

**IMPACT OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND
MAHATMA GANDHI TO THE CULTURAL
AND POLITICAL SCENARIO OF PRE AND
POST INDEPENDENT INDIA**

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CERTIFICATE

I, Dr. A. C. Rajeswari Kunjamma, do hereby certify that this thesis is a report of bonafide research carried out by Smt. S. Remadevi, under my supervision and guidance.

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DECLARATION

I, S. Remadevi, do hereby declare that the work reported in this thesis is original and carried out by me in the Department of Philosophy, University of Calicut. I further declare that this thesis or any part there in has not been previously submitted for any degree in this or any other University.

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preface

Even from my College days I was fascinated by the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and the historical studies about national movement led by Mahatma Gandhi . The views of this greatmen played an important role in rousing the patriotism with in me. These two greatmen made way for the life -current of the nation. When we heard the word"take away the blocks that bar the way to the progress of the mighty river , cleanses its path , clear the channel , and out it will rush by its own natural impulses the nation will go on careering and progressing " Yes! It is true that when one goes through the lines of these greatmen one cannot touch it without receiving a thrill through out the body.

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CONTENTS

	Page No.
CHAPTER - I	
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER II	
THE TEACHING OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA	30
CHAPTER III	
THE TEACHING OF MAHATMA GANDHI	64
CHAPTER IV	
IMPACT OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON THE PRE AND POST INDEPENDENT INDIA	101
CHAPTER V	
IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI ON THE PRE AND POST INDEPENDENT INDIA	130
CHAPTER VI	
CONCLUSION	163
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

INTRODUCTION

S. Remadevi “Impact of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi to the cultural and political scenario of pre and post independent India ” Thesis.
Department of Philosophy , Sree Kerala Varma College Thrissur, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - I

“They may be found side by side in service that is devoted to public well - being ; and both of them - though with different tactics - follow the great design, the national unity of the whole of India.”

(Romain Rolland)

INTRODUCTION

India is a country which has an unbroken tradition over a long period, starting from the vedic period. All other civilizations which existed over the globe at different periods of time, became extinct and new ones have replaced them. We, the Indians, are the inheritors of a long and rich tradition, though it had its periods of ups and downs during the centuries. Other civilizations like the Roman, Egyptian, Persian, Chinese and Mesopotamian may not be able to claim such a continuity. This is a unique feature of our tradition.

People from all other parts of the globe looked upon India for special knowledge and wisdom. Nalanda, Taxila were the centres of knowledge and people from other parts of the world came down to India for imbibing the culture and knowledge. We had established our superiority over other branches of knowledge also viz., Astronomy, Mathematics, Fine Arts, Craftsmanship and Architecture. The excavations at Mohanjedaro and Harappa revealed that there existed a civilization which was par –excellence.

India is the only country which conducted an enquiry into the mysteries of the universe and the secret behind the

creation. The Rishis in our country stretched their imagination to surpass the concept of time and the mysteries of the universe unfolded before them. They revealed these secrets for the welfare of the humanity. Although they remained in isolation from the

rest of the world, they gave guidance and leadership for a healthy living. The knowledge and the wisdom which was revealed to them were classified and systematically organised and evolved into a system to pass on to the generations that followed. The vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and Ithihasas present a rich legacy before us.

Thus we find that the wisdom contained in our traditional scriptures are revelations of the Rishis passed on to the following generations so that they can also live a life of fulfilment. As the times changed, the interpretations of the basic truths contained in the sacred texts have to be adapted to the changing situations. Their Philosophy needs an intelligent re-interpretation in the context of the new times and seers need to guide the common man on how to apply effectively the ancient concepts in his present life.

Swami Vivakananada was the religious teacher of India. He used the principles of Vedanda to strengthen the life-

blood of India. He charged into the Indian youth, a new vigour and enthusiasm.

Vivekananda's **New Vedantic Movement** played a vital role in the national integration of this country and through that the freedom movement which shook the whole country. It is the well known vedanta Philosophy re-interpreted and enlarged to become the National Philosophy of Bharatha. That national Philosophy has to go beyond the narrow sects and sub-sects that have arisen during the century. His point was that the Vedanta should be the common spiritual property of all – the priest and the worshipper, the rich and the poor, the high caste and the low caste, the Pandit and the layman. Thus he stood for a **Universal Vedanta Philosophy** which is applicable to all for a Vedantic democracy.

Another aspect of his teaching was its **Universality**. He was against all types of privileges and exclusiveness. This meant that this must be our country's national Philosophy and it must touch (become operative in) all the fields of man's activity. That is there is nothing like an **exclusive** Spiritual plane as against a worldly plane. This division which has been persisting for centuries, is illogical and actually opposed to real spiritual progress. **Life must include Spiritual and worldly values**

The Key-note of Vivekananda's philosophy was his love for fellow being. He tried to experience the Unity of his soul with that of the other human souls – to worship God through the service of the mankind. His heart weeped for the poor suffering masses of India. This made him to think about a social reformation .

Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Indian Nation was the Leader of the National Movement for the freedom of India. He was a Politician but Politicis was not a craze for him. His political theory was based on two foundations known as Truth and Non – Violence. He found Truth as the end and the non – violence as the means to attain the end. Bearing this in mind he coined the word Satyagraha truth force for his non-violent struggle against the British.

The main source of Gandhiji's political strength was the common man. "Social" was his outlook. He was a mass agitator. He wanted political freedom through social welfare. He believed that an active vital society could repair all the defects and evilness of social life.

As Gandhiji was unable to separate life into water tight compartments such as political, social, economic etc., His

theory was an **integral** one. His economic and social ideal was the **Sarvodaya** - the goodness of all.

The unique feature of Gandhian thought is the simplicity. His ideas are simple and highly practical. He was the model before common man. That is why the masses of India approved his leadership.

Thus we can see that Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi are two shining stars in the sky of India. Both of them have re-interpreted the age-old principles into practicality.

1.2 Analysis of Previous Studies

Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi are the great souls who could revolutionise the thinking of the people of their time. Many studies were done about these two great personalities. These studies bring out the different features of their personality and their philosophies. These studies help the readers and investigators to have a wide and clear knowledge about these two personalities and their teachings.

There are a number of biographical studies about Swami Vivekananda. The Life of Swami Vivekananda¹.by his Eastern and Western Disciples, bring out the important events of his life and the central aspects of his philosophy. **Vivekananda** :

- ***A Biography***² by Swami Nikilananda also indicates the same thing. Another biographical study is made by Swami Sidhinanthananda in his work ***Srimad Vivekananda Swamikal***³ (Malayalam).

Romain Rolland, in his work ***The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel***⁴ gives a life study of Swami Vivekananda and analyses the universality of the teachings of the Swami. Swami Jyothirmayananda, in his work ***Vivekananda – His Gospel of Man – making and a chronicle of his life and times***⁵, analyses the philosophy and mission of Swami Vivekananda..

Sister Nivedita in her work, ***Master as I saw him***⁶, describes her own experiences with Swamiji.

V.K. Arora evaluates Swamiji's social as well as political views in his work ***Social and Political Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda***⁷. In this work he studies about the relevance and applicability of the theory of Swami Vivekananda and finds out that the Swami revealed the high practicability of the Vedantic ideals.

Amiya Kumar Mazoomdar in his work ***Understanding Vivekananda***⁸ describes the importance of the Message of

Swamiji to Indians, at that time. In his book entitled **Swami Vivekananda and the Indian Renaissance**⁹. Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan depicts Swami Vivekananda as the rejuvenator of Modern India and evaluates that the teachings of Vivekananda

had inspired the youth of India.

Swami Tapasyananda, in his work, **Swami Vivekananda-His Life and Legacy**¹⁰ presents an analysis of the validity of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

Ekanath Ranade (Comp) in the book, **Swami vivekananda's Rousing call to Hindu Nation**¹¹, clearly shows the vision of Swami Vivekananda.

R. Ramakrishnan, in his book **Swami Vivekananda-Awakener of modern India**¹² - sees Vivekananda as the rejuvenator of India.

Swami Jitatmananda finds Swami Vivekananda as the path finder, in his book entitled **Swami Vivekananda - prophet and path finder**¹³.

B.R. Nanda, in his book **Mahatma Gandhi a Biography**¹⁴ gives a biographical sketch of Mahatma Gandhi.

Louis Fischer in his book ***This Life of Mahatma Gandhi***¹⁵ gives details of the life history of Mahatma Gandhi. All the important aspects of his life and his emergence as the leader of India are well explained in this book.

D.G. Tendulkar, in his book ***Mahatma- The Life of Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi***¹⁶ narrates all the important events in Gandhiji's life.

Mahatma Gandhi¹⁷ edited by S. Radhakrishnan contains the views of a number of intellectuals about the life and Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.

Nirmal Kumar Bose collects all the important teachings and sayings of Mahatma Gandhi in his work ***Selections from Gandhi***¹⁸ Another work of the same author entitled ***Gandhism and Modern India***¹⁹, describes the ideals of Gandhism and their applicability in Modern India.

U.S. Mohan Rao in his work, the ***Message of Mahatma Gandhi***²⁰ gives a clear picture of Gandhiji's message to the Indian people.

J.D Sethi in his work ***Gandhi Today***²¹ studies in depth about the principles of Gandhism and their validity in the present day Indian life.

The essence of Gandhian teaching is extracted in the work, the **Core of Gandhi's Philosophy**²² by Unto Tahtinen.

S. Narayanan analyses the vitality of the principles of Gandhism in his work **Mahatma Gandhi the Atomic Man**²³.

Gener Sharp tries to explain the political strategy of the Mahatma in his work **Gandhi as a Political strategist**²⁴.

Verinder Grover investigates the importance of Gandhi in Indian politics in his work **Gandhi and Politics in India**²⁵.

In the work **The Mind of Mahatma**²⁶ edited by R.K. Prabha and U.R. Rao, detailed study of the policies of Mahatma Gandhi is also done.

S.R. Bakshi describes the concept of society and the effect of social theories of Gandhi in his work **Gandhi and his social thought**²⁷. Another work of his is **Gandhi and Mass Movement**²⁸. This book goes into the ability of Gandhian teaching to stir the masses and thereby its capacity to lead the masses in the correct direction.

Kumud Sinha in her Thesis, **Education - Comparative study of Gandhi and Freire**²⁹ gives an elaborate

study of the educational principles and the new system of education which was suggested by Gandhi.

Viswanathan Thandan in his book ***The social and Political Philosophy of Sarvodaya after Gandhi***³⁰, studies the social as well as economic principles of Gandhian theory after Gandhi.

Ramjee Singh evaluates the relevance of the principles of Gandhism in his book entitled ***The Relevance of Gandhian Thought***³¹.

Besides these there are a large number of studies on Gandhiji's economic ideals, ethics, education etc., revealing his contribution in the respective fields. The teaching of these two twentieth century heroes who were influential in the fields in which they tried to reform our mother land are taken up for detailed study in this Thesis.

1.3 Life of Swami Vivekananda

Narendranath Dutta was born in 1863 in a Dutta family of Calcutta, as the son of Viswanath Dutta and Bhuvanewari Devi. The members of his family were rich and were known for their free thinking and scholarship. Narendra's grand father, Durgacharan Dutta a gifted man, well-versed in

Persian and Sanskrit, had-a strong inclination towards monastic life and he left home at the age of twenty five to become a Sanyasin. Viswanath Dutta, the father of Narendra, was the Attorney-at-law in Calcutta High Court and was well cultured and generous. Bhuvaneswari, the mother of Narendra was a pious woman, who played an important role in shaping the personality and character of Narendra. It was his mother who advised him to hold strictly to the Truth, irrespective of the consequences. The Swamiji says " I am indebted to my mother for whatever knowledge I have acquired"³².

Besides these, the liberal atmosphere in the family provided by his father along with the self confidence that he instilled in his son "Enabled Narendranath, in his future chequered career, to preserve his serenity of mind whether dwelling with princes in their Palaces or sharing the strawhuts of beggars"³³.

Vivekananda was very brilliant, active and very dynamic. He was courageous and a spirit of enquiry could be seen in all his actions. He was rational in thinking and could accept anything only with practical truth. He had a kind heart.

During his college days, he got attracted to the study of different philosophies and different civilizations of the world. He drew the attention of both Indians and English professors, who recognised his potentiality and the latent powers of his personality. Principal W.W. Hastie said "Narendranath is really a genius. I have traveled far and wide, but I have never yet come across a lad of his talents and possibilities, even in German Universities, amongst Philosophical students. He is bound to make mark in life"³⁴.

During this time he got attracted to the activities of Brahma Samaj meant for the purification of the Hindu society. This gave him opportunity to be in close contact with the spiritual giants of his time such as Kesave Chandra sen, Ravindra Nath Tagore and other who were considered as doyens of the society. The inquisitive mind of Narendra made him approach these great people, to get a first hand information on the existence of God. But they expressed their helplessness.

Contacts led him to Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa of Dakshineswar, an ordinary Priest at the Kali Temple, who cleared his doubts about the existence of a God. For the first time Vivekananda got a brave answer, "yes, I see him just as I see you

here, only in a much intenser sense. One can see and talk to him as I am doing with you. But who cares to do so?"³⁵.

The relation between Narendra and Sri Ramakrishna become intimate and at last, Narendra accepted Sri. Ramakrishna as his Master. His faith in asceticism and renunciation got strengthened. His master, who knew Vivekananda's later Mission, checked him. One day Vivekananda tasted the bliss of Samadhi. After that, when he saw his master, the master said to him "Now the Mother has shown you everything. But this revolution will remain under lock and key, and I shall keep the key when you have accomplished the Mother's work you will find this treasure again"³⁶.

Before his Mahasamadi, the Master transferred all his spiritual Powers to Narendra and equiped him to take up the mission assigned to him. Thus it was the contact with Sri Rama Krishna that became a turning point in his life. The English educated proud rational atheist youth changed into a new man with all his intellect, his abilities and wisdom. He became a Sanyasin and dedicated his life for the welfare of humanity as directed by his great master.

After the Mahasamadhi of Sri Rama Krishna (1886) Narendra Nath started his Parivrajaka life to find out the means to translate his masters vision into reality. He toured all over India, and his tour enabled him to get the pulse of the Indian society and gave opportunity to interact with the common people. The scene of poverty and misery of the Indian people pained him very much. Finally he reached the last bit of Indian soil; Cape Comorin and sitting at the rock there he recalled Rama Krishna's words "Religion is not for empty bellies"³⁷. His mission was chosen.

He found that the West with all its material prosperity is longing for the eternal principles which make it free and happy, whereas the East India, rich in her eternal wisdom is a land of starving masses. When he knew that the Parliament of Religions was being held at Chicago Vivekananda decided to attend the parliament of Religion. There he earned great respect, popularity and appreciation of his ideas.

Margratt Noble, later known as Sister Niveditha chose India as her motherland and dedicated her life to the service here, her master had in mind.

In India, on his return from the West Vivekananda called on Indian youth to get interested in the service of the people

of the country and for religious refinement . He knew that India does not want the ideas of religion to be preached as it is. He knew very well that what India needed was the **practical application of those higher religious principles for the benefit of humanity** and went about carrying out these ideals in his life. He also charged intense patriotism in the blood of the youth of the country. **Fearlessness** was the key word he gave to the world. Based on the great ancient ideas of Vedanta he preached religious social and political theories of life. He encouraged the youth of the country to undertake cultural improvement programmes. Through the slogan "Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached"³⁸ he raised the Indian youth to the height of patriotism and heroism.

To practise the ideas of social service indicated by his master, and spread his message all over India the Swamiji started the Sri Rama Krishna Mission in 1897. Inspired by his teaching his disciples undertook the service of **Daridra Narayana**.

His restless work in India and abroad affected his health. The Swami attained Mahasamadi in July 4, 1904.

1.4 Life of Mahatma Gandhi

Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi, later known as Mahatma Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869 in the city of Porbander in Gujarat as the son of Karam Chand Gandhi and Puthali Bai. Mohan's grand father Uttam Chand was the Prime Minister of Porbander and love for the country was inherited by Mohan from his grand father.

In school, he was a mediocre student but was punctual. He said this later, "my intellect must have been sluggish and my memory raw"³⁹. He was firm in holding to the Truth . He never tried to criticise or blame others. Shravana Pithrubhakti and Harischandra were the two plays which influenced him very much and had pivotal role in the moulding of his personality and character.

Mohan Das after his matriculation decided to proceed to England and became a Barrister. Towards the close of 1889 he came across some Theosophists and by their influence he got acquainted with Theosophist literature. This stimulated in him the desire to study Hinduism. He read Bhagavat Gita in Arnold Toynbee's translation entitled the "***Song Celestial***". It attracted Gandhi very much and he translated it later into Gujarati.

To him the Gita was a book for daily reference, "when doubts haunt me, when disappointment stares me in the face, and I do not see one ray of light on the horizon, I turned to the Bhagavat Gita and find a verse to comfort me, and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming the sorrow"⁴⁰.

During these days Gandhi got some Christian friends, who helped him to study about Christianity. He studied the **New Testament**. He was attracted to the **Sermon of the Mount**.

He returned to India from England in 1891 and practised as a barrister. Unexpectedly an offer came to him from a company to proceed to South Africa to be their counsel. In 1893 Gandhi sailed for South Africa.. There he had to face many difficulties. Some newspapers described him as "Un welcomed visitor". This stay there gave him chance to have a knowledge about the miseries of Indian labourers. The discrimination shown by the white people towards the Indians and other Asiatics with respects to colour creed etc., was unbearable to him. Gandhi felt that it was his first duty to secure the Indians with rights and better living conditions. So he tried to unify them irrespective of their religious difference and thus, slowly he became the Leader of Indians there.

By this time, the South African Government introduced a Bill to disfranchise the Indians there. Gandhiji opposed this and submitted a petition with the advice of Dadabhai Naoroji. But the petition was not sufficient. So he proposed the formation of a permanent organisation with the advice of Dadabhai Naoroji. It was named as **Natal Indian Congress**. As a result of his intense public activities and propoganda, the conditions of Indians in South Africa was made known in India. On June 5th 1896 he sailed for India.

In India, Gandhiji started his journey from Calcutta to different parts of India and published a pamphlet about the sufferings of Indians in South Africa. He met leaders like Bala Gangadhar Tilak and Gopala Krishna Gokhale. He accepted Gokhale as his political mentor and said, Gokhale was like the "Ganges in whose refreshing holy waters one longed to bathe"⁴¹. Gokhale was a well - known leader and was moderate in his dealing with the British. This attitude influenced Gandhi very much.

During his stay there he had occasion to read the book "Unto This Last" of John Ruskin. This attracted him very much. This book preached the dignity of manual labour and

simple life. It was from this book, that he adopted his principle of Sarvodaya – good for all.

The South African Government imposed a special “marriage Act” for the Asiatics. People under the leadership of Gandhi resisted this Act. He advised people to non-cooperate with the government. Gandhi began to train the people to suffer without violence. He named the new system of struggle as Satyagraha (Truth force). He was arrested several times. But this did not check the onward march of this movement. At last he became victorious and returned to India.

This South African episode has a greater importance in the life of Gandhiji. He became confident about the victory of his new weapon satyagraha strictly based on non – violence. On his return, he found that the condition of Indians under the Colonial rule of the British was not satisfactory and thus he became interested in public activities. His contact with leaders like Tilak and Gokhale accelerated his programmes. He traveled all over India. He was attracted to the Swadeshi movement. On May 25, 1915 he founded an Ashram at Kochrab (Ahamedabad) with the help of his friends. The object of the Ashram was the service of Motherland. According to Gandhi, Swadeshi is the only doctrine consistent with the law of love.

Gandhi distinguished himself from others not only in social as well as political reforms but also in economics. He launched several activities connected with labour. And also he developed a total approach to man and his problems. Gandhi gave greater importance to the economic factor. His non-violent approach made him to reject not only the inevitability of class-war but also made him to reject a commercial system. He put forward his own system of ***socio-economic organisation and participatory democracy***.

In the following years he worked for Indians and taught them self-reliance and self-sufficiency. With the help of the Indian masses he regained the freedom of the Motherland. His marching to Dandi in 1930, the "Quit India Movement" of 1942, his 21 days satyagraha of 1943, his 1946 satyagraha for religious harmony are all unforgettable and the pictures of all these, always remain in the minds of Indians. His programmes and guidance gave significance to our life and his passing away left us in emptiness and loneliness. Pandit Nehru in his Foreward to the book of Tendulker has said that "(Gandhiji's) Message was not confined to a particular country or a community. Whatever truth there was in it was a truth applicable to all countries and to humanity as a whole"⁴².

1.5 The Political Conditions of 19th and 20th Century

The influence of the prevailing socio-cultural climate had a significant role in the Political, social and Cultural contribution of these two great social reformers. Time is an important factor in actualizing certain potentialities which remain dormant in exceptional individuals. In India the 19th and 20th centuries had their own characteristic features which made it possible to bring forth a renaissance and reformation in the social, cultural, and political set up of the Sub Continent.

The industrial revolution initiated in Europe began to spread, gradually in all the countries in the world. The industrial and scientific revolution led to political changes, economic re-adjustments, social revolutions and drastic changes in the day to day life of the people all over the world. Another significant phenomenon was the liberation of many countries from colonial rule. Following the general trend set globally, India also emerged as a free sovereign democratic republic. Closely looking at the changing India scenario, we can very well understand that political independence was only a passing phase, and the free democratic government was only a by - product in the process of a revolutionary change in the thinking people. Many thinkers have contributed for this.

In 1876 Surendranath Banerji, Editor of "**The Bengalee**" set up in Calcutta a political organisation named, the Indian Association. In 1885 the Indian National congress was formed under the leadership of A.O. Hume.

The congress demanded for higher posts in government jobs. But it was clearly declared by the British in 1894 that all the highest posts would be held by the British only. By the close of that century the Congress became the loyal opposition to the government.

Gopala Krishna Gokhale, one of the earlier leaders of the congress, advocated for western type of education, though he was against the British rule. He believed in **Evolution** not in **revolution**.

We can see a remarkable change in the policy of the congress, brought about by Balagangadhar Tilak. He could not agree to the policy of the Congress, approaching the alien rulers with a begging bowl and boldly declared Swaraj as his birth right. The triumph of Swami Vivekananda at the parliament of Religions, awakened a new vigour among the Indians. His bold words inspired the youth of the country.

In August 1905 the congress launched its first movement against the Government, urging people not to use British goods and to use Swadesi – Indigenous goods. Special emphasis was given on the boycott of foreign clothes. People responded positively. Enthusiastic youths, women and students came forward to boycott. Foreign cloths, salt, the sugar etc. Many foreign newspapers admired the coverage of the Indian youth.

Gandhi came to India in 1915 from London. On reaching India Gandhi undertook a long tour to see India. He was full of expectations for a favoring response from the British for his co-operation given to them in the First World War. But the Government cheated him by introducing several Acts, which empowered the government to detain without trial or enquiry, to control the revolutionary activities. But the Indians reacted violently. Gandhi started passive resistance and called for an All Indian Hartal on April 6, 1919. People responded positively.

This was followed by the Jallian Walla – Bagh massacre in Punjab. The police fired on the innocent masses, including women and children, gathered to celebrate the Baisakhi Festival. This activated revolutionary movements in Punjab.

Gandhi who had taken British at their word, now realised their double – dealing and decided not to co-operate with them. He actively joined the Congress movement and led India to Freedom with his charismatic approach.

1.6 Socio – Cultural Aspects

The effect of British imperialism could not be confined to the political field. It also affected the social and cultural fields in India. As we all know, India had a glorious culture. This culture was considered **Sanatana** – ever living. The essential feature of our culture is its spirituality. The different sects, which came to India embraced this culture and got identified with it. This all embracing civilization absorbed all other civilizations which come in contact with it.

But a change could be seen, since the coming of the British. They never tried to get identified with the Indian culture and civilization. They believed that they were the most civilized race in the world. So they tried in India to impose the concepts of their civilization which was clearly based on material prosperity.

Thus the 19th century India was in between these two opposing currents of civilizations. The British tried hard to spread the ideals of materialism, and this brought a degradation in the

cultural field of India. Some Indians also began to believe in the greatness and modernity of Western culture, and began to praise the Western culture and condemned the Indian one.

Another important feature of that century was the rising up of several socio-religious movements. The Arya Samaj of Dayananda Saraswathy, Brahma Samaj of Raja Ram Mohan Roy etc. started wide propagation of the religious concepts of Hinduism. These movement accelerated the purification of the Hindu society, from social evils like, untouchability, child marriage sati etc. This also produced a wide awakening and brought awareness about the basic concepts of Hinduism, even among the common people.

Later the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna, formed a favorable atmosphere for the spiritual teachings of Swami Vivekananda, and the political programmes of Mahatma Gandhi, which were based on the spirituality.

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THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

S. Remadevi “Impact of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi to the cultural and political scenario of pre and post independent India ” Thesis.
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CHAPTER - II

“So I preach only the Upanishads. If you look, you will find that I have never quoted anything but the Upanishads. And of the Upanishads, it is only that one idea **strength** the quintessence of vedas and Vedanta and all, lies in that one word.”

Swami Vivekananda

THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda though he was not a politician or a social worker, was the hero of the twentieth century India. He was a spiritual leader whose sharp intellect touched almost all aspects of the universe. His love for the motherland made him think about the welfare of his country and countrymen. So he studied the problems of India and tried hard to see his countrymen overcome these problems.

a) The neglect of the masses

The swami during his tour all over India noticed the pitiable state of the common masses. The thing which pained him very much was the condition of the Indian poor people. To save them from this became his first and foremost duty. He understood that there is no need of preaching religion to the people. Instead, what they needed was bread to sustain life. These poor people of India, and their poverty compelled him to go the wealthy west. The suffering of the common people of India was unbearable to him. He reminded his Madras audience of this fact, on his return from the West, " I did not go to America, as most of you know for the Parliament of Religions, but this demon of a feeling was in me and

within my soul. I travelled twelve years all over India, finding no way to work for my countrymen, and that is why I went to America ; most of you know that who know me then. Who cared about the parliament of Religions? Here was my own flesh and blood sinking everyday, and who cared for them? This was my first step”¹.

To Vivekananda the neglect of the masses is the great “national sin” and one of the main reasons for the downfall of India. He was very much worried about the toiling masses of the country. He Says “The poor, the low the sinner in India have no friends no help”². He points out that, “The poor of India worked hard without any murmur for a long time, suffering all suppression for thousands of years. They have suffered eternal misery, which has given them inflicting vitality”².

Even though the peasants of India working silently, without proper remuneration they have got the wonderful strength that comes of a pure and moral life, it is not to be found anywhere else in the world. He says that with a half bread they could shake the very world. He compares the peasants of India with those of other countries. He says, that comparatively the Indian masses are silent, peaceful, loving and when compared with others the Indian masses are “Gods” and “Angles”, because they maintained their balance inspite of provocation.

When he went into the depth of the problem, he understood that the country is rich in natural resources, while the people are poor.

b. Priest – hood and caste system

When analysed, Vivekananda knew that, the main cause of the problem in India is the Priest – power. The Hindu society had lost its vitality and was divided into many classes; one exploiting the other. There were some rich and powerful upper classes, who enjoyed all the goodness of life whereas the lower classes remained in misery. The caste became determined by birth, not by virtue. This brought a degradation to the whole system. He points out, “priest – craft in its nature, is cruel and heartless, religion goes up the idea of privilege, then will religion come. Before that there is no religion at all”³. Again, he criticises the in-human nature of the upper class, saying that there is no love in their hearts and they have no hope for manliness.

He criticises that the upper class intellectuals are interested in unnecessary discussion on food and food habits, touchability etc., with their head loaded with superstitions.

The main wicked practice of the caste system was the untouchability; the lower classes were considered as

untouchables. The Swami depicts the picture clearly. He says “To what ludicrous state are we brought ! If a Bhangi comes to any body as Bhangi he would be shunned as the plague, but no sooner does he get a cupful of water poured upon his head with some mutterings of prayers by a Padiri and get a coat on his back, no matter how the thread – bear come into the rooms of the most orthodox Hindu. I do not see that man who then there refuse him a chair and a hearty shake of hands ! Irony can go no further”⁴.

c) **Monopoly of Education**

He found that in the ancient land of the Vedas, knowledge and wisdom, the majority of people are now illiterate and kept away from the systems of education. Only the selected classes could be able to acquire knowledge. The rest were kept in darkness. He assumes. “The chief cause of Indian’s ruin had been the monopolising of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority among a handful of men”⁵.

The Swamiji compares this condition with the state of the West, where all are well educated and free, and are capable of finding their own livelihood and better living standards. He says, “The whole difference between the west and east is in this ; they

are nations, we are not, in civilization, education here is general, it penetrates into the masses. The higher classes in India and America are the same but the distance is infinite between the lower classes of the two countries. Why was it so easy for the English to conquer India? It was because they are nation; we are not”⁶.

d. People were not aware of their potentialities

The Swami points out another reason for the degradation of Indians as the lack of awareness about their own true nature and capacities. The Indians are not ready to think freely and work freely. They have lost their thinking capacity. He says “they believe what others say. For centuries people have been taught theories of degradation. They have been told that they are nothing. The masses have been told all over the world, that they are not human beings. They have been so frightened for centuries, till they have nearly become animals. Never were they allowed to hear of the Atman”⁷.

(e) Not Ready to Work

The Swamiji points out our general attitude. He says “We would do nothing ourselves and would scoff at others who tried to do something. This is the bane that has brought about

our down fall as a Nation. Want of sympathy and lack of energy are at the root of all misery and you must therefore give these two up, who but the Lord knows what potentialities there respectively in particular individuals. Let all have opportunities and leave the rest to the Lord. It is indeed very difficult to have an equal love for all. But without it there is no Mukthi”⁸.

f) Exclusiveness

According to the Swamiji one main reason for the downfall of India is the isolation from others. Years of foreign rule and mis-interpretation of the older view caused for this. He says “ One of the great causes of India’s misery and downfall has been that she narrowed herself, went into her shell as the Oyaster does, and refused to give her jewels and her treasures to the other races of mankind, refused to give the life – giving truth to thristing nations outside the Aryan fold. That has been one great cause ; that we did not go out, that we did not compare notes with other nations”⁹.

He continues “No man, no nation, my son, can hate others and live ; India’s doom was sealed the very day they invented the word “Mlecha” and stopped from the communion with

others"¹⁰. When one hates others, that indicated his own degradation, not others.

(g) Lack of organisation

The experience in the West helped the Swami to know about the benefits of an organisation and he felt the need for such faculty in India. The first requisites for organisation are obedience and readiness to work Swamiji found that the Indians are not ready to obey others. Here there is no love. Moreover the Indians are lazy; are not ready to work hard.

(h) Neglect of women

According to the Swamiji, another reason for India's downfall is the neglect towards women. This is a serious problem. As he points out that "in India there are two great evils" Trampling on the women, and grinding the poor through caste restrictions are those. Indian woman hood is the symbol of strength, "Sakti". Only he who knows God as the Omni present force in the Universe and sees in woman the manifestation of that force would be the real worshipper of Sakti.

i. Cultural Westernisation

The political domination of the west over India, caused for the ruin of the glorious culture of India. The Indians tried to imitate the west in all aspects of life. Indian youths, imitate the west in walk and talk, especially among the educated ones. The educated youths of India instead of being interested in the work and welfare of the country seemed to have been proud of their Western Education and viewed the things which are of western origin as superior to that of Indians.

He found that India - the Mother of all riches turned into the principal market of England by the Vaisya genius of the English enhanced by Science. As a result, the country became more and more poor. This was followed by the intellectual slavery. Everything from the West was viewed upon with great affection and admiration. The Indians simply imitated the West and discarded the Indian ideals and culture. They dressed like the English, behaved like the English, and spoke as the English and were ashamed of their nationality and kinship with the ignorance, poor, illiterate, down - trodden masses of India.

Seeing this degradation he cried out "O India's with this more echoing of others, with this base imitation of others, with this dependence on others, this slavish weakness, this vile, detestable cruelty wouldst thou, with these provisions only scale

the highest pinnacle of civilization and greatness? Wouldst thou attain, by means of the disgraceful cowardice, that freedom deserved only by the brave and the heroic! India'. Forget not that the ideal of the womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damanti forget not that the God they worshipped is the great Ascetic of ascetics, the all renouncing sankara"¹¹.

About the foolishness of imitating west he says "O India this is your terrible danger. The spel of imitating the west is getting such a strong hold up on you that what is good or what is bad is no longer decided by reason, judgement, discrimination, or reference to the Sastras. What ever ideas, what manners, the Whiteman praise or like are good, whatever things they dislike or censure are bad. Alas what can be more tangible proof of foolishness than this"¹².

1. Practical Vedanta

Swami Vivekananda was known as an eminent expounder of Vedanta Principles. He preached the philosophy of Vedanta, as one based strictly on an intellectual basis and thereby highly acceptable to all. He prescribes the practice of vedanta as the remedy for all the ills of India.

As he points out India is a land of various religions, various ideas and various ceremonial forms. The term **Hindu** stands for the sum total of all these various sects; the only point where all these sects agree is on our four **Vedas**. The term Veda originated from the root vid – to know, contains all the knowledge. Veda is divided into two parts; the **Karma Kanda** and the **Njanakanda**. The karma kanda includes an account of various sacrifices and ceremonials, and njanakanda contains spiritual teachings. The end portion of veda containing the spiritual knowledge is the Vedanta or Upanishads.

The Upanishads reveal the true nature of Atman. Apart from the theology, the literature of Upanishads is highly attractive. About the Atman it says, “The stars, the flash of lightning can not illumine the place, what to speak of this mortal fire”¹³.

Vivekananda points out that when one realises his true nature, his Atman, becomes fearless, fully satisfied and strong. He says, “Strength, strength is what the Upanishads speak to me for every page. It is the only literature in the world where you find the word ‘Abhīh’ – fearless used again and again”¹⁴. He considered the Upanishads as the great mines of strength.

Weakness is the cause of all miseries and strength is the freedom from all types of weaknesses. The Upanishads speak about this freedom. All kinds of freedom are the watch – words of Upanishads; physical freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom. So freedom is strength and bondage is weakness.

He points out that this freedom is the very basis of morality. So weakness is immoral. The laziness selfishness, hatred are all immoral. Because lack of strength is the reason for all these. So man's first duty is to be moral. For this one has to avoid weakness. First of all try to avoid physical weakness. One can not do study great things without strength.

He gives importance to the belief in the **self**. He says "The only ism that we require now is this wonderful idea of the soul – its eternal right, its eternal strength, its eternal purity and its eternal perfection." "Thou art the Pure One"¹⁵. One who believes that he is weak becomes weak. One who believes in his own strength becomes strong.

Universality of the ideals is one main feature of Upanishadic teachings. Vedanta is applicable to all man and woman, irrespective of one's place of living, occupation, financial

status, caste or position. All are equally divine and heirs for these ideas.

Another great idea that Vivekananda wanted to communicate is that concept of service. Man is to be served as the lord. He says “ You cannot help any one, you can only serve; serve the children of Lord if you have the privilege”¹⁶. He advises to look upon every man, woman and every one as Gods. Doing service to humanity means doing the worship of the Lord himself. So the poor, miserable are all the different forms of the Lord himself, and be served.

Thus we can see that the ideas of Swami Vivekananda are clear, highly simple and practical. This simplicity and practicalicity distinguisher the teachings of Swami Vivekananda from other teachers of Vedanta.. His theory was applicable to all planes of human life and activity.

2. Patriotism

The swamiji points out that *liberty* or freedom is the prime need for all kinds of developments in the case of individual; Like that the development of the country is based on its political freedom. A dependent or a country under the rule of any other, is incapable of development or growth. So political freedom is a

must in the case of a country to be prosperous and self – supporting. Though Swami Vivekananda was not a political leader he knew this very well and felt the need of his country becoming free and independent. Even though he was a renounced person he had a mind full of love and pride about his nationality. He was a lover of mother land and he always adorned his land as the Divine Mother. To him the very soil of this country was a ***Thirtha***. He had the affection of a baby towards his beloved mother India. Sister, Niveditha points out this, “He was a born lover, and the queen of his adoration was his Mother Land”¹⁷.

He being a soul – worshipper tried to awaken the innate force of sleeping soul. He was confident about the undefeatable strength of the human soul. When these individual souls unite limitless power would be the result. So he viewed this as the Virat (ever – powerful) – working through his many hands, walking by the numberless legs, seeing through a thousand eyes.

The Swamiji advised his country men to leave all other personal ends and try hard to free the motherland and to worship the motherland. He said “for the next fifty years this alone shall be our key-note-this our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for that time from our mind. This is the only God that is awake, our own race”¹⁸.

So he demanded hard work from his fellowman to free India and place her in her original glorious stage. He says "Arise and Awake and see her seated on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was this motherland of ours"¹⁹. He knew that the glory of this land could be established only by the sacrifices of his countryman. He says "Arise, Awake, for your country needs this tremendous sacrifice. It is the youth men that will do it." He continues "the young, the energetic, the strong, the well - built, the intellectual"²⁰. Thus he tried to convey the **burning love** for his country. He wanted **Men** having strong will, and strong muscles to undertake the work of the country. So he told his countrymen to become Abhihi - fearless and "Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached"²¹. These words echoed in the minds of the Indian youth which inspired them to work restlessly for the upliftment of the country. He said "This national ship, my countrymen, my friends, my children - this national ship has been ferrying millions and millions of souls across the waters of life. For scores of shining centuries it has been plying across this water, and through its agency, millions of souls have been taken to the other shore.....If there are holes in this national ship this society of ours, we are its children.

Let us go and stop the holes, let us gladly to do it with our heart's blood; and if we cannot, then let us die"²².

He felt pride in everything that is Indian. He said "Thou, too clad with but a rag round the loins, proudly proclaim at the top of the voice; the Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life, India's Gods and Goddesses are my God, India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure - garden of my youth, the sacred heaven the Varanasi of my old age. Say, brother; the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good"²³.

3. On Indian Culture

According to Swami Vivekananda, "if there is any land on this earth that can claim to be the blessed Punya - Bhumi..... the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all the kind of introspection and of spirituality - it is India"²⁴. The Indians never believed in political greatness or military power. That is, although the race had acquired immense wealth the nation never stood for wealth. This nation was not interested in conquering others either for political supremacy or for wealth. The nation remained quite content with its own

boundaries and never tried to fight with others. Because wealth or power were not the ideals of the nation.”

Swami Vivekananda says that India is a land of unbroken tradition for centuries. India is the only land which sustained its vitality and vigour even after a long period of degradation. Indians are the most ancient race of people who owned a glorious past. The ancient races such as the Greeks, Romans etc., are no more now. They all lost their glory within a certain duration. But the Indians are still a living race, without total destruction even though there are degradations.

Another feature of the Indian culture, according to him is its civilization. He says “One thing we may note, that whereas you will find that good and greatmen of other countries like pride in tracing back their descent to some robber – baro who lived in a mountain fortress and emerged from time to time to plunder passing way farers, We Hindus, on the other hand, take pride in being the descendants of Rishis and sages who lived in roots and fruits in mountains and caves meditating on the Supreme”²⁵. When all other lands on earth were not established, life prevailed in India. So Indian is the ancient culture; a race of well civilized people.

India is the land of happiness and renunciation. The great ancestors of India, the Rishis revealed that 'Not by progeny, not by wealth by renunciation alone immortality is reached'. The Indian culture never believed in taking or accumulation. It teaches only to renounce to give up. The Indians recognized that all the worldly pleasures such as wealth, power etc., are all mortal and immortality cannot be reached through these material pleasures. So they over - powered all the miseries and pleasures of this world. They were only interested in supreme happiness, through renunciation ; the eternal joy.

To Vivekananda India is the land of spirituality. Spirituality is the back-bone of Indian culture. This is the land where the supreme soul - the spirit is worshipped.

According to him, the greater superiority of Indian culture is that, it never mentioned about a personal God. Here the ideal is the Supreme Spirit - the Omnipotent, Omni present, Omniscient. This is the only one thing which is having permanent existence in the world. All others are of no existence. Its only the spirit one with beginning, without end, without development or decay.

To him India is a land of Aryan Civilization, where the ideal of manhood is Brahminhood – the height of spiritual and moral development. By the Brahmin ideal he says “I mean the ideal Brahminness in which worldliness is altogether absent and true wisdom is abundantly present. That is the ideal of the Hindu race”²⁶. India is the only country where the one whole race is dedicated for the search of the spirit, the true wisdom. The dream of all Indians is to become the Brahmna – the one who knows Brahma.

4. On India’s Contribution to the World

He pointed out that the debt which the world owes to India is immense. In the case of religion, Indian is the earlier. In the case of science and technology quoting sir William Hunter he says she has even contributed to modern medical science by the discovery of various chemicals and by teaching you how to reform is happened ears and noses. Even more, it has nose in Mathematics, of Algebra, Geometry, Astronomy and the triumph for modern science the mixed Mathematics – where all invented in India, just so much as the ten numeral, the very corner stone all threatened civilization were discovered in India, and are in reality, Sanskrit words”²⁷.

“Similar is the case” says the Swami “with philosophy and Music, Literature, legend etc., in manufacture India was the first to make cotton, and purple (dye) it was proficient in all works of jewellery and in the production of materials like sugar. India invented games of Chess, the Cards and the dice”²⁸.

5. On Religion

India is the only blessed land where the foundation, the back – bone, the life – centre is Religion; whereas all other nations of the Earth have their ways politics, wealth and Trade etc. The Indian religion is not bothered about the acquisition of political power, wealth or any other thing in the universe. It only cares for spirituality. It is the reason for the survival of India, inspite of a thousand years of foreign rule and foreign oppression. There were powerful and prominent countries like Rome, Greece, Spain etc., but they all disappeared and new one are formed. Only India stands still without distraction because the validity of India has not been touched.

He did not blame religion for the problems of India. In India what he wanted was the practical application of religious principles. He knew very well that, the political or social reforms in India are possible only through the upliftment of religion.

Every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion. He believed that in India the political or socialistic ideas were applied only through religious progress.

6. On caste

Actually the caste is a social system and was meant for the good and smooth functioning of a vital society. As Lord Krishna says in "Bhagavat Gita" it is a scientific system **for the division of labour**. There were four castes or **Varnas** strictly according to the ability and aptitude, namely the Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. The Brahmanas are the Scholars, Kshatriyas - the Warriors, Vaisyas - the Merchants and the Sudras - the Workers or Peasants.

Vivekananda points out that the caste was determined not by birth but by quality or ability. There were chances for the lower classes to be elevated to a higher according to the power of learning or valour. A number of examples can be sighted to prove this. Vasista, Narada, Sathya Kama - Jabala, Vyasa etc., of questionable parentage were raised to the position of Brahmana or Kshatriya in virtue of their superior learning or valour. On the other hand the fallen from the Brahmana or Vaisya class were brought down to fill their rights of Sudras.

Eventhough he discarded the caste system prevailed then saying "it narrows and restricts, and separate the noble bond of humanity"²⁹. Vivekananda believed that caste is a must in a growing society. The basic aim of Indian system was spiritual, i.e., to accelerate the progress of the individual towards his goal of spirit. This was a certain type of classification which allows maximum freedom for the individual to grow according to his will. In this system there is the whole freedom to choose the path. The Sanskrit word **J ati** means **species**. The individual is a member of society. By virtue of his qualification and attitude to has certain obligation to the society which is to be fulfilled, and it is his duty. By performing this duty, he could reach the spirit.

The principle of harmony of trade and labour is needed by the society. In that view there is no question of superiority or inferiority. Mending shoes is as valuable as reading Vedas. In such a caste system the individual gets opportunity to express his talents for the well being of the whole society. Jati or **Vichitrata** is the first ideas of creation. Unity is before creation, diversity is creation. When the diversity stops, creation gets destroyed. So original idea of Jati was this freedom of the individual to express his Nature, his Prakriti, his Jati, his caste. Our scriptures agree with the system of caste and even the latest

text contain no restriction for inter caste marriage or inter - caste dining. He points out quoting Githa "with the extinction of caste the world will be destroyed"³⁰.

He was aware of the super brain work behind the caste system of India. He was positive in his view, and so did not believe in the destruction of case system. He was highly **constructive**. In India he never wanted to crush down the caste system even though it is defective. He did not want to abolish the classes what he wanted was the upliftment of the lower classes to be highest. So he says "the plan in India is to make everybody Brahmin; for Brahmin be the ideal of humanity in India attempts were always done, to raise the lower classes to higher one. India never thought about bringing down the highest one to the lowest that is the production of universe of Brahmins"³¹.

7. On Education

According to Swami Vivekananda the purpose of education is **man - making**. The aim of all training should be this, i.e., education should help the man to be *Man*. He says "The ideal of all education, all training, should be this man making. But instead of that we are always trying to polish up the **outside**. What use in polishing up the outside, when there is no inside?"

The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow, the man who influences, throws his magic, as it were upon his fellow being, is a dynamo of power and when that man is ready, he can do any thing and everything he like that personality put upon anything will make it work.”³². Such an education only make man strong and manly. In that case the education is the way to fulfill his manliness, his perfection, his true nature. Because truth only strengthens. Therefore education should the search for truth, by the realization of which one gets strong and manly. So he says “here is the test of truth, anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually neglect as poison. There is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening. Truth is purity. Truth is all knowledge; Truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening must be invigorating”³².

He differentiate education from the mere collection of data, which is a mechanical process. He says “Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have **life building, man - making, character - making assimilation of ideas**. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library”³³.

Therefore true education is the Training by which the conduct and expression of Will are brought under control. He says "By which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's feet"³⁴. So the education should be self supporting and strengthening the mind and health controlling the mind. The very essence of education is ***concentration of mind not the collection of facts***. He says "One who has not experienced the art of concentration of mind can gain no knowledge; greater the concentration of the mind, greater will be his knowledge, will only prevent their growth and spoil them. Some parents constantly compel their sons to read and write, telling them that they will never learn anything and called them fools. This will not produce any positive result, what happens in actual practice is that their children gets spoiled and remain as fools. It is a fact that if you speak kind words to them and encourage them, they are bound to improve in time. If you can give positive idea people will grow to be men and a learn to stand on their legs".³⁵

Each child is potentially divine, and to be helped to grow according to his own nature; to manifest the divinity in him. Then education is the manifestation of divinity in him and the only

requisite for education is purity of mind and a real thirst for knowledge.

If education is the manifestation of divinity it also is the aim of Vedanta. Man is essentially the soul, which is pure consciousness, absolute knowledge and eternal perfection. So education is the self discovery - discovery of the true self. Thus the education according to him is the "manifestation of perfection already in man"³⁶. "Then knowledge is inherent in man; no knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside. What we say a man **knows** should, in strict psychological language, be what he **discovers or unveils** what a man learns is really what he discovers, by taking the cover of his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge"³⁷. He says again "this is the one call, the one knock, which opens the gate of nature, and lets out floods of light; this the power of concentration is the only key to the treasure house of knowledge"³⁸.

To develop the power of concentration of mind Brahmacharya (celibacy) is essential. Chastity in thought, word and deed is Brahmacharya. A student who adopts celibacy is a Brahmacharin. By the observance of strict Brahmacharya all learning can be mastered in a very short time. Commenting on Pathanjali's Yogasutras he observes "the chaste brain has

tremendous energy and gigantic will power. Without chastity there can be no spiritual strength, continence gives wonderful control over mankind. The spiritual leaders of man have been very continent, and this is what gave them power"³⁹.

Thus education is self – learning. He says and “no one was ever really taught by another ; each of us has to teach himself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things. Then things will be made clearer to us by our own power of perfection and thought and we shall realise them in our own souls"⁴⁰. He says again, “you cannot teach a child anymore than you can grow a plant. You can only help. You can only take away obstructions"⁴¹. So the extra effort done by the parents to teach their child is in vain.

For this discovery or self realization body and mind are instruments. This indicates the importance of keeping the body strong along with the strong mind. A strong body and a sound mind are the two bases of spiritual evolution. Vivekananda says, “you will be nearer to heaven through the study of the Gita. These are bold words. But I have to say them for I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained little experience. You will understand Gita better than with your biceps, your muscles a

little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman, when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men"⁴².

Thus we can see that the education is a harmonious process of body and mind. Besides these two his intellect, his personality and behaviour are also to be considered because man is the integral of these all. Thus he puts it "the personality of man is two – thirds and his intellect, his words, are but one third"⁴³. It is the harmonious growth of the real man, ***the personality of the man including the intellect, that should be the objective of education***. The finer feeling and emotion should not remain under development. The true man is he, who is strong as strength itself and yet possess a woman's heart"⁴⁴.

8. Status of Woman

One of the most precious feature of Indian culture is that, its concept towards womanhood. According to him the ideal of Indian Womanhood "is Sita, Savitri and Damayandi"⁴⁵. In India women are considered as mothers. He points out "The ideal of womanhood in India is motherhood – that marvellous,

unselfish, all suffering, ever forgiving mother. Here woman is the embodiment of Divine mother⁴⁶. In west woman is wife where as here she is the mother. To Indians she is visible manifestation of God.

Swami Vivekananda was a supporter of importing modern education to girls along with boys. He gave special importance to the education of girls. Pointing out the examples from Vedic ages he argues that women should be treated as equal to men.

Vivekananda saw education as a method to solve the problems of women. He says "give the women education ; they will solve their own problems. They have all the time been trained in helplessness, servile dependence on others, and so they are good only to weep their eyes out at the slightest approach of mishap or danger. Along with other thing they should acquire the spirit of valour and heroism. In the present day it has become necessary for them also to learn self - defence⁴⁷.

He was of opinion that the women should be taught, subjects like history, the Puranas, house keeping identities of house life, arts, and modern sciences. So that the they would be

able to become ideal mothers. He gave importance to artistic working sewing painting, photography etc.

In his opinion women should be trained to render humanitarian services. That is the training of heart along with the training of hands. Women are to be trained to sacrifice their own lives for the benefit of humanity.

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THE TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

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53

CHAPTER - III

"The moment he awakens to the spirit
within, he cannot remain violent"

Mahatma Gandhi

THE TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi was one of the most prominent figures on the political scene of India. At a critical state of Indian history, he emerged as a political Leader of India. As the leader of freedom struggle against the British colonial rule, he led India to freedom. The struggle was not merely a political war for the independence of the country; it was aimed also at the social and economic development of India. Gandhiji's approach thus was a unique one, an all embracing one.

I. Political Philosophy of Gandhi

As mentioned above Gandhi was the political Leader of India. He took politics as his medium or field of activity not because of mere greatness of politics. As he himself put it, "If I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics encircles us today like the coil of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one tries. I wish therefore to restle with the snake".¹

To him life is a *whole* thing. Life cannot be separated into water - tight compartments like social, political or economic.

Society, Politics, Economics are all parts of the same life and are inseparable.

Also to him "Politics bereft of religion is absolute dirt, ever to be shunned".² Again he says "Politics concerns nation and that which concerns the welfare of nation must be one of the concerns of a man who is religiously inclined, in other words a seeker after God and Truth"³.

But this is not to be taken that he is a supporter of all religious practices such as superstition and blind beliefs. He says "For me there is no politics without religion-not the religion of the superstitions and the blind religion that hates and fights, but the Universal religion of toleration. Politics without morality is a thing to be avoided".⁴

That is how his political idea was for **Rama Rajya** which is based truly on moral principles. By Rama Rajya he says "I do not mean Hindu Raj. I mean by Rama Rajya Divine Raj, the Kingdom of God" and "Rama Rajya of my dreams ensures equal rights alike to prince and pauper"⁵.

a) Concept of Swaraj

It is clear from this stand point that Gandhi's political was strictly based on **moral principles**. In politics, his concept

for Indian rule was Swaraj. To him Swaraj means not mere **political independence**, but a system **based on the traditional values** of India.

The term Swaraj literally means **Self-rule**. So, it depends entirely on **internal** strength, the ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Also it is the self rule of all. "I have therefore endeavoured" he says, "to show both in word and deed, that political self - government for a large number of men and women, is no better than individual self - government and therefore it is to be attained by precisely the **same means** that are required for individual self - government or self rule"⁶.

Thus by Swaraj he meant that the government of India by the consent of the all people who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the state and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. What he meant by a rule of the people for the people. So in a sense, it is basically social rather than being political.

b) On Democracy

The above ideal of Swaraj of Gandhi, we can see coincide with the proper ideal of democracy. He was not fully agreed with totalitarian rule. But he had faith in democracy.

According to him, "Democracy must in essence..... mean the art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.

The individual have to undergo a training for democracy, because it is the rule of mass and this mass is contributed by individuals. The good of individual is the good of all and so everyone would know his responsibility to mould the system clean and effective. Therefore real revolution should be brought in the home itself. The training or reform, should begin at home itself. "Democracy disciplined and enlightened" he says "is the finest thing in the world"⁸ For this mental or moral discipline is a necessity ; otherwise it would become useless.

For this, it is clear that in democracy, the individual will is governed and limited by the **social will**, which is the State. If every individual takes the law into their own hands, there is no state. That way lies destruction of liberty. Therefore, one should subdue his anger and let the state secure justice. So a born democrat is a born disciplinarian. In a true system of democracy there should be equal opportunity for all irrespective of strength.

“My notion of democracy” says Gandhi, “is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through **non-violence**”⁹. Because the democracy or the Swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means. Gandhi believed that “True democracy is not inconsistent with a few persons representing the spirit, the hope and the aspirations of those whom they claim to represent”¹¹. A truly democratic system could never exist without the true representation of the whole people.

The representation by a few is not sufficient to express the feelings of the masses. A true democracy is a system in which active representation of all is possible. So centralisation as a system is inconsistent with the non-violent structure of society. Therefore, he wanted **decentralisation** of power. An active participation of the people in all the affairs of the government is needed. He points out “democracy is an impossible thing until the power is shared by all, but let not democracy degenerate into mobocracy”.¹²

In the true democracy of India according to Gandhiji “**The unit is the village**”. He points out “True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village.”¹³

It is for the administration of the village that he put forward the concept of panchayat. The panchayat, formed by the residents of the village, only could know the problems of that particular villagers and thereby clear their wants. Every panchayat of five adult men or women being villagers or village minded shall form a unit. The Panchayat should select representatives **first grade** leaders and those leaders select **second grade** leaders. First Grade leaders work under second grade and so on.....Second grade leaders should select a chief.

So we can see that his concept of an ideal Democratic state, is that bases strictly on the principles of non-violence. It would be a completely de-centralised, stateless democracy where the prime consideration should be the welfare of the people and the people should be trained for selfless co-operative action.

c) The concept of Satyagraha

Gandhi considered everyman as a mixture of good and evil. He says "Everyone of us is a mixture of good and evil Is there not plenty of evils in us? There is enough of it in me.....and I always pray to God to purge me of it, The difference that there is between human beings is the difference of

degree¹⁴. So evilness in a sense, is innate in man's nature i.e., as an animal he is violent. Gandhi points out "The moment he awakens to the **spirit within** he cannot remain violent"¹⁵.

Thus when one become truly non-violent, the body is transformed into spirit. But this transformation is not easy. The spirit is one which is always perfect, and body is one with **imperfection**. So the change from imperfection to perfection is not so easy. So he does not prescribe absolute Ahimsa or non-violence. But he believed in the gradual transformation or progress of man towards the spirit i.e., man is striving ceaselessly to reach the spirit. So what Gandhi suggested was perfectibility rather than perfection.

Sathyagraha, in his opinion is the relentless pursuit of truthful ends by non-violent means. It is "Vindication of truth, not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent on one's own self"¹⁶. Thus he considered it as a penance **Thapasya for Truth**. Sathyagraha literally means the **holding on to Truth**. So it is a Dharmayudha and there are no secret to be guarded, no scope for cunning and no place for untruth. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous one.

Satyagraha aims at the inner reforms and is based on inner strength. So it is called the soul - force. The inner reforms of the human soul, means that the acceptance of all that is good and rejection of all that is evil.

This is aimed at the realisation of the true self, which is the Truth itself, through non -violence. This is possible through love only. Hence it is called as **love force**. That is why this is eternal. He says "For me the law of Satyagraha - the law of love, is an eternal principle. I co-operate with all that is good. I desire to non co-operate with all that is evil, whether it is associated with my wife, son or myself.¹⁷ i.e., to realise this eternal nature, man has to reject all the evilness and try to achieve all goodness.

The procedure of Satyagraha is purely non - violent, based on love only. Gandhi points out that satyagraha is not to crush the opponent but to make him understand his mistakes. He remarked to Miss. Agata Harrison, "The essence of non-violent technique is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists"¹⁸ i.e. a Satyagrahi should over power the opponents, not with physical strength but by pure love. There should be no hatred. A Satyagrahi will always try to overcome evil by Ahimsa. That is why he says that the end of non - violent war is always an agreement, never dictation. The satyagrahi should try to avoid

violence in all forms; violence is to destroy the opponent or atleast to injure him, but this is not the way to convert or to reform the opponent.

Again a Satygrahi should always be ready to examine himself and this self - examination is the way to **purity**. There should be no secrets in his life. He should be of clean habits and have open mindedness. "The Satāgrahi" says Gandhi "Must always hold himself open to conviction and whenever he discovers himself in the wrong, he must confess his mistake at all costs and atone for it"¹⁹.

Faith in human nature, is an essential qualification of a Sayagrahi. The basic nature of human being is non violence goodness. That is a satyagrahi should be aware of the dignity of human nature. Gandhi says "Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the Satyagrahi is ready to trust him the twenty first time, for an implicit faith in human nature is the very essence of his creed"²⁰.

Satygraha is the last resort to settle the problems, i.e., Satyagraha is launched only when all other attempts fail. Gandhi says "The first step that the satyagrahi takes in a conflict be it, individual or collective, persuasion , negotiation, and discussion.

If necessary he also argues to arbitration by a third party. Thus the Satyagrahi launches upon the extreme step not abruptly but only after gentler methods have failed²¹.

Moreover, Gandhi believed that it is the duty of the Satyagrahi to pave the way for negotiation, talking to two parties. "It would not do for a Satyagrahi" Says Gandhi "to argue that the approach must be mutual. That assumes the existence of the spirit of Satyagraha in the authorities, where as Satyagraha is offered in respect of those who make no claim to be Satyagraha is. Hence the first and last work of a Satyagrahi is ever to seek an opportunity for an honourable approach"²².

But this never means that compromise on the fundamentals, because compromise on fundamentals is a surrender. But persuasion and discussion are essential. In addition to the discussion with the adversary, appeal to the public opinion is also needed. And the Satyagrahi should explain the case to one who wants to listen him.

It also can be seen that Gandhi gave maximum importance to suffering. He called Satyagraha as the law of suffering. In satyagraha there is no limit to sufferings of the Satyagrahi. He has to face assaults, beating, ex-communication,

loss of property, and even death. That is a Satyagrahi must continue to stagger his opponent; all his suffering strikes a responsive chord in the latter's heart and gradually converts him, because conversation or appeal are vital matters related to head, but suffering changes the heart. The progress of Satyagraha is measured by the amount of suffering. He says "the purer the suffering, the greater is the progress"²³.

The ultimate and the most potent weapon in the armoury of Satyagraha is fasting. Gandhi calls this as a fiery weapon and claims to have reduced it to a science. Physical strength is not an important qualification to adopt this method. Because physical strength is of no use without a living faith in God. Fasting is not a mechanical process. It must come from the depth of one's soul. So fasting, though a very potent weapon has necessarily very strict limitations and is to be taken only by those who have undergone previous training.

True fasting generates a silent unseen force. In violence there is nothing invisible. Non - violence of the other hand, is three - fourth invisible and so the effect is in the inverse ratio to its invisibility. Gandhi points out, " non violence when it becomes active travels with extra ordinary velocity and then it becomes a miracle"²⁵. In short, the non- violence of the satyagrahi

staggered the violent opponent and upsets his moral balance and thereby prevent him from doing wrong. So he compares non-violence to homeopathic medicine, which are given in small doses but are very effective.

The satyagrahi should not be demonstrative. He says that satyagraha is the silent and undemonstrative action of Truth and Love and not showy performance. Gandhi says "Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr. But let no one lust for martyrdom"²⁵.

II Cultural Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi

Though Mahatma Gandhi was a politician, we can see that his ideals were strictly based on the age - old principles of India. He based his theory on the firm basis of Indian culture. Behind all his political, social and economic principles, this touch of Indian culture could be seen. He bases his theories mainly on the traditional values of India namely Truth and Non - violence.

a) Truth

To Gandhi Truth and God are Synonymous. He tried to see Truth as God. He says, "I call that great power not by the name of Allah, not by the name of Khuda or God, but by the name of Truth, For me Truth is God and Truth over - rides all our

plans.....I was taught from my early days to regard Truth as unapproachable; something that you cannot reach. A great Englishman, taught me to believe that God is unknowable. He is knowable to the extent that our limited intellect allows"²⁷. Therefore he suggested no special significance to the empirical knowledge in the search of Truth. To him sense perceptions are often wrong and deluding however real they may seem to us. Eternal evidence is not sufficient. So he distinguishes Eternal Truth from usual empirical truth.

Therefore Truth can be reached, through an all - inclusive or integral effort of man's faculties in which knowledge plays only a part. This all inclusive process means a co-operated or harmonious process of thought word and deed. So harmony between thought, word and deed is an essential factor in the search for Truth. So to think anything, to speak a second and do a third is a lie. That is, man should do that, about which he is thinking and speaking or man should accord his word. The need of harmony arises, because man is not a rational being, or a material body or a creature of feeling. His intellect body and mind are needed in the process of seeking the Truth. So all three must be harmoniously blended in order to make the whole man.

If there is a uniformity in the thought and practice, then it is evident that thought or inner voice is Truth. Every one should follow this inner voice. The significance in this case is that, the inner voice says different things to different people. This is because all people are at different levels of mental and spiritual development. Due to the difference in the level of developing spirit of human beings, different inner voices are formed.

So all should undergo training to have good innovations or temptations. So in order to achieve the same results in the search for Truth, the individual must train himself in order to be able to make discoveries in the spiritual sphere. When an individual has done his spiritual training his inner voice is infallible.

Therefore, in his opinion the progress of this spiritual training will be according to the ability for self-purification. Every one should know his limitations and his own aptitudes. So it is needed that, for the formation of clear inner voice, one should clear his tendencies and wrong motives. That is why Gandhi stressed the significance of moral purification in the search of Truth.

According to Gandhi as the purity increases, the possibility to attain the Truth also increases. But it is true that one cannot reach the optimum purity. Man is incapable of being completely pure. That is Truth is one that could not be attained with man's imperfections. So what is to be done, is to adopt a relative truth, according to the ability of the individual and try to understand it. As the individual progresses towards that relative truth, gradually his imperfection vanish. To Gandhi Absolute Truth remains beyond man's reach as long as he remains imperfect.

Truth is the **Absolute**, which is the only **Existing**. It is the only thing ever existing and ever-lasting. All others are mortals. The word Satya is derived from **Sat** means to **exist**. Then it is the only Reality in this unreal world and the only thing which is permanent in the ever changing universe. Truth is the Supreme Reality. Gandhi identifies it as the indefinable, mysterious power that penetrates everything. He says that he feels it although he cannot see it with his sense.

These ideas coincide with the fundamentals of the theory of the spirit of Vedanta. The realisation of supreme Reality is moksha. Actually this moksha is the realisation of the Self and

it is said to be the goal of human life. Finding the Truth is, therefore, Self Realisation.

According to Gandhi self - realisation is possible through love only. He says "In order to see face to face the universal and all penetrating Truth, we must be able to love even the least of creatures as we love ourselves. And the man who attempts this cannot be indifferent to any thing in life. This is why my worship of Truth has led me into the political field"²⁷.

True love originates from true morality. True morality comes when the six enemies are absent. The six enemies are Lust, Hatred, Greed, Error, Pride and Injustice⁸¹. When all these gets away truth can be realised.

b) Non - violence

Non - violence or Ahimsa is a word closely related to Indian religion and Philosophy. To Gandhi non - violence is the **means to attain Truth** and ends means are convertible terms. We cannot see that the whole philosophy of Gandhi is based on these two ideals namely Truth and non - violence and he had sufficient experimentation in these two fields.

The actual meaning of Ahimsa is not non - killing or bringing physical pain. **Non - violence to be observed in**

thought, word and deed. There are spiritual, Verbal and Physical non - violence. Non - violence is not the abandoning of the real struggle against evil. In his opinion, non violence is more real and more active battle against evil than counter - violence. It is the moral resistance against immorality

He points out "non-violence is not a mechanical performance. It is the finest quality of the heart and comes by training²⁸. It takes a long time to attain this mental state of non - violence. In daily life it has to be a course of discipline and he says that mental co-operation is needed more than outward observance and the latter is some - times harmful to it. The perfect state is reached only when mind, body and speech are in proper co-ordination.

The acceptance of true non - violence is the complete self surrender before God. When one becomes the humble servant of God, his duty is to serve the humanity. God is in intense action with out rest and if one wants to serve him, he also should become intensely active. There may be a momentary rest for a drop of water when it comes to the shore, but drops in the ocean do not have rest. So when one identifies himself with the ocean of God which is in intense action, he also should become intensely active. That is the adoption of non violence demands two things, intensive

activity and service to humanity. One who adopts non - violence should serve God in the form of human beings. "I am endeavoring to see God through service of humanity - for I know that God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in every one"²⁹. So according to Gandhi, the best way to spirituality is the service of the Poor and the depressed.

According to Gandhi non violence can be practiced only by brave men. Cowards is cannot perform it "I am not pleading for India to practice non - violence because it is weak" says Gandhi " I want her to practice non - violence being conscious her strength and power. No training in arms is required for the realisation of her strength. We seem to need it because we seem to think that we are lump of flesh"³⁰. But what is needed is patience.

c) His Concept of the Universal Religion

Gandiji believed that there should be one religion which was the root of all religions and it is the fundamental religion harmonises the historical religion and makes them valid. He believed that just as a tree has one trunk but many branches and leaves, there is only one religion which is true and perfect. By religion he meant not the conventional type of religion, but it has

an idealistic one and was based on the fundamental qualities of religion.

According to him religion is the trust in the moral organisation of the universe. The goal of man's life is to conquer evil in himself and reach the optimum goodness, therefore, these various religions are different part or roads to the same goal.

d) Tolerance

So what is wanted is the co-operation of different religion. There is no need of quarreling or arguing about the superiority of ones own religion. All religions are equal and are correct. There is no question of superiority or inferiority in the case of any religion.

Gandhi points out that all should have equal right to progress through their own paths towards God. He ruled out the conversions. To him faith is a personal matter and is based on one's ability to **experience** or **realise**. Religious writings and traditions are only pave way to the progress of the individual. That is, **they from the surroundings to grow**. Faith publishes itself and it is not necessary to spread it, through conversions. One could attain the goal through his own religion.

Gandhi points out that to hate other is irreligious, because all religions have the foundations to humanity. So if one thinks, his religion is only correct and all others are incorrect, it is purely irreligious, because to love and respect others is the fundamental concept of a religion.

Realisation of the supreme is the goal of all religious. All religious believe that there is one power which directs all the activities, knowledge and thoughts of this whole universe. When one realises this then, all the diversities vanish.

Gandhi was very much pained by the communal conflicts which were taking place in the country. He realised that communal harmony is an essential factor for the achievement of Swaraj. So he wanted Hindu - Muslim unity for the development of India. Love and respect he said, are the fundamentals of all religions - Hatred of others is irreligious. So he asks "Should we forget our humanity and return a blow for a blow? If some misdirected individual took it into his head to discreate the temple of break idols, should a Hindu in return he descerate a mosque on that account"³¹. He said that ignorance of the ***pure nature of religion*** is the cause of all differences and a true knowledge of religion will break down the barriers between once faith and another faith. To every Hindu and Muslim, his advice was that in

there was compulsion anywhere they should gently but firmly refuse to submit to it. To restore communal harmony he said, "I respectfully invite the heads of all the communities including the Englishmen, to meet an end to this quarrel, which is a disgrace to religion and to humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate him in our hearts"³².

e) Status of Woman

Gandhi was proud of the Indian woman and believed that the glory of the land was due to the sacrifices of Indian women. The epithets used in our literature to denote the wife are *ardhangana* - the Better half ; *sahadharmini* - helpmate. The husband addresses the wife as devi (Goddess). These are sufficient proofs for the mentality of Indians.

But unfortunately at some states in history this changed. Women were divested of many of their privileges and were reduced to a lower status. Many customs like, child marriage, Pardah, enforced widowhood were imposed on them. Gandhi called these customs as great evils and condemned them.

He always advocated widow re marriage. To him every widow has as much right to re-marriage as every widower. He

considered that it is the duty of every parent to arrange for the re-marriage of their girl widows.

Another custom which raised criticism from Gandhi was the dowry system. He was of the opinion that this system has lowered the status of women, and destroyed the sense of equality. He always criticised unnecessary expenditure. He felt the need for an effort for the abolishment of this.

Gandhiji did not want women to be called as the weaker sex. "To call women the weaker sex is a libel. This is a man's injustice to women. If by strength is meant moral power, then women is immeasurably man's superior"³³.

Prostitution too was condemned by him and he is held much to rehabilitate these 'fallen' and unfortunate sisters. He advised them to give up their bad and degrading profession and to take up khadi. He opposed the system of Devdasi prevalent in several places in India.

Gandhi believed in the equality of women and wanted their support in all fields of life. He wanted the service of patriotic women in the process of Satyagraha and the propagation of khadi. He believed the India should only progress through the upliftment

of women. "I am firmly of opinion" he said "that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women"³⁴.

f) Swadeshi

The broad definition of swadeshi according to him is the use of all home made articles and the exclusion of foreign things he knew that this is necessary for the protection of home industries, more specially, those industries with out which India will become pauperised".

He believed that high productive Mills only help to destroy the hereditary spinning system of India. Which was a supplementary occupation for the relief of the poor. The acute poverty of Indian masses during British rule in India, was caused by the destruction of the handicrafts of India. In his "Hindu - Swaraj" Gandhi reveals his conception of "the ancient and sacred handlooms and asked his people to take this. He says to the wealthy people to devote their money for the support and spreading of this. He considered Swadesi as a *spirit* in us which restricts us to the use and service of our *immediate surroundings* to the exclusion of the more remote. It is necessary to attend to the primary physical needs of man and satisfy them by the use only of things that are produced by himself or his

immediate neighbours.....The primary needs of man are food, clothing and shelter.

To Gandhi, the spinning wheel produces the golden bridge between the rich and the poor. Infact, he wanted to see that the seven lakhs of villages of India are kept alive, as the spinning wheel at the centre. And he saw this as a way to achieve his socil order of the future.

Gandhiji saw the spinning wheel as an instrucment to give employment to the millions of India. So he described spinning as a penance or sacrament. The revival of the cottage industries was the only method to regenerate the Indian villages, and he believed that the revival of one industry may inspire many others also.

Gandhi realised that the Swaraj was obtainable through Swadesi. In his presidentaial address at the first "Gujarat Provincial Political Conference" held to Godhra in October 1917, he said, "If we have no regard for our respective vernaculars, if we dislike our clothes, if our dress repelsus, if we are ashamed to wear the sacred Shikha, if our food is distasteful to us, our climate is not good enough, our people encouth and unfit for our company, our civilization faulty, and the foreign attractive. In

short, if every thing in native is bad and every thing foreign pleasing to us, I should not know what swaraj can mean for us"³⁵.

So for the attainment of swaraj Gandhi wanted the promotion of swadeshi concept. According to him what is wanted is the love for swadeshi. Every one of India, should develop that feeling of love. For that every thing national should be adhered to and everything foreign should be avoided.

He found that spinning is the cheapest and the best supplementary industry for the peasants of India. He felt the need of "a cottage industry" for the Indian peasants as they are unable to support themselves by the income from the land only. The spinning will serve as a supplementary industry for them. By doing this a large sum of money could be saved, which is being spend for dress and it would benefit the spinners and weavers of India. This will encourage the industry to maintain the good quality of wooven cloth.

To Gandhi Khadi cannots the beginning of economic freedom of India, as it strictly bases on swadeshi ideals. Great Britain was exploiting the Indian villages. They ruined all the indigenious industries. So the revival of khadi needs a revolutionary change in the mentality of all Indians. For this the

ideal of swadeshi should touch the life of every Indian, making him feel aglow with the possession of a power that has lain hidden within himself and make him proud of his identity with every drop of the ocean of Indian humanity. He says, "Kadi to me is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality and therefore, ultimately in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, "the livery of Indian Freedom"³⁶.

g) Education

For a dynamic society, Gandhiji considered that education is essential. According to him "Real education consists in drawing the best out"³⁷ of oneself. So in the case of education also like all other subjects, the centre is the individual in Gandhian philosophy. Drawing out the best in the individual is education. Therefore it is the drawing out of divinity in man. Thus he agrees with the concept of divinity of a human being.

Realisation of this innate divinity which is the true self of the individual is the attainment of Brahman - the **supreme reality**. This Brahmin is not related to the body, it is related only to the human spirit. So the body of the individual is only an instrument for the revelation of the spirit. In that case, the body, which serves as an instrument to feel the spirit or supreme soul

should be a perfect one because perfection cannot be attained through imperfection. Man should be wholeman for the revelation of the spirit. Man is neither more intellect nor the animal body, nor the heart and soul alone. A proper harmonious continuation of all the three is required for the making "of the whole man".

Man is governed by natural laws. Gandhi believed in the theory of evolution and holds that species of human being is development upon animals. Man is governed by both animal and divine passions. Like, animals, he is also the subject of hunger, sleep, fear and sex. But he is distinguished from animal due to certain development qualities of moral consciousness, self control and religious consciousness.

Man has to become perfect, He believed that no one can attain perfection while he is in the body. For the simple reason that the ideal state is impossible. So long as one is tied down the shackles of the flesh." But this doesn't or mean that man should not make efforts.

To avoid these defects Gandhi formulated a new system of education. According to him the true nature of education coincided with the traditional concept. "Sāvidya Yā Vimuktaye" - education is that which liberates. To him knowledge

includes all training that is useful for the service of mankind and liberation means freedom from all manner of servitude even in the present life. Servitude is of two kinds; slavery to domination from outside and to one's artificial needs. The knowledge required is the pursuit of this ideal alone constitute true study' By education it is points meant that an all around drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit.

So according to him education include the cultural aspects also. He considered this as an important aspect of education. In his talk to the girls of Kasturba balika Ashram, at New Delhi on 22-04-1946 he said, " I attach far more importance to the cultural aspects of education than to the literacy, cultural is the foundation of the primary thing which the girls get out from here. I should show itself in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal conduct, how you sit, how you dress, etc. so that anybody might be able to see at a glance that you are the products of this institution. Inner culture must be reflected in your speech this way in which you treat the visitors and guest and behave towards on another and your teachers and elders"³⁸.

This cultural behaviour is based on moral freedom. He said " I regard character building as the proper foundation for their (students) education, and if the foundation was firmly laid I

am sure that the children could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends”³⁹. So effort should be done to have the character. One would try to develop courage, strength virtue, the ability to forge oneself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy. Literacy training by itself adds not an inch to one’s moral height and character building is independent of literacy training. He said that the student should realise that learning without courage is like a waxen statue beautiful to look at but bound to melt at the least touch of a hot substance. Moreover he recommended that moral and religious education should be included in curricula that is his chief goal of education was character building.

The main purpose of education is to grant freedom for all-round development of the students that is the harmonious development of all the constituents of human personality body, mind and soul. Therefore, he says that a true education is that which draws out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculty of the children.

Basic education

Bearing these in mind he made a plan for a new system of primary education He says “I hold that true education of

the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and the quickest way of developing his intellects. But unless the development of the mind and the body, goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lop - sided affair.”⁴⁰.

III The Economic Theory of Mahatma Gandhi

a) Sarvodaya

John Ruskin’s “Unto This Last” was a book that influenced Gandhi very much. He was very much attracted to the new socialistic principles of life. This book affected his social principles to a certain extent, even though he did not agree with the utilitarian principle aiming at the greatest good. According to him, “The greatest good of the greatest number is meaningless, for, it sacrifices the interests of 49 % for the completion of the interests of 51 %. So he coined a new idea Sarvodaya - for the “good of all”.

b) Trusteeship

For the good of all he wanted equal rights for all, equal distribution of wealth and property. He wanted equal distribution of the land. The basic theory of this is that lands are **common property** and all have equal right on it. The basic concept behind

this is the theory of non possession. The landlords have to donate their land for the landless people. The whole land is owned by the society. The landlords are only trustees. He believed that it is the duty of the rich to donate the land to the common people and become the trustees. He says that "the rich should take the initiative in this possession with a view to a universal diffusion of the spirit of contentment. This does not mean that if one has wealth, it should be thrown away and wife and children should be turned out of doors.....it simply means that one must give up attachment to these things and dedicate one's all to God and make use of His gifts to serve Him only. And he believed that love and exclusive possession can never go together. He says that a violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is voluntary abdication of riches giving and sharing them for the common good. He invited the owners of the land to act as trustees, taking a decent minimum livelihood.

c) Bread Labour

By the term "Bread" Gandhi meant the primary needs of man. Among these food is that most important. So everyone would earn for his bread. It is must. The basic idea of this is God created man to work for his food, and those who ate without work are thieves. Therefore, the basic idea behind the concept of bread

labour was economic equality. Therefore, this was the idea based on the welfare of the poor masses of India. Actually this idea was first put forth by a Russian writer named T.M. Bandaret, Tolstoy advertised it and gave it a wider publicity.

Gandhiji suggested the implementation of spinning as Bread labour, and therefore, the spinning should be done by all. Everyone should produce Khadi clothes, according to their want and every family can grow cotton at least for family use. Women in the family can carry out this excellently by decorating the coarse Khadi with their artistic talents. So the world would see the revival of the fine, rich and coloured garment of the old. The Indian clother were the finest in the world at that time. No machine has yet reached the fineness of the cloth spunned by our ancestors. And the most important advantage of this is that for the middle classes it should supplement to income of the family and for the very poor women it is undoubtedly a means of livelihood. The spinning wheel should be as it was the widows loving companion and to the women of the women of the well to do family, spinning is a duty or Dharma.

Another idea behind the bread labour is the theory of conception. That is each one would take what he needed strictly to sustain his body. Over conception of a few will lead to

deficiency. He believed that God never creates more than needed. The deficiency is due to the over consumption of a few people. This causes the difference between the rich and poor. So the term bread stands for minimum quantity of food for living.

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IMPACT OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON PRE AND POST INDEPENDENT INDIA

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CHAPTER - IV

"The flame of that pyre is still alight today.
From his ashes, like those of the phoenix of
old, has sprung anew conscience of India".

IMPACT OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON PRE AND POST INDEPENDENT INDIA

The second half of the nineteenth century can be considered as a transition period between bondage and freedom to India. During this time, the people of India attempted to shake off the bonds of slavery and to regain their lost glory. The first war of Independence in 1857 was the beginning for the future programmes. After this we can see an awakening and enthusiasm in every fields of human life such as social, cultural and political. Many contributed for this. But the part played by Swami Vivekananda is helping India to stand on her legs is always memorable.

During the 19th century, India was under the rule of the British, who wanted to civilize India for a better national, cultural and social life. For this they introduced many reforms in political administration, social, cultural and religious fields. The aim was to westernize India.

But the age - old Indian culture was not ready to surrender without a struggle. And at the time, a new class of saviours of Indian culture emerged, among the Indians.

Swami Vivekananda came to the scene at this time, when India was at the cross - roads. His triumph at the Parliament of Religions in 1893 awakened a new sense of dignity and confidence among the people of India. For the first time, they became proud of their heritage. They are no longer ashamed of being Indians or Asians. A new confidence originated in the minds of the people of India.

The swamiji knew that the Salvation of India is not possible either through western materialism or through Eastern spiritualism. But he was very practical in his findings. He analysed both of these cultures and this helped him to know that these two cultures of the East and the West are complementary in their functions, and he tried to derive a new blend of these two. So he suggested that the west should learn Eastern Religion and philosophy and on the other hand, the East also should learn the advantages of Western materialism. That is why he suggested a give-and-take programme between two ways of living and he believed that by this process both will gain enormously. "India has to learn" he says from "Europe the conquest of external nature and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature. Then there will be neither Hindus nor Europeans - there will be the *ideal humanity* which has conquered both the nature,

(the external and the internal). We have developed one phase of humanity and ~~an~~ they other. It is the union of the two that is wanted”¹.

Swami Vivekananda was a practical Vedantin. He gave a new dynamic interpretation to Vedanta, so that it would effect in the cultural and political integration of this country. He refused to accept that Vedanta was theoretical and held that it was **practical**. He saw that the nameless, formless spirit could be realised through the individual spirits of the starving masses of India. He saw the Omnipotent, Omnipresent spirit in all his fellow - beings. So he dedicated his life for the service of this suffering humanity. He could not think of personal salvation, which was the goal of a Sanyasin. when the rest of the humanity is immersed in misery. He wanted their salvation also, and held that the Vedanta could be practiced by all.. In other words, he converted religion from the concept of meaningless rituals to a dynamic faith. He wanted the supply of the ancient glory of Aryans to all. To him Vedanta was a thing which is to be followed or practised in **this world itself**. He had no belief in a God who would give him pleasure in a world other than this. He saw his God, to be worshipped in the Poor and tried hard to serve them with bread or what they wanted. This supreme love for them was his **pooja** or

mode of worship. In that sense he secularised religion and proclaimed it as a means to the regeneration of his country both culturally and politically. So he used Vedanta as a tool in the remaking of his country, according to the revolutionary ideas of cultural and political integration of his Mother Land.

By doing this, he showed that the people of India could know the past glory of their culture and their by make them proud of it. The richness of Indian thought, got revealed to them, which made them self - confident. Through this process he liberated the ideals of Vedanta from the grip of the Orthodox Pandits and Priests. The shining glory of Vedanta philosophy was presented to the people in simple terms for the first time through his many Letters and Lectures. This caused for a wide awareness of the concepts of Hinduism. Young men of the country became interested in the ideals of Hinduism and a religions revival was the result.

His method was **constructive**. He never believed in destruction. He said "In the first place, I would ask mankind to recognise this maxim, "Do not destroy". Iconoclastic reforms do no good to the world. Break not, pull not any thing down, but **build**, Help if you can; if you cannot, fold your hands and stand by and see things going on. Do not injure, if you cannot render

help.....Take man where he stands, and from there give him a lift.....What can you and I do? Do you think you can teach even a child?. You cannot. The child teaches himself². So he never mentioned the Barahmana to be pulled down. What he wanted only is the upliftment of sudras. He belived in compromise, rather than revolt. So he advised the higher classes to render help for the lower to rise in a healthy way.

The keen eyes of Vivekananda observed that the main reason for the down fall of India was the absence of spirit of nationalism. He wanted to create this national feeling among Indians. India, as a nation has no national unity. So he found that in India what needed was to create the national feeling essential for nation - building.

a) Awakening of the masses

The first thing he found essential was the ***awakening of the masses***, who form the very basis of Indian nation. He knew that the resource of power of any nation is its people, not the ruling minority but the subject masses. So the prime need of national integration was the integration of these subject masses. They are the power - houses. These masses should be brought to the main stream, so that they would develop a national feeling.

And these individuals constitute nation. He said, "Self - love is the first teacher of self renunciation. For the preservation of the individual's interest only, one looks first to the well - being of the whole. In the interest of one's own nation is one's own interest, In the well being of one's own nation is one's own well - being. Without the co-operation of the many, most works can by no means go on-even self - defence becomes an impossibility"³. Taking a reciprocal, "The individual's life is the life of the whole the individual happiness is the happiness of the whole, apart from the whole, the individual's existence is inconceivable - this is an eternal truth and is the bed - rock on which the universe is built. To move slowly towards the infinite whole, bearing a constant feeling of intense sympathy and sameness with it, being happy with it's happiness and being distressed in it's affliction, is the individual's sole duty"⁴.

He was very sympathetic to the labouring classes of India. He called them the proletariat and said that even their suffering was heroic. He said "ye labouring classes of India, as a result of your silent, constant labours Babylon, Persia, Alexandria, Greece, Rome, Venice, Genoa, Baghdad Samarqand, Spain, Portugal, France, Denmark, Holland and England have successively attained supremacy and eminence! And you? - Well,

who cares to think of you!.....Your ancestors wrote a few philosophical works, penned a dozen or so epics or built a number of temples - that is all, and you rend the skies with triumphal shouts; while those whose heart's, blood has contributed to all the progress that has been made in the world-well who cares to praise them? The world - conquering heroes of spirituality, war and poetry are in the eyes of all, and they have received the homage of mankind. But where nobody looks, no one gives a word on encouragement, where every body hates - that living amid such circumstances and displaying boundless patience, infinite love and dauntless practicality, our proletariat are doing their duty in their homes day and night, without the slightest murmur - well, is there no heroism in this? Many turn out to be heroes when they have got some great task to perform. Even a coward easily gives up his life, and the most selfish man behaves disinterestedly when there is a multitude to cheer them on : but blessed indeed is he who manifests the same unselfishness and devotion to duty in the smallest of acts, unnoticed by all - and it is you who are actually doing this ye, ever- trampled labouring classes of India ! I bow to you"⁵.

He wanted that these proletariat may rise and he realised well that the well - being of the country depends on the

elevation of these masses. So he suggested. "keep the motto before you - Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion". He continued, "Remember that the nation lives in the cottage.....then fate of a nation.....depend(s) upon the.....condition of the masses. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature"⁶.

The Swamiji considered that the neglect of the masses as the great ***national sin*** which was one of the causes of our down fall. The masses of India would be supplied with sufficient education, food and care. The nation could not progress without them. The only way to regenerate the country was to elevate the standard of living of these masses, otherwise politics or any other way would not be successful.

He suggested that the elevation of masses should be conducted only by winning their love. They should be loved - one must raise oneself by one's own exertion - this holds good in all spheres. The moment they understood the work done for the benefit of them, then only the work becomes fruitful. He believed that once they were brought into the stream they would take their own path safely.

b) Practical application of Religious Principles

But Swami Vivekananda did not account religion for this downfall. Religion was not in fault, but what needed according to him was the application of the religious principles into practice. Religion teaches that every being is only one's own self multiplied. Religions demands sympathy. So no need of blaming religion for all defects, the defect he found was that religion is only *preached not practised*.

He counted liberty as the first condition for growth, and considered it as a natural right. He said, "Liberty does not certainly mean the absence of obstacles, in the path of man's appropriation of wealth etc., by you and me, but it is our natural right to be allowed to use our own body, intelligence or wealth according to our will, without doing any harm to others; and all the members of a society ought to have the same opportunity for obtaining wealth, education or knowledge"⁷.

c) Pride in the past of the country

The second thing needed to build a nation, according to him was the pride in the past of our country. "Out of past is built the future" says he "We should look back, and drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind, and after that, look forward,

march forward and make India brighter, greater much higher than she ever was”⁸. Therefore Hindus should study their past - the wonderful truths confined in the texts like Upanishads, Scriptures, Puranas must be brought out from the monasteries, and be broadcasted all over the land. Indians would respect great men of the country - those great souled men who have realised the eternal truths.

Another important thing he wanted to create was the unity based on spiritual ideas. He did not believe in reforms; he believed in growth. He said that everybody can show what evil is, but he is the friend of mankind who finds a way out of the difficulty. The reformers like Sankara, Ramanuja, Nanak had never cursed. “Their lips only pronounced blessings. They never condemned”⁹. He says that they did not say you have been wicked, now let us be good. They said, you have been good, but let us now be better. This was a positive approach.

d) Physical Strength is needed

The swami was always cautious about the Physical and moral strength of his men, he always stressed on the need of having a good physique because he knew the body-mind relationship. So he gave special importance to physical strength.

He advised his country men to become strong physically. He found that manliness is strength. So for the regeneration of India, he advised his country men to be strong. He knew that nothing could be gained by the week. He wanted his men to have an athletic body.

e) Political freedom

Unlike other spiritual leaders Vivekananda touched all facets of human life. He realised that the immediate need of India was the political freedom. As he realised weakness as the cause of the one third of man's miseries, he knew that the main reason for the weakness of India was the political dependence. Though he was not a politician his rational intellect could realise the cause of the problem of India. One of the India's most respected old - time Revolutionaries Hema Chandra Ghosh has put on record how deeply inspired he was by the words of Swami Vivekananda. He recalls in particular the pasting exhortation of Swamiji. "The great master gave us a four fold programme of work, going among the masses, eradication of don't touchness, opening of gymnesiums and libraries,.....The patriot Saint blessed me with a gentle look and said; Man making is my mission of life. Hema Chandra, you try with your comrades to translate this mission of mine, into action and reality. Read Bankims Chandra and emulate his Desh

bhakti and Sanatana Dharma. Your duty should be - service to the Motherland. This India should be freed politically first"¹⁰.

Thus we can see that apart from creating the ideological basis for the rise of nationalism, Swami Vivekananda directly provided inspiration in this sphere. A well known historian says "This great - hearted Sannyasi remained to so many in India the harbinger of a new hope, the proud apostle of India's freedom as the pre-condition of fulfillment. It was this man who actively inspired a whole host of national revolutionaries in the Swadeshi era and afterwards, whose influence was a powerful, pervasive factor in the making, let us say, of Nataji Subhash Chandra Bose and many other freedom fighters with diverse ideological affiliations. No wonder the Sedition (Rowlatt) Committee Report (1918) affirmed that Vivekananda had an **important influence on those who created a big pre-freedom tumult in the first decade of this country**. That influence continued and pervades what ever is forward looking in the national scene even today"¹¹.

It is evident from the report of sister Chrisine^t, that Swami Vivekananda was not indifferent to politics. Vivekananda said once, "What does Nivedita know of Indian Conditions and politics. I have done more politics in my life than she. I had the

idea of forming a combination of Indian princes for the overthrow of the foreign yoke. For that reason I have tramped all over the country from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin”¹².

f) Love for nation is wanted

Swami Vivekananda was not an active politician but he, through his speeches and exhortions helped much to attain the political freedom of India. He knew that political freedom of India is a must for the regeneration of India. He was a true patriot, as Sister Nivedita wrote, “Throughout those years in which I saw him almost daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed”¹³.

This burning love for his motherland, made him to exhort, “Be patriots, love the race which has done such great things for us in the past”¹⁴ and He continues “Feel, therefore, my would - be reformers, my would be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel the millions and millions of the descendants of gods and sages have become next - door neighbours of brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make your restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins,

becoming consonant with your heart - beats?. Has it made you almost mad?.....That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step.....you may feel, then: but instead of spending your energies in frothy talk, have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help instead of condemnations, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death? Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain - high obstructions? If the whole world stands against you sword in hand. Would you still dare to do what you think is right? If your wives and children are against you, if all your money goes, your name dies, your wealth vanishes, would you still stick to it? Would you still pursue it and go on steadily towards your own goal?.....Have you got that steadfastness? If you have these three things, each one of you will work miracles”¹⁵.

And for the liberation of India he wanted a band of such patriots, who are ready to sacrifice their life for the sake of the country. He said, “Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large -hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost, for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance”¹⁶.

His stirring exhortations fell on the Indian mind which was thrilling to throw away the foreign yoke. It awakened a new vigour and enthusiasm in the minds of Indian youth, Many young men whole heartedly responded to his call for the service of motherland. His clarion call 'Awake! Arise! And stop not till the goal is reached' stimulated the youth of India who wished to be free from the foreign rule. A new wave of nationalism originated. As instructed by the Swami Vivekananda this new nationalistic movement, looked upon the past of India, with a reverence, unlike other reformatory movements of that time. They felt pride in being Indian; Bhagavada Gita, was their Bible, and Motherland was their idol. As in the great battle in Mahabharatha, they dreamt the victory of truth. This new band of youths, terribly inspired by the nationalism, originated in Bengal, was the beginning of a new era, in the history of Indian independence.

Another important feature of this movement was the extreme valour and readiness to sacrifice life for the service of the motherland. They were ready to undertake the sacred duty. The faith in the immortal soul made them brave to face death. It was said, "A part from intense patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice which formed the new basis of new nationalism, they felt the call of a higher life as expounded by Swami Vivekananda, on the basis

of the Vedanata. A firm faith in the immortal soul within, led them to shed the fear of death and bodily pain. The religious attitude which made them realise God in the Nation, that is in their fellow - country - men, prepared them to sacrifice everything for the sake of the country, They approached their task with a spiritual faith and cheerfully embraced death. There is sufficient evidence to show that the following idealised picture of a patriot was literally true in numerous cases.....The patriot when the call the self - immolation comes, rejoices and says; The hour of my consecration has come, and I have to thank God now that the time for laying myself on His altar has arrived and that I have been chosen to suffer for the good and my countrymen. This is the hour of my greatest joy and the fulfilment of my life”¹⁷.

The book continues “That this philosophy, based principally on the teachings of Vivekananda and old texts like the Gita, profoundly influenced the young men are amply proved not only by their constant use of these books but also the autobiographies and memoranda of quite a large number of them. It is proved by official reports that the Gita and the works of Vivekananda were very much in use by the ‘terrorists’ and many copies of them were seized by the police in the course of their searches”¹⁸.

The Bengali poems and the songs especially served to demonstrate this militant nationalism. Any way it deeply touched the people at a large. Men of all classes left the houses to seek spiritual salvation. Here the spiritual Salvation was substituted by political salvation. These men left, schools and colleges, houses, relatives, friends, for the salvation of their motherland. They had no fear for death, and physical pain, like the wandering monks who dedicated themselves for a higher cause.

Later, in Subash Chandra Bose, we could very well understand this effect of Swami's teachings. In his early years, he read books of Vivekananda which gave him the ideal that struck with him throughout his life. "He learnt from Swamiji that the attainment of personal salvation lay in the service of humanity, and that to serve humanity truly, one had to be selfless. Whatever form it took that selfless service of humankind was the highest religion and the highest spirituality"¹⁹. Vivekananda thus brought relief to Subash Chandra's mind.

We could see a series of such fine young men vibrating with intense nationalism and were ready to give up their life for freeing the motherland from foreigners. Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Chandrasekhar Azad etc., in India, and some others like V.D. Savarkar, abroad took the work of Mother India and gave up their

life for the freedom of this land. The thing was that when these revolutionaries were sentenced to death, or life in other countries they welcomed it unhesitatingly and with the slogan Vanda Mathram on their lips, and Gita on their hands, walked to vow death.

Not only in these revolutionaries, but the influence of Swamiji words could be seen in his close friends and relatives also. Swamiji's two brothers, Mahendranath and Bhupendranath devoted their life for the service of the country influenced by their brother.

Bhupendranath, youngest brother deeply influenced by the teachings of his elder brother, become a revolutionary firmly determined to free his motherland. He founded the revolutionary group Anusilan Samithi. He actively participated in the publication of the weekly Yungantar. His articles inspired the countrymen, to rise against the British Rule.

The influence of Swami Vivekananda on his Disciples in West was well known Miss Margrett Noble who later came to be known as sister Nivedita left her homeland for the service of India.

The most striking example of the influence of Vivekananda could be seen during the Swadeshi - era around

1906. People of Bengal actively conducted the boycott of foreign clothes. They fired the boycotted clothes. Enthusiastic young men actively participated in these activities and they banned the use and trade of foreign goods. The congress committee held at Calcutta during 1906 under the presidentship of Dadabhai Navroj made a resolution demanding Swaraj and Swaraj-flag was unfurled.

Later in 1907 the split between moderates and extremists could be easily seen. The extremists were not satisfied with the activities of the moderates and they wanted a quick walk over of British. Many of them like Tilak believed in the way of valour and were supporters of men who believed to take arms to fight against the British.

This led to the formation of Swaraj party led by Tilak, Lala Lajapath Roy etc., who believed in rebellion. Tilak wanted freedom as a birth right. He believed that it should not be won either by prayer or by donation. They were not satisfied with the methodology adopted by the moderates, who still believed in the sense of decency of British.

The most precious example of the impact of Swami Vivekananda's teaching was the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, he

founded in 1897. The main objectives of the mission were the promotion of learning and propagation of Vedanta principles, to train young Brahmacharins to conduct the programmes. The Ramakrishana mission still working guided by a band of Sannayasins for the cause, to promote the cultural and humanitarian values as instructed by Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda was one who suggested for special care for the lower classes. He said that if a Brahmin is five times brilliant than a pupil of lower birth, the facilities allowed to educate the lower class pupil should be five times greater than that allowed for a Brahmin boy. Our constitution agrees with this and it ensures reservation for these lower class people.

Swamiji wanted also the material progress of India. For this he advised the men to achieve more and more advancement in the fields of Science and technology with the help of the West. This also came into effect. Now in India, we can see that the Scientific Researches, including Space Researches are in an advanced position. In the case of Technology also India has a position among the latest computer - soft ware technology.

Another effect could be seen in the foreign policy of India. India now has a good relation with almost all countries and

they are ready to co-operate with India in increasing interaction between.

Swamiji pointed out that his chief task was to rejuvenate India. Almost echoing the words of Swamiji, Pandit Nehru wrote. "I was not interested in making some political arrangement which would enable our people to carry on more or less as before only a little better. I felt they had stores of suppressed energy and ability and I wanted to release these and make them feel young and vital again.....Behind the past quarter of a century's struggle for India's independence and all our conflicts with British authority lay in my mind and that of many others the desire to realize India we felt that.....we would recharge the battery of India's spirit and weaken her from her long slumber"²⁰.

Impact of Swami on Post Independent India

India became independent, four decades after the Mahasamadhi of Swami Vivekananda. But the influence of his ideology can easily be seen even today. The magic touch of his magnetic personality attracted all, who came into contact with him. Even now the people of India and of other countries consider

him and his teachings with high admiration and respect. The impact he made on the Indian minds is immeasurable.

First it was the awakening of Nationalism. He advised his countrymen to worship the Motherland and be proud of being the sons of a great and sacred land like India. He played a great part in generating the ***national feelings*** of Indians. In the period when there was not even a clear concept of nationality known to the Indians, he preached Nationality. In Subhash Chandra Bose's words Swami Vivekananda is the ***Father of Indian Nationalism***. He knew that Nationality is the only thing which could inspire the Indians at all levels. And Indians became proud of being called as Indians.

Another important influence of his teachings could be seen in the awakening of Hinduism. Now the Hindus are more clearly aware of their heritage as Indians. To certain extent, it can be said that the national upheaval was the awakening of Hinduism. As a consequence, many Philosophical school of India and cultural organizations like Sri Ramakrishna Mission, started educating people on the several ideals of Hinduism. This helped to retain the vitality and vigour of the religion and made people aware of these almost all parts of the country. A number of cultural publication, accelerated the propagation of these basic ideals. The

great Epics, Puranas, Legends, etc., achieved a wide popularity through these publications. Broadcast through our media agencies such as Radio and TV promoted the popularity of the Hindu culture.

Swamiji also insisted on the study of Science and technology. This helped India to get improved in the fields of Science and Technology. India could compete with any other countries in the area of scientific researches and technical superiority. In satellite launching, production nuclear weapons and getting latest scientific equipments are all the consequences of this. Now, India is a country producing Super Computers. This is also the case with textile and several other consumer items.

We can also see that his prime concern was the state of the poor in the country. So a number of charitable societies, and other social Science institutions came up in the efforts to help the Poor.

The Swamiji emphasised the fact that in our tradition women are respected as Mothers and if the country has to awake it should ensure the respect for the women. Our constitution gives equal status for men and women. Now Indian women are capable of securing education, safety and similar job possibilities

with men. Now our Governments are trying to implement more and more reservations and representations to women in all fields of life, including legislative bodies of the state and Central Governments.

Another thing the Swamiji emphasised upon was the spreading of education. This also is now recognised by the constitution of India. It ensures, equal rights for all citizen of India to have education.

Swami Vivekananda reminded the Indians about the distance between the rich and the poor. It is the duty of the rich to recognise the state and conditions of the poor and treat them gently to restore the rights of poor, to avoid clashes between the Haves and Have-nots for these rights and facilities. That is why even though the socialistic revival took place in the country demanding equal rights and status for the poor as that of the rich, here there was no class wars or riots. That was the effect of his religious socialism. Moreover in India, there were no military operations against the rulers. In many other countries, the poor along with the military force, replaced the Government and ruling bodies.

Eventhough these are the facts, we could see that there are problems in India, the same problems but with slight formal changes. One thing he found as one of the main reasons for our national degradation was the exclusiveness. In those days India narrowed herself and was not ready to give up her possessions to other nations and spiritual principles were kept away from the public. But now the same thing is happening in the political field. The political leaders keep themselves away from the public, and behave as Superhumans. They are not ready to give up their power to others. They keep all the administrative powers with them or with their family men. As a result the field of politics is now full of corruption. Even the national leaders and rulers are not exceptions.

Another thing we could see is the craze for consumer goods. The Indians are not more interested in their simplicity of living, the basic theory of renunciation. Now the Indians are interested in the glamour of materialism. All are trying to acquire more wealth and other material facilities. No one is interested in the dharma. All are trying to have more and more money. There are no moral principles in gathering wealth.

A noteworthy change occurred in the social values also. A vital society which could resist all the immoralities is no

more. Now the social leaders are not bothered about the moral principles. This reflected in the family relations also. As in wealthy Western countries, in India also, family relation are not being strong. All are highly selfish. The youth of country is emerging as helpless and depressed. They are not being motivated and directed through the correct path. A thing which is called as generation gap is being pointed out as the reason for this degeneration of youth. This youth unrest is the cause of many atrocities and calamities.

India is a land, where womanhood is considered sacred. But now the atrocities against women are increased. Not the police nor the social organisations are able to make an end to this. Eventhough there is law prohibiting doing this is a main cause of death of young women. Women could not save their honour, or the life itself from some antisocial criminals.

Even after a half century the educational system, about which Swami Vivekananda opined, that the system producing only Clerks, is going on. There were many educational reforms were done, the system is still defective. That is, it is not a man - making education. This is the case of higher education also. The education is now job oriented.

Indians are becoming more and more lazy. They are not ready to work hard. The Indians are talking about rights only not about duties. Less work, more profit is our motto. The Indians are always seeking ways to have more money, without work.

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IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI ON PRE AND POST INDEPENDENT INDIA

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CHAPTER - V

“An extra ordinary personality who had evolved through his life and work a moral and spiritual power which is many times more effective than the atomic power”.

(Sriman Narayan)

IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI ON PRE AND POST INDEPENDENT INDIA

Mathma Gandhi, the founder of Indian Independence returned to India from South Africa after his triumph there in 1915. In South Africa, even though his mission was another, he fought against the injustice shown by the European against the Indian labboureres. He brought the Indians together and trained them to seek their rights. As he mentions in his "Autobiography" he felt boundless joy and a type of relaxation on reaching India. Reaching here, he went on a tour to "see" India. This vision of India made him think about the need of independence to Indians and he decided to apply the new system of struggle which he had adopted in South Africa. He would lead the Indians towards freedom through the newly adopted way - Satyagraha. That is why he made it clear when his co-workers drafted the Fundamental Principle when they decided to establish an Ashram in 1921 as "Self realization through the service of the Motherland. Service of the Motherland means service of Truth and God and abstention from doing harm to others".

In 1915 he founded 'The Satyagraha Ashram' in a rented house at Kochrab, in the vicinity of Ahmedabad and framed

the rules in the light of his experience in South Africa. The basic principles were truth and non - violence.

Gandhi entered into Indian Politics through the launching of a Satyagraha at Viramgam customs office, knowing about the high handedness in the customs office. He communicated with the Government and secured an order for the closure of that Customs Office from the Vicercy, Lord Chelmsford. This was his first Satyagraha in India.

In 1917 he started his second effort to secure the abolition of Indentured labour. In this he got public support beyond his expectations.

Subsequently he had another Satyagraha in favour of the Indigo planters of Champaran, in Bihar. Here also he met the officials and made clear the grievances of poor planters and secured permission for proper investigation which resulted in the removal of the misery of people. Besides this, knowing the then laxity of better living conditions and education, he started his constructive work' laying special importance to the promotion of education, better sanitary conditions etc.

Just after Champaran a Satyagraha was launched against the mill - owners of Kheda in Gujarat. Here also he tried

hard to make the mil' owners aware of the conditions of the workers and to get reasonable payment for the poor people. The no-rent campaign designed by him attracted the attention of the Government and the Government exempted the poorer section from paying taxes.

It was in 1918 that the First World War started. Gandhi recruited volunteers for the help of Britain encashing the wide support and influence got to him. In return, from the British, he hoped for the gift of Independence to India. Instead, India got the Rowlatt Act which curbed even personal freedom of Indians and allowed detention without trial. This made Gandhi to resist these and to start "Civil disobedience" against this. April 6th was the date fixed for the civil disobedience programme. There was tremendous response all over India and the hartal was observed in villages as well as towns. With great enthusiasm, people attended the meetings. The success was beyond calculations. India witnessed a new awakening. In Bombay the programme included the sale of banned Hindi song which was written by Gandhi. It was a big success and the people in the Public meeting took the vows of Swadeshi, and Hindu - Muslim unity.

Now, Martial law was imposed. Gandhi left Bombay to Delhi and then to Punjab. But he was arrested on the way. The

news of his arrest spread far and wide, and provoked reprehensible acts more violence at Ahmedabad, and other places. Gandhi rushed there and his efforts helped to restore peace and unity. In effect the Martial law was withdrawn.

The affairs of the Punjab deteriorated rapidly. General Dyer took command of Amritsar. He banned public meetings; but the prohibitory notice was not properly circulated. Unknowing the ban a large number of people gathered at a place called Jallianwalabagh on the day of Baisakhi. Gen. Dyer ordered firing cruelly on this mass without giving any order to disperse. Besides this massacre, the British also imposed many repressive measures on Punjab.

As protest against these atrocities in Punjab, Gandhi returned the Kaiser-i-Hind Medal awarded to him. Rabindranath Tagore also surrendered his knighthood. When the events in the Punjab got wide spread publicity the Government appointed a Committee of Enquiry under Lord Hunter. Gandhi decided to find the Truth. Soon he noticed that the imprisoned Punjab leaders were not allowed to presenting all the facts before the commission. So Gandhi and other leaders decided to boycott the Commission and to form a non-official committee for enquiry on behalf of the

Congress. He drafted the report of the Enquiry Committee and that was accepted unanimously.

Gandhi became the Editor of an English Weekly named Young India and a Gujarathi Monthly, Navjivan.

In the World War, Turkey was against the English, yet the Indian Muslims fought against Turkey on behalf of the English believing in the pledge given by the British, that after the termination of the war the powers of the Khalifat would not be curbed. But the British broke the promise and the Muslims turned against the British. Gandhi supported the Muslims and in 1919 at Delhi he first spoke of non-Co-operation, with the British who denied their pledge.

About this time the British Govt. announced certain administrative reforms, Gandhi had the view to accept the given powers and to press for more but leaders like Tilak, Motilal and Chittaranjan Das were against this.

The Amritsar Congress (1919) proposed for a change in the constitution of the congress on account of the changing situations. Gandhi drafted the new constitution and the Nagpur congress in 1920 adopted it. He accepted the Presidentship of a political organization named the "All Indian Home Rule League".

Then the All - Indian congress Committee decided on holding a special session of the Congress in Calcutta in September 1920. At this session Gandhi moved the non - cooperation resolution, which was brought forward for the purpose of redressing the Punjab and khilafat wrongs. This resolution also mentioned the attainment of 'Swaraj' as one of the objectives of non - cooperation. This resolution was opposed by leaders like Bipin Chandrapal and Lala Lajpat Rai. But the top leaders of the congress like Motilal Nehru, and the Muslims supported Gandhi and the Congress adopted the Programme of progressive non Co-operation of Gandhi with a huge majority. His programme included the surrender of titles, withdrawal from schools and Colleges, Law - Courts and Legislative councils, boycott of foreign goods and non - payment of taxes. Gandhiji's leadership was firmly established.

He visited many places preaching his new theory of Non-violent Non co-operation. When he visited Dacca he spoke unhesitatingly". Get rid of this foreign yoke, my creed is non - violence I have got this message to give you to India that Swaraj can be attained by non -violent non co-operation. If any body can convince me that he can obtain it by violence ; I shall retire to the

Himalayas"¹. He was confident about the attainment of Swaraj within one year.

After the Nagpur congress there was an unprecedented stir all over the country. Many caught infection of Gandhi's inspiration and prompted by the ideal of sacrifice, leaders, and workers in different provinces addressed themselves to the task before them. The congress adopted the tri-coloured flag. During the first three months of 1921, he laid special stress on the boycott of the law courts, school and colleges, Gandhi emphasised that students will not give up education simply out of emotion or momentary excitement. It is true that no other movement attracted so many self sacrificing workers.

The All India Congress Committee met at Bombay gave stress on the boycott of foreign cloth and production of Khadi. Huge quantities of foreign cloth were burned at Bombay.

In a meeting held at Bombay Gandhi decided to launch civil disobedience. The All India Congress Committee met in Delhi adopted a resolution on individual and mass civil disobedience, which was moved by Gandhiji. The volunteers took the oath in the name of God and it was proposed to have a Satyagraha in Bardoli Taluk of Surat District.

But then Government declared the congress volunteers organisation of many provinces unlawful, With a view to make the visit of the Prince of Wales a success. But wherever the Prince went, he was met with hartals and deserted streets. Thousands of people courted arrests by joining the volunteer organisation. Among the leaders there were Lala Lajpath Rai, Desabandhu Das and Motilal were arrested. Pandit Malaviyagi was unhappy over the arrests and he tried for a compromise. So he, after negotiations with government, recommended for the calling of the hartals to the Mahatma. He gave assurance about the Round Table Conference to discuss the matters, and the withdrawal of recent government orders and, the release of all political prisoners. The Ahamedbad session 1921 discussed the matter and the Congress approved of the attitude taken by Gandhiji. But according to the request of Malayiyagi he agreed to postpone the Satyagraha for a fortnight. But the government did not take any favourable step and with great enthusiasm Gandhi decided to conduct civil disobedience.

The chauri chaura incident disappointed Gandhi there, the violent mass set fire to police station and burnt 21 policemen. The share of congressmen and khilafatmen in these incidents hurt him very much and he decided to postpone the

Non-violence campaign until an atmosphere of non - violence had been created. So he insisted on a constructive work. This was known as the Bardoli Resolution. Gandhi was arrested on March 10, 1922 and was taken to Yervada Jail for 2 years.

During this time the congress split into two. Gandhi met the two groups. The Swarajists, led by Deshbandhu, was against civil disobedience.

In 1924 there occurred Hindu - Muslim riots in many places of India. It took places severely in Kohat in the North West Frontier Province. Gandhi took the responsibility thinking that the political consciousness awakened by him now diverted to different channels. Finding no other way to stop this he undertook a Fast for 21 days to restore communal harmony.

Within two weeks of his breaking his Fast, the Bengal Government arrested on October 25 Satyendra Chandra Mitra, Subhash Chandra Bose and others who were the right hand man of Desabendhu. Came to Gandhi and the discussions led to a pact.

After Belgaum Congress he was on tour revitalizing the constructive work. By non - violent Satyagraha, he helped the untouchables to secure their rights. The temple - entry

Satyagraha at Vaikom was the best example. He visited Noakhali, where the Hindu-Muslim conflict took place.

After the death of Desabandu, the All India Congress Committee included the Swarajya party members as members of congress to contest elections. An autonomous body called All Indian Charka Sangha (All Indian Spinner Association) was started for the promotion of Khadi. But at the time of Kanpur Congress (1925) the Swarajya Party split, Gandhi laid special emphasis on "communal unity".

At this time, Viceroy announced the coming of Simon Commission. All political parties in India decided to boycott it. The congress too passed a resolution in 1927. When Simon Commission arrived there was hartal. There was a lathi charge at Lahore and Lala Lajpath Rai died on November 17 due to the injuries in lathi charge.

In 1928, in Bardoli started a no-rent campaign in protest against the unreasonable enhancement of rent. This fully backed by Gandhi and led by Patel. The government imparted large scale repressive measures on Satyagrahis to put it down. The people conducted the campaign non - violently. At last the people won. An official commission made enquiries and from the

official report it was clear that the rate proposed earlier was higher. The success of Bardoli agitation was the success of Gandhi and once again he took active part in the session of Congress at Calcutta in 1928.

By this time the Congress proposed dominion status for india and it was decided that if parliament rejects it or does not approve of it, then the congress will launch a campaign of "non - violent civil disobedience and advise the nation to suspend payment of rents etc., and of course, there will be no bar to carrying the propaganda in the name of the Congress for complete independence.

At this time the Viceroy went to England and on his return a declaration was made on October 31. This led many people to hope that India might get the Dominion status. To make sure of This Gandhi and Motilal met Viceroy who was unable to give and assurance of that kind. At the Lahore Congress Which met a few days after, the largest number of votes were cast in favour of Gandhi at the primary nomination for the presidential election. But Gandhi nominated Jawaharlal Nehru. Jawaharlal Nehru became president, but the problem of dominion self government verses independence did not come up for consideration.

The main resolution moved by Mahatmaji was passed. It directed members to boycott completely provisional and Central Legislature, and the All Indian Congress Committee had empowered to launch at the appropriate time the programme of Civil Disobedience. Mahatmaji again became the undisputed leader of the Congress. After the Lahore Congress Mahatmaji drafted pledge of Independence which was accepted by the working committee and adopted all over India as January 26, 1920. He was firm and the country was marching along the path shown by him.

After mediating for some time who that he would start civil disobedience, he decided to break the salt Law. In a Letter to the viceroy, he pointed out that the British rule was a curse to India as economically there was a gulf between the rulers and the ruled and pleaded for the removal of this inequality. If no there was response within March 11, then the campaign of Salt Satyagraha would be started. The poorer class were not able to get sufficient salt for them and for their cattle. Even the people at the seaside were not allowed to make salt. So on March 12, 1930 with 79 co-workers Gandhiji started from Sabarmathy Ashram on foot for Dandi on the Arabian Sea coast about 200 miles away. He took 24 days to reach there. He was the first to break the Salt law

and make salt. People full of enthusiasm made and sold salt in various places of India. The Government at first showed no interest in this matter. After breaking the law, Gandhi decided to have possession of salt house at Dharsana and the date fixed for this was May 6th. But on May 5th he was arrested. In his absence Sarojini Naidu perfectly carried out the agitation. But after arresting her, the government carried on very brutal repression on Satyagrahis, the spectacle of which awakened a feeling of respect even in the minds of foreigners who witnessed it. Not only at Dharsana but every where in nation gave proof of unflinching determination. More than a lakh of people courted arrest. There was an unprecedented stir among the women - folk who joined the movement in large numbers. The congress did not send any representative to the First Round Table Conference. In January 1931 government released Gandhi and some other Leaders.

Gandhiji met the Viceroy Lord Irwin and had discussions for about fifteen days, terminating in a pact which was known as Gandhi Irwin pact. According to the agreements of the pact, the people living in coastal areas were allowed to make salt peacefully, and all the political prisoners were released. And the representatives of the Congress assured him that the representative would join the Second Round Table Conference.

Gandhi was the sole delegate but he was of the opinion that freedom could not come as gift from others, but had to be gained by sacrifice.

After the pact, the congress met at karachi on March 29th and elected Sri patel as the president. According to the Mahatma's wish the Congress took steps to minimise the economic difference. It fixed a maximum salary and an minimum.

In 1931 a new Viceroy, Lord Willingdon came. He wanted a change in the policies of his predecessor. But according to the earlier agreement Gandhi went to the Round Table Conference. There he demanded franchise for all adults educated and uneducated. He was against any special treatment for the Minorities, but the Government, was inclined to do so. As the British did not like transfer of power they tried to make greed in the minds of minorities and there by separating them from the others.

By the time the Indian Politics had become complicated. The government broke all the agreements with Gandhi. In North Western Frontier Province, in U.P. Bengal, Abdual Gaffarkhan, Dr. Khan Sahib etc., were arrested. Jawaharlal was arrested on his way to Bombay to receive Gandhi.

Severe repressive measures were taken in Bengal especially in Chittagong. Mahatmaji sent a wire to Viceroy seeking an interview. But the Viceroy adopted an unreasonable and unbending attitude. Gandhi proposed a resolution recommending a campaign of civil disobedience if there was no satisfactory response from the Viceroy. But before commencing this campaign on January 4, 1932 Gandhi was arrested. The official policy was to bury the Gandhi-Irwin pact. Gandhi was in Yervada jail. On August 17, 1932 the British Prime Minister Mr. Ramsay Macdonald published his communal Award, providing separate electorate for the scheduled castes. Protesting this Gandhi sent an ultimatum to the British Government, that unless the award was modified, he would commence a fast unto death from September 20. All India was in a stir with deep anxiety and excitement. All were actuated by a supreme desire to save the Mahatma's life. Padit Madan Mohan Malaviya took the lead and with him came Sapru, Jayakar and many other. Shri. Bhim Rao Ambedkar was determined to secure the demands of the scheduled castes. However as a result of the united efforts of all these, an agreement was signed on the fifth day of the fast i.e., the Yervada Pact, canceling separate electorates for caste Hindus and Scheduled castes. Provision was made for primary elections in which the Scheduled Castes alone

would have the right to vote; but final elections would be on the bases of joint voting. The Government accepted this. After the fast he himself issued a statement urging the eradication of untouchability. On September 30, there was a public meeting at Bombay, which decided to form an "All India Anti - touchability League". Subsequently this League was reconstructed as the Harijan Sevak Sangha. Gandhiji demanded that these people must have the right to draw water from common wells to study in the same schools and enter into temples. He believed that the removal of untouchability was essential for the attainment of Swaraj. He demanded facilities to serve Harijans in the Jail. But the Government refused this.

He informed the Congress to withdraw all the programmes and concentrate only in removing untouchability. Vallabhai Patel and Subhash Bose objected to this. In 1934 Gandhiji declared not to remain as a member of the Congress and hither to Charka alone would be stressed. He shifted his Ashram to Wardha. He planned to establish Gramodyog Sangha for the promotion of Village industries. The congress Session met at Bombay accepted it.

He knew that for proper appreciation of rural problems it is necessary to live in the village. So in 1928 he

shifted to shegon, a village 5 miles away from Wardha and renamed it as 'Sevagram'.

Concentrating on his constructive work produced a tremendous progress to the All India Spinners Association in 1934. He made necessary arrangements to avoid exploitation and at the same time to help to earn their livelihood for the spinners. In 1937 he registered the Charka Sangha (All India Spinners Association) as a charitable Organization.

The Congress met for the first in April 1936 after the resignation of Gandhi in 1934, at Lacknow under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru who had just returned from Europe with his socialistic ideas. Gandhi did not attend the congress. There was a difference of opinion among the members. The supporters of Jawaharlal was in the minority. In the elections, congress had an overwhelming majority. Jawaharlal and Subhash had different opinion about the acceptance of office, but Sardar Patel and Rajendra Prasad were in favour of it. In march 1937, a resolution for office acceptance was adopted by the All India Committee by a majority of votes and after discussion with the Governors, Congress Ministers were installed in Madras, Bombay, U.P. M.P. Bihar and Orissa. A congress parliamentary party was formed to give advice and guidance to the congress Ministers. But

in fact it was Mahatmaji, who was source of inspiration. He was the brain behind the parliamentary Organisation.

In December 1926, the Congress Session was held in the village of Faizapur of Maharashtra. It was for the first time that a congress Session was held in a village, according to the desire of Gandhiji. There special mention was made in the speech of Gandhi about his concept of freedom. He said "By political independence, I do not mean a mere imitation of the British House of Commons, or the soviet Rule of Russia, or the Fascist rule of Italy, or the Nazi rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their own genius. We must have system suited to ours"² and economic freedom it was meant requisite clothing - not and adequate food including milk and butter for all, and for the attainment of these ends every one. i.e., men or women bust strive.

Mahatamaji considered himself as a non - violent socialist. He thought that this socialism was essentially Indian in character and was superior to the socialism imported from Europe. About socialism he said, "True socialism we have inherited from our fore - fathers who taught us that the land belongs to Gopal, that is God, which means that society is the true owner. Property of land belongs to him who works on it"³.

In February 1938 on the eve of the Haripura Congress, there was a ministerial crisis in UP and Bihar over the question of the release of the prisoners. The Ministers wanted the release of all political prisoners: but Government after consultation with the Viceroy objected. The UP and Bihar Ministers resigned. At last, at the intervention of Mahatmaji the crisis was resolved. All the political prisoners were released and the Ministers withdrew their resignation. Gandhi believed that all political prisoners are good patriots but misguided. At this session of Congress, a resolution was passed on craft - centred "Basic education". Which recommended the need of compulsory primary education through learning, simple crafts.

In March 1939 the Congress session at Tripuri made a resolution stating that the Congress would follow even in future the directions of Mahatamaji which it had been following. Thus Gandhi's leadership became unquestionable.

Mahatmaji tried hard to secure Hindu - Muslim unity. For this he met the Muslim League leader Mohammadali Jinnah, but Jinnath was not ready to accept congress as their votary. He further demanded that the national flag must be changed and Vande Matharam should not be the National song of India. More over, must be guaranteed in the constitution for Muslim.

Mahatmaji was against all reservations and he refused the demands. At the time of the second World War. Gandhi invited Jinnah to propose a joint demand of independence, but Jinnah was not ready. In 1940, the Muslim league adopted a resolution at the Lahore session demanding the right of self determining power of Muslim. This was the very beginning of the two nation theory. So Gandhi could not support it.

As soon as the Britain declared war on Germany, The Viceroy declared that India was belligerent country and issued various ordinances. The Mahatma in no way could approve of the policy of involving India in the war without caring what the Indians really wanted. The working committee met at Wardha to consider all aspects of this question if Britain granted independence to India. Free India would give all - out support to Britain. But the Government refused to do any thing concrete, instead it tried to wider the difference between the Hindus and the Muslims. It practiced the policy of 'Divide the Rule'. The viceroy acted as the Guardian of Muslims and tried to save their demand of separate nation wish which the Congress could not co-operate. So the Working committee empowered Gandhiji to start Civil Disobedience, if necessary. Soon October 11, he revealed to Working committee his proposal of Individual Satyagraha and

suggested Vinobabhave to start this and the aim was to secure Freedom to Speech. The individual Satyagraha went for one year. The Government prohibited the publishing of news about this Satyagraha.

He was against the caste differences. As a follower of Gita which proclaims the Chaturvarna he believed in the existence of caste system and the need of it. But he never advocated the dissimilarities. He was against the reservation for them because he believed that the reservation only weakens them and prevents the full-flourishing of their abilities. In his later life he supported inter-caste marriages.

His Swadeshi movement was a demonstration of his respect towards Indian culture and civilization. He proposed swadeshi in a period, when India had a mentality of worship towards European Civilization. The Indians had lost their pride and became mere imitators of the West. Everything 'Indian' was ridiculed and everything Western was respected. His Swadeshi was a symbol of self-respect and self-knowledge of Indians. This also helped to remove the inferiority complex of Indians.

To him religion is a thing deserving respect. He believed that it is unable to separate religion from India. As a

country of spirituality India could not leave religion, religion is the basis or back bone of Indian culture. Gandhi witnessed the presence of religion in politics and that is why he said that politics without religion is a non - sense. Without this religion and moral values it would become useless and mistaken.

Impact of Gandhi on Post Independent India

Now are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Indian Independence. Now it will be relevant to have a study or look into the lasting impact which Gandhi had made in the minds of Indian, and its effectiveness in the present condition of India.

Gandhi was an all rounder in all fields of human life. There was practically no area of human activity where he had not made his contribution. He was a religious man, and a reformist. As a traditionalist he held fast to the religious traditions of India and suggested reforms in that field. He suggested humanistic values to be applied in religious practices. Besides this he was revolutionary in the field of politics with his self - designed weapon - non violence. He fought against the mighty British rule and made them quit India. In the case of social and Economics fields also he was reformist who applied new theory of social and economic revival of India.

In politics after winning independence, Gandhi recommended that the Indian National Congress as a political institution should be dissolved and the congress workers should be sent to carry on the constructive programmes there that is to educate and organise the villagers about their rights and duties in India. Those who wished to remain in politics should have to form new political parties.

The Republican Constitution of 1950 bears several elements which come under the influence of Gandhi. The first one is, the **Adult franchise**, which had high consideration by Gandhi. It is the duty of politicians to make the people conscious about their rights.

The second is the **statutory reservation** for the backward communities and sections. Article 46 of Indian Constitution enables special care and protection for the Scheduled classes and Scheduled tribes in the fields of education and economics. This ultimately aimed at an exploitation free economic system for India. Actually these reservation for the scheduled class in the parliament and state legislature was drafted in the Poona pact of 1934 by Gandhi himself.

The adoption of the **Panchayati Raj** system also was another impact of Gandhi. Gandhi suggested the concept of self-sufficient autonomous villages as the centre. Now the Government has adopted this as a part of decentralisation of power, which ensures and exploitation-free system for rural development.

Moreover, he held the view that the best government is that which governs least. So he insisted on voluntary organisation strictly adopting democratic methods as far as possible in the social and the economic fields at different levels. And the State should take control only at higher levels where centralization is necessary.

In all his activities **man was the central theme**. He was not satisfied with the position of individuals under foreign rule. According to him every human being has a role to play. He was a person who not only was driving himself but also was driving others, according to Nehru. So all his programmes were centred round the individual, especially socio-cultural and economic activities, namely, emancipation of women education, social structure, and village administration.

The total poverty of the masses was the main problem he found. Attainment of political freedom was secondary to him

when compared with the removal of *the poverty of the masses*. He noticed that it was poverty which was dehumanizing men. He coined the word Daridranarayana to refer to those down trodden masses and devised a talisman. As he pointed out "I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self become too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swarga for the hungry and spiritually starving millions"⁴.

He was against the practice of untouchability. He was one who wished to see God in all his creation. So he could not bear the distinction to one class. He did not believe that this as a part of religion. If so, he said the religion is defective. He criticised the society for the atrocities against the untouchables. He called them "Harijans" which means "Children of God".

He opposed the decision of the British Government to provide separate electorates for Depressed Classes, realising the danger of dividing the Hindu society. He undertook a fast against the further division of society.

He knew that India lives in villages. A large section of village community lived in semi starvation and servitude. He made effective programmes for rural reconstruction. According to him, planning should begin from the bottom. Villages should be at the centre of all reforms. He put forward the view of autonomous, self-sustaining villages called Gram Swaraj. He believed that this Gram swaraj formed by the local people could effectively work for the development of that village.

The unemployment problem was another important problem. The educated men in large numbers were in need of employment. They had an education which will not help them to have a job. Gandhiji called this situation **enforced idleness**. He said that these idle hours can be profitably used in spinning. Later the spinning wheel was replaced by Ambar Charkha and middle class men who cannot find out any other job could earn something from this Charkha. The Government should provide support and help.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh which looked after the special educational and economic needs of locally artisans like Leather workers and the like had also to modify the programme of work in accordance with the needs of the time.

But he was against the **mass production** advocated by the socialists. Modern machinery was at the centre of this. But Gandhi could not co-operate with it because this will replace manual labour. He was against the industrialisation of India. He believed that exterminate industrialisation means extreme exploitation as centralisation is a by-product of industrialisation. So he considered it as **centralised violence** and **soullessness**. He did not want to see man as a slave of machine. Again, he wanted a system which provides employment to men. Moreover, he pointed out that here the capital which is needed for the establishment of heavy industries is not available, but here labour is abundant. If the ideal goal for the society is to develop human personality, intelligence, character and artistic sense, then the centralization advocated by the communists is not useful, but only decentralisation is advantageous.

To Gandhi there was no distinction between Ethics and Economics and he believed that economics devoid of Ethics is a waste. He wanted to check the craze after material profits which is an unavoidable side effect of industrialisation. He always valued the economic progress of a country in terms of the moral character and social integrity of its citizens. He advocated that everybody should get sufficient work to make his ends meet.

Industrially generalising employment, would displace the labour opportunities. He believed in the optimum use of man power.

Apart from all these things his programmes of Trusteeship is a valuable one. he based "Gram Swaraj" as the "Stepping stone to a purely non - violent independence. There he wanted to diminish the distance between the rich and the poor. He wanted no class wars. So quoting from, Isavasyopanishad' he said, wealth can be enjoyed by renouncing it. He wanted to reinforce the idea of nsakti yoga of Gita. One has to enjoy the minimum he wanted. One can only enjoy a portion of his possession and he should consider himself as a Frustee of the rest of his wealth, and that is to be used for social benefit. But he was not of the opinion that the wealthy people should be liquidated by only an equal distribution of wealth should take place. He explained that there is no need of liquidation of wealth. What is needed is that trustee, should become ready to use his possession for the benefit of the society. He should take only that much, what he needed for his livelihood. He should give up the concept of private ownership. Economic equality does not mean equal wealth to all. Equality should be there, in getting equal opportunity to satisfy their needs. This does not depend on the status of living. That is the prince and the pauper should avail the equal

opportunity to have his necessities. Every one should get house, equal nutritive food, education to his children etc., our Constitution ensures this.

Under the influence of Gandhi the Congress formulated certain social principles for economic emancipation of the poor and the down trodden. The ideal was to set up a social order which ensures social economic and political justice to all. Article 39 of our constitution allows equal right for men and women to seek their livelihood. This further provides that the ownership and centre of the material resources of the community are distributed so as to enable maximum goodness to the common people. Moreover this article also provides for equal pay for equal work for both men and women. That state should take care of the health and strength of the workers, man and women, and the children of tender age would not be allowed to enter into a work unsuited for their age and ability.

In Gandhi's conception, the inhabitants of the village should grow sufficient food grain for them. They should make sufficient cloth, and should run some village industries. The village should provide play grounds for children and facilities for cultural an social intercourse of the elders.

But one can see that the present day - India is quite different from his conception. Politics has degenerated. Criminalisation of politics and politicalisation of criminals go hand in hand. Today - satyagraha is not the Satyagraha visualised by Gandhi. He had strictly instructed that the reason for Satyagraha should be right and just. Such nobler and heroic fasts are now replaced by passive resistance based on coercion. These toes of fasting are frequent in India in the name of gherao. In that the opponent is surrounded and not allowed to move. Sometimes he has to suffer insults also. Here we can see a diversion from the original theory of Satyagraha.

But Vinobha Bhave, who was considered as the spiritual heir of Gandhi, effectively conducted his Bhoodan Gramdan movement. Everyone should donate a part of his land for the landless, and should contribute one day's labour to build up Gram Nidhi meant for Gram Niraman - rebuilding of villages.

The confession of Nehru towards the end of his career enlightened the possibility of the message of Gandhi. Here it is "One thing that distresses me very greatly is that, although I am convinced that the great majority of our population have bettered their economic condition a little, with more calories and more clothes, yet there are a good number of people in India who have

not profited by planning, and whose poverty is abysmal and most painful. I do think that some method should be framed to remedy the situation.

I begin to think more and more of Mahatma Gandhi's approach. It is odd that I am mentioning his name in this connection. I am entirely and admirer of the modern machine and I want the best machinery and the best techniques, but taking things as they are in India, however rapidly we advance towards the machine age and we will do so the fact remains that large numbers of our people are not touched by it and will not be for a considerable time. Some other methods have to be evolved so that they become practiced in production, even though the production apparatus of their may not be efficient as compared to modern technique, but we must use that for otherwise, it would be wasted. That ideas has to be kept in mind. We should think more of the very poor country men of ours and do something to improve this lot as quickly as we can. This problem is troubling me a great deal"⁵.

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CONCLUSION

S. Remadevi “Impact of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi to the cultural and political scenario of pre and post independent India ” Thesis.
Department of Philosophy , Sree Kerala Varma College Thrissur, University of Calicut, 1999

163

CHAPTER - VI

“The two movements , although independent of each other and each going its own way, have none the less the same object. ”

Romain Rolland

CONCLUSION

The Nineteenth century was a period of awakening and reforms in the political Social and Cultural fields in India. In the beginning, Raja Ram Mohan Roy brought in a social reformation, and urged the Indians to re-organise the religious and social concepts and customs of that time. His "Brahma Samaj" was the first systematic attempt to check the evils in the social life of India. After that, the "Arya Samaj" of Dayanada Saraswathy laid the foundation of Hindu revival on Vedic basement. As a result of similar attempts to reform the Hindu society a new awakening or enthusiasm began to flourish.

At that time English education became wide - spread, the English educated classes, strongly attracted by the glamour of the West, were ready to sink deep into Western culture and beliefs. They believed that the English were the most cultured and progressive race and so tried to modernize themselves by imitating the west. They got superiority over the other classes of India and they looked for everything

It was during this time that Swami Vivekananda appeared on the scene. Indians were in a dilemma to accept it or not. Swamiji's triumph in the parliament of Religions in 1893, awakened a new spirit and sense of dignity among Indians. For the first time Indians began to think about the cultural heritage of India and to feel proud of it. This gave a new confidence to them. Vivekananda found that India had to find their way between the Scylla of old superstitious orthodoxy and the Gargyladise of materialism. But both were, not acceptable to him as it were. He wanted was a unique blend of these two different cultures. That is, he wanted the Indian to have the prosperity and progressiveness of the Westeners. and the Westerners need the soulfulness of the Eastners . while he was in America he never forgot a single day the primary idea of his mission - to save his people in body and soul. In Vivekananda's eyes there are two missions. One is to take money from the west and the other is to give the spiritual treasures of India to the west.

Swami Vivekananda was a practical Vedanitin. He believed in the extreme practicability of Vedantic principles. He wanted these to be not just heard but also to be practiced by everybody in their daily life. He re-interpreted Vedanta in a new style without any deviation from the original. His Vedanta was life

- giving and extremely dynamic. It gave a new spirit to the religious ideals in India. We have to note that this change was reflected in the social political and cultural fields in India. Every where now he found it applicable. To him Vedanta was not just science of personal salvation but a theory of universal salvation "krnavanto Viswamaryam". It was not a theory of lifeless rituals. Instead it was dynamic faith. That is, a process of seeing God in all and every where. To him all are the manifestations of the same God and hence are divine. This helped him to define God, in the form of bread before a starving man as knowledge before an ignorant person and an education before one lacking in education. Thus he secularised and socialised religion and transformed it into an instrument for the political and social remaking of India.

As a Vedantist he considered all the religions as good, and as different ways to the same goal. They all contain the same basic truth. The ways are different because the tastes of men are different. All have the equal freedom to worship through their own way. Like the rivers towards the same sea they are ways to the same God. So there is no need of leaving any religion and accepting another one. One should progress through his own way - by following it sincerely. Moreover, he suggested a universal

religion, without any sect or creed based on love and brotherhood, acceptable to all.

To support his views, the Swamiji preached about an Impersonal God which the Vedanta refers as birthless, deathless etc. All beings are manifestations of the same God. That is he advocated a universal religion .

The Swamiji didnot believe in the glamour and prosperity of the Western civilization. He found it is only an outward expression under the glory and enjoyment there is only hopelessness and sorrow. Even though at the surface are misery and unhappiness, the Hindu Civilization is based on ever glorious spirit which is Eternal Bliss or supreme happiness.

Swami Vivekananda found that the basic attitude of India is spiritual. Religion is the basis of Indian vitality the back bone of Indian culture. He saw that every reform whether it is social or political should be based on spirituality. It is the only language of spirituality which India could follow. So here the political or social reforms are possible only through the spreading of spirituality. Thus religious upheavel is needed for all activities. Therefore he wanted to spiritualise India before flooding her with

socialistic or political ideas. The spirituality hidden in the Upanishads should be brought out and preached.

But by spirituality he did not mean just the rituals and superstitions. He found that these rituals are the kinter gardens of religion and are only stepping stones. As a sociologist he analysed these rituals and social customs and advocated for a refined social set-up. He found that the cast system, widow re-marriage etc., were the necessities of certain sometime, and there is no need of following it always. So he advocated, the abolition of caste distinctions . He pointed out that suppression of women and poverty of the masses are the chief causes of the downfall of India. But with a practical mind he found that before preaching the spirituality, their urgent needs such as, food and emancipation of women, should be served.

As a vadantist, he could not find any difference between man and man. To him the same God is residing in all so there is no need of discrimination. All must have the same opportunity to hear about and know about this Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omniscient one. He wanted to acknowledge the nobility and dignity of all, irrespective of one's work and educational qualification.

So he suggested the preaching of Advaita - the unity of mankind. Therefore he suggested uniformity or socialisation in education, which would enable one to be self - confident.

He believed that all reforms should be positive in nature. That is no condemnation but praise he wanted. He suggested, uddhared Atmanatmanam - One must save the self by one's own self - by personal prowess.

Swami Vivekananda's contribution to the Indian Renaissance is significant. He laid the foundation of "New India" which continued in to the following century.also. His teachings supplied a new vigour and enthusiasm to the Indians. It brought self confidence and dignity to the masses of India. His humanitarian Vedanta attracted many and attained wide publicity. This attracted many Nationalist leaders and a new nationalist School under the leadership of Bal Ggangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra pal and Aurobindo Ghosh based on their ideas on this humanistic view of Vivekananda. This paved way to the rise of a new nationalism, based on religion which played an important role in the renaissance of India. This against the utilitarian mentality of the west and tried to base its ir activities on religion and spirituality in social political and moral fields. They stressed on spiritual freedom and preached the immortality of the soul

which enabled many young men to donate their talents for the welfare of the country. It gave them strength and fearlessness to face death. To them the work for the welfare of the masses was divine goal. They were brave enough to break all bondages and were ready to shake off the foreign yoke. They believed in Swadharma.

Vivekanda's four fold nationalistic ideal got wide - spread which included the awakening of the masses who are the real force of the country. With out this power - house of nation, nationality could not be formed by a small percentage of nationalists. He identified the boundless power of public. The Swamiji needed his men to have physical and moral strength. Moreover he was an ardent follower of karmayoga and suggested selfless work for the liberation of India. For this selfless work the body is an instrument. So he suggested good physical health. He suggested that one could understand spirituality easily through football than through Gita. He wanted to make men the ever powerful bits of spirituality. There is no limitation of man's power. He wanted men with iron muscles and strong will. That is kshatravirya and Brahmateja. He advised them "Arise! Awake ! and stop not till the goal is reached.

The swamiji wanted an organisation based on the common spiritual ground. He preached unity among different sects irrespective of diversity. Moreover he urged all men to be proud of their past and ancient glory of Vedic culture, to realise the superiority of Indian culture. Thus a new band of youths vibrant with intense patriotism and dedication to their motherland, emerged free their motherland and revolt against the suppressive foreign rule. In a sense, he was the militant monk.

These bands of youth decided to take arms for the political liberation of our land from the foreign rule. It is in this context that Subhash Chandra Bose recognised the swami as his political teacher. Leaders like Nehru, also influenced by the swami.

This passionate appeal of swami Vivekananda to the youth was not in vain. It awakened the sleeping Indian giant. This was seen in the Bengal revolution. In fact, if India, at the time, had definitely taken part in the collective action of organised masses, it was in no measure unrelated to the initial shock given by the mighty message of Swami Vivekananda. It was his fiery speeches that helped to rouse the millions of Arjunas to rise from their tamasic sleep to undertake hard work.

In this context, another great contribution of the Swamiji was the setting up of the Ramakrishan Mission. The mission following the ideals of the great Master has during the years grown into a large institution to carry on several social, educational and charitable activities. It has a large number of Mmutts and Ashrams and publishes a variety of religions Literature in different languages.

His social attitude was constructive. He knew that the two cultures (Eastern & Western) are not really opposed but are complementary to each other. He wanted a creative synthesis of the two cultures. He felt the need of material progress and social setup which are the positive aspects of materialism, and he had an appreciation for the social order of the west. For instance, the western " Ideal of liberty for women "in the society attracted him, and he also wished to bring it out in the Indian society also.

The swamiji has a clear notion that the prime condition that needed for this progress of his countrymen was the political freedom. He found that it was the political subjection that was the basic obstacle to the progress of India.

We should remember that swami Vivekananda had clear vision about the political destiny of India. Logically stating the rule of sudras (labourers) in succession with other three sections, namely, Brahmin, kshatriya and vaisya, he identified democracy as the rule of the Shudras. In fact, something more he predicted. "Yes : the Sudras of the world will rise.I can see, through the veil of the shadow coming events of the world. By God's grace it has descended on me. This sight of mine, through years of close observation, study and travel that is 'Sadharna'. As the astronomers see the movements of the stars through telescope, like wise a movement of the world falls within the range of my vision. You take it from me, this rising of the sudras will take first in Russia, and then in China. Indian will rise next and will play a vital role in shaping the future world"¹.

At the extreme, he knew that the materialisation will be destructive and to check this the current of spirituality is needed. So he said, that Europe is on the edge of the volcano and if the fire is not extinguished by a flood of spirituality it will erupt. This come true in the form of the first world war. The significance of the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda can be assessed in the fields of this contribution to the total humanity as also the political and cultural fields of India.

His contribution to the world humanity is matchless. His life for fellow - beings, was immeasurable. To him his life itself was a Tapasya or penance to the Virat in the form of the poor. He saw God in human beings and ignored the practice for self - salvation and he was ready to sacrifice his salvation, for the salvation of the world, the salvation of the whole humanity. He gave the poor men of India a new hope and life. He believed that it is the duty of the sanyasin to work for the poor. To him Sanyasa was not a thing a part from the natural life. He recognised the role of Sanyasin in the social and cultural works or the society.

The political significance of his work is that he awakened the sleeping soul of India. He felt the urgent need of the resurrection of the nationality of India. He saw that educated and middle upper classes were completely apart from the major part of India - the poor and the lower classes. They were completely alien to the field of politics of nationality. So the Swamiji urged the middle and upper classes to lift the poor to their standard by leading heartfelt love and help so that they will be able to take part in the national programmes of freedom. He realised that when the whole India becomes single hearted then the national freedom will come soon. He paved the way to such a situation.

The swamiji 's contribution to the cultural field of India is also very important. As a religious teacher, his main domain was religion. He gave a new definition to religion so as to suit for the then need of India - the evolution for the national spirit.

We can also see that the Swamiji realised the new trend of the world in the form of socialism, and knew that India also as moving towards it. His keen eyes noticed that in all other countries the rise of socialism led to a series of class - war or clashes between classes - rich and the poor.

Realising the possibility of such class wars in India he tried to shorten the distance between the rich and the poor. In all other places socialism was the rising of the poor against the rich. But here in India he sought the help of the Rajas and the Maharajas to raise the poor by lending heartfelt support and co-operation to the poor. By doing this he avoided the ill feeling the poor generally have towards the rich and thereby facilitating a peaceful hand over of the authority from the rich to the poor.

Another contribution of his to the social life was the active participation of charitable societies in the relief programme of flood or disease infected areas. The Ramakrishna Mission was

the foremost in such activities. Following this a number of charitable institutions were started in our country and these are still ready to give active support to the social programmes in India.

Mahatama Gandhi based his philosophy on Truth and Non violence, which are the essentials of religion. He felt the need of elevation of the ethical and moral principles for the regeneration of India, politically and socially. One could easily feel the influence of the Indian philosophy in his teachings. He identified God as the supreme truth or Absolute Reality. He says "Our will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self"². He wrote to Tagore, "The doom which is going wanting to over take them (the so-called free countries) is as certain as death - for man's truth is moral truth and his emancipation is in the spiritual life"³. He used the words like ahimse, aparigraha, analsakthyoga, satyagraha, as examples.

Another significance of Gandhi is the high idealism of his principles. G.N. Dhavan identified him as a philosophical anarchist, because of his conception of stateless, classless democracy of autonomous villages, strictly based as non-violence,

the acceptance of which is also an ideal condition rather than practical.

The most significant was his ideal of "humanity. He believed that with out the emancipation of the common folk of India, India could not be free. For this he wanted an integral social reformation. He was a social worker and he fought against all the dissimilarities in society. He led the compaign to remove untouchability to secure equal rights in religious performances etc., The temple Entry satyagraha of South India is the an example.

He realised the power of the masses, he carefully and wisely utilised this power to reach the end. His satyagraha was highly successful. He injected into them the necessity of independence and his emphasis on the power of violence, removed all fear or inferiority - feelings of the Indian masses, which encouraged them to fight against the armed British. In fact, he raised the soul force of the Indian masses.

This was due to his excellence in mass communication. "Gandhi's movement, on the other hand, was much more comprehensive. He tried to activate all the diverse sections of the national spectrum, from the affluent classes to the

impoverished. It was not just confined to tending only the grass root level as a multitude of activist groups are now a days doing no doubt these are bringing some relief to the people of bottom'

Gandhi's concept was a holistic one. He looked life as a whole and for his it was no possible to differentiate it into separate water tight compartments. Therefore, he found no difference between Ethics and politics. And according to him the economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral values. K.M. Munshi wrote "Gandhi is too near to us in time to enable us to judge him from the perspective of history and human thought. Patriots may call him "the Father of the Nation" and historians may call him the "Liberator of India". However it must not be forgotten that he was a Mahatma in the line of the greatmen who have stood, and fought and suffered for indicating the moral and spiritual values against the forces of barbarism"⁴.

Another significance was the transparency of his teaching. He preached what he had practised. He was one among us. "I claim, to be no more than an average man with less than average ability"⁵. This is true.

His significance according to Romain Rolland was "the perfect manifestation of the principal of the life which will lead

new humanity on to a new path"⁶. Gandhian thought has significant relevance for the modern world and that many things which have happened since he passed away have not diminished, but lightened its relevances." "The crisis that Gandhi faced is obviously not over but has been deepening, and the solutions that he proposed have not become outdated.....Gandhi is still a living challenge to the economic thinking, planning and action not only in his own country but in all the countries of the world"⁷.

The ultimate moral end according to Gandhi is God realisation . Man is free to choose his actions . The results are independent of him.Gandhi was the supporter of world brotherhood. He, going a step further finds the existence of God in every living being. Public service is a means to attain God. According to Gandhi Swaraj, Swadeshi, and the Sarvodaya are steps in the attainment of God. His aim for the establishment of Society is based on the unhindered opportunity to every individual. He synthesises ethics and religion . He synthesises ethics and Politics too.

After the independence that the country cannot progress without the ideology of Sarvodaya . Unfortunately He cannot fulfill his wish. After his death the unfinished was taken up by his chief disciple and he successfully led Bhoodan Movement in

which millions of acres of land was donated and distributed among the land less labourers.

On comparing these two contemporary philosophers - Swami Vivekananda and mahatma Gandhi, we can see that the philosophy of Swami Vivekandanda which was strictly based on deep religious awareness and purely vendatic approach which was highly intellectual. He clearly explained the principles of Vedanta with effective proofs. The theory of Gandhiji was based on ethical or moral principles.

Swami Vivekandanda put forward a synthesis of religion and socialism. That is he proposed a Religious socialism. He did not want any individual difference in the filed of religion. He did not see any difference between man and man. He found that the theory of socialism is absolutely practical in religious field only.

Even from childhood Vivekananda was rational in thinking and outlook. His meeting with Ramakrishna changed the life of Young Narendra like a Sculptor, with his imagination and power making a beautiful piece of art form a marble piece Ramakrishna moulded Swami Vivekananda. In the case of Vivekananda whatever he thought and did was all deeply rooted

in Sri. Ramakrishna. After the death of his guru , He travelled all over India . We see Narendra as Swami Vivekananda- a saint with national and international mission, as a world shaker and a world maker.

Mahatma Gandhi was a pious , religious person. His visit to South Africa brought entire change in the life of Gandhi. During his stay there the discrimination and the in human treatment towards Indians from the white people urged him to react. He felt the need of social work. On his return to India , his meeting with Gopalakrishna Gokhale whom he accepted as his political Guru changed his life a lot. This was a turning point in his life.

But it is true that both of them had realised the true attitude of India, and so based their teachings accordingly. The voice of these two great men filled even the sky and the whole earth vibrated with it. As Romain Rolland said "The great message brooded over from Vedic times by the dreaming spirit of ancient race- the message for which it must render account to the rest of the mankind." 8

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NB4 326