helped Gandhi to know the many sidedness of reality. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* is the theory of relativity of reality. *Anekāntvāda* of Jainism helps us to discover the multifacetedness of reality. The notions of self and the other are manifested in this doctrine in terms of tolerance and veneration towards others and their standpoints. It is primary to cultivate respect and tolerance towards each other in order to establish unity between them. Gandhi admitted that the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* taught him to judge persons by their own standpoint. The doctrine saves us from falling into dogmatism. The theory held that truth is one and due to our different perceptions of it, it seems different to all of us. The *R̥g Vedic* exhortation; *Ekam sat viprāḥ bahuda vadanti*, and the theory of *anekāntvāda* asserts the same thing that reality is one and it seems different to different persons. According to Gandhi, the doctrine of *anekāntvāda* has taught him to accept and appreciate plurality of viewpoints. The doctrine taught him to cherish the plurality among diverse standpoint.

Hence, the pluralism of Indian culture helped Gandhi to hold an equal eye towards others religions, traditions and cultures. The doctrine of *anekāntvāda* provided Gandhi with the view that truth has many aspects and our comprehensions of truth are finite. The pluralism embedded in Indian culture helped Gandhi to hold the view that there is unity in diversity. Gandhi holds that self and other are not different in a way that through the realization of one we can realize the other as well.

After demonstrating the role of Indian pluralism in shaping up Gandhi's anti-essentialistic perspective towards others, I have moved to demonstrate the role of Gandhi's political weapon Satyagraha as a means to combat violence in the form of exploitation, inequality and injustice in the society. Gandhi's doctrine of satyāgraha is a unique weapon of winning over the oppressor by inflicting soul suffering upon oneself. For Gandhi, *satyāgraha* is not only a political but also a moral tool for it helps us in shaping our moral character. Gandhi's *satyāgraha* is a fight against the wrong and not the wrong doer. He held that man is essentially good by nature and right always prevails over the wrong.

Gandhi's love and compassion towards all beings is a blessing of Buddhism to him. The notion of compassion in Buddhism taught Gandhi that the realization of the truth is possible only through extending equal love and compassion to all beings. Compassion promotes harmony between self and the other, whereas, violence gives rise to the feelings of resentment, anguish and hatred towards others. According to Buddhism, by seeking triumph over our violent instincts we can establish peace within us. Hence, violence and peace are adversative to each other because we cannot attain peace unless we overcome our violent deeds. According to Buddhism, by the cultivation of noble eightfold path, i.e. right mindfulness, right understanding, right thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort and concentration we can get rid of all the sufferings. Buddhism proposes right thought to eliminate the difference between self and the other because by developing the right thought we can hold a right attitude towards others. Buddhism proposes the cultivation of four virtues, i.e., compassion, love, sympathetic joy and equanimity to realize the unity between self and the other. By the cultivation of the feeling of love in us, we wish for the well-being and the happiness of others. Equanimity helps us to develop the feeling of equality towards all beings.

After developing the notion of compassion as a means to realize the other, I have tried to show that how the enlightenment era of 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe helped Gandhi to develop his concepts of freedom, liberty, swaraj, Sarvodaya, autonomy of self and the dignity of other and self also. It is during this era that the concepts of autonomy, dignity garnered importance. The enlightenment philosopher, John Locke through his letter concerning tolerance first raised the issue of tolerance regarding various Christian denominations. Locke argued for the separation of civil government from

religious authorities, i.e., churches. He argued against the interference of religious authorities in matter of people's faith. According to Locke, the matters of religious faith are purely subjective and are related to the beliefs of people. He rejected the conventional idea that man is naturally subject to a sovereign and emphasized that man is free by nature and is not under any dominion to serve others. Locke further argued for the basic rights of man in terms of his right to property, right to life and right to liberty. According to him, right to life, liberty and property defines and strengthens the place of a man in a society. According to him, every individual has a right to a dignified life served by his autonomy to pursue his interest. Hence, Locke revolutionized the orthodox system of thought in which there was no place for the autonomy and dignity of man.

Followed up by Locke, Kant also gave the highest importance to moral autonomy of man. Kant in his works entitled, *Critique of pure reason*, *Critique of practical reason* and *Critique of Judgement*, reflected on the concept of moral autonomy of man. Autonomy generally refers to conferring law to oneself. In this regard he put forward three maxims of his notion of categorical imperative which are universal in nature.

Gandhi through his notions of Sarvodya and satyāgraha attempted to elevate the exploited and the dispossessed sections of the society. Gandhi through his notion of Sarvodya attempted to achieve equality and peace in the society. Gandhi being a votary of nonviolence presented a quite distinct yet powerful method to address the autonomy and dignity of man. Though Kant and Gandhi both argued for Individual's autonomy in setting up rule for themselves yet they differ in their approaches, Kant, on the one hand, emphasized on the free play of reason to provide the act of duty for the individual, Gandhi, on the other hand, stressed upon the innate goodness of man. Gandhi emphasized more on the moral character of man, while Kant gave the utmost preference to reason over everything. We have explored in this chapter, the moral and political philosophy of *Satyāgraha*, *Swaraj* and *Sarvodya* as means to realize the self and the other.

In the chapter third of the dissertation, I have tried to show that how Gandhi tried to synthesize different cultures of India by preaching them the virtue of tolerance. For establishing unity in plurality, Gandhi advocated inter-religious tolerance among various religions in India. Gandhi laid more emphasis on the Hindu Muslim unity

because he considered that the unity between Hindu and Muslim community is essential for the independence of India from the yoke of British imperialism. Gandhi also strived to elevate the untouchables of Hindu community by giving them status of Harijans, means, people of God. He criticised the rigid caste system of Indian culture and its mentality towards the untouchables. For Gandhi, untouchability is a curse on Hinduism that it is carrying. To end the discrimination against the untouchables, Gandhi advocated the Varna system over the caste system. Next I have dwelled upon Gandhian principle of unity and its relevance in modern times. I have showed that Gandhi's notion of self-sufficient economy can help us in eliminating poverty from the less developed nations of the world by making them self-sufficient in meeting up the demands of their people. Similarly, Gandhian notion of trusteeship can help us in developing a sense of responsibility among the developed countries for the non-exploitative use of resources so that the demand of poor and undeveloped nations would be met. The Gandhian notion of *Sarvodaya* paves the way for equality among all nations of the world by elevating the poor and less developed nations by providing them enough resources to stabilize their economy.

Hence, the elevation of the downtrodden is the fundamental aim of Gandhi's notions of *Sarvodaya* and trusteeship. Gandhi throughout his life strived to establish unity between self and the other by bringing the other at par with the self. Gandhi advocated the virtues of nonviolence, tolerance, compassion and peace in order to establish unity in diversity. Gandhi's veneration for the other has been quite explicitly manifested in his ethical and political endeavours. Thus, by developing an insight into Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence, I conclude that Gandhi's notions of tolerance, love, compassion plays a vital role in establishing unity between self and the other.

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