

**HIGHER SECONDARY COURSE**

**G A N D H I A N  
S T U D I E S**

**CLASS - XI**



Government of Kerala

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State Council of Educational Research and Training  
(SCERT); Kerala

2016

## THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Jana-gana-mana adhinayaka, jaya he  
Bharatha-bhagya-vidhata.  
Punjab-Sindh-Gujarat-Maratha  
Dravida-Utkala-Banga  
Vindhya-Himachala-Yamuna-Ganga  
Uchchala-Jaladhi-taranga  
Tava subha name jage,  
Tava subha asisa mage,  
Gahe tava jaya gatha.  
Jana-gana-mangala-dayaka jaya he  
Bharatha-bhagya-vidhata.  
Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he,  
Jaya jaya jaya, jaya he!

## PLEDGE

India is my country. All Indians are my brothers and sisters.

I love my country, and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage. I shall always strive to be worthy of it.

I shall give my parents, teachers and all elders respect, and treat everyone with courtesy.

To my country and my people, I pledge my devotion. In their well-being and prosperity alone lies my happiness.

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Dear learners,

The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is extremely delighted to bring out a textbook for Gandhian Studies for the first year higher secondary learners.

This textbook focuses mainly on the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. However, essential elements of social science to analyse and contextualise Mahatma Gandhi's ideas and recognise their interrelationships have appropriately been incorporated in all chapters. Activities are provided wherever needed to help you to internalise the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas in addressing contemporary problems.

We hope that you will receive this textbook with great enthusiasm for going deep into the Gandhian thoughts and preparing a sound platform for studying the practical implications of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas which will be the focus of the second year textbook.

The SCERT is grateful to the team of practising teachers and subject experts who joined us in preparing the textbook. We welcome all creative and constructive suggestions and feedback about this book which would be useful for improving the quality of the content and design of this textbook.

Wish you all success.

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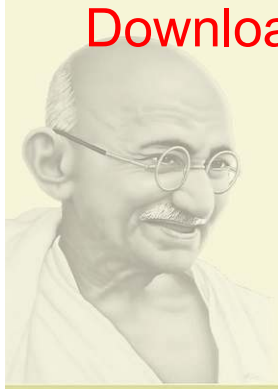
Let us know



Let us do



Let us check



# CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

## Key Concepts

- Culture
- Cultural heritage
- Culture and civilization
- Indian culture
- Features of Indian culture
- Phases of Indian culture
  - Ancient era
  - Medieval era
  - Modern era
- Mahatma Gandhi, the embodiment of the cultural heritage of India

Mahatma Gandhi is the embodiment of Indian culture and its heritage. So it is desirable to know about Indian cultural traditions. This unit discusses the features of Indian culture and heritage, its meaning and significance.

### What is Culture?

#### Activity

Identify different festivals in India and the reasons for celebrating them. Discuss their similarities and differences.

Culture is a complex term. It has different meanings. It is a way of life that is vital for the survival of a specific group or people living in a specific society. It includes the way we dress, the way we behave, the way we talk, the type of music, food and so on.

#### Definition of Culture

Culture is the characteristic way of life inspired by fundamental values in which people live. It is the sum total of the values expressed through art, religion, literature, social institutions and behaviour

(K.M. Munshi)



Let us know

Culture is understood as a system of shared beliefs, values, customs and artifacts that the members of a society use. These are transmitted from generation to generation. Culture has a key role in determining the course of social change and the history of a nation.

## Cultural heritage

What do you mean by cultural heritage?

Cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation. Cultural heritage includes tangible culture (such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, and artifacts), intangible culture (such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge), and natural heritage (including culturally significant landscapes, and biodiversity).

### Mahatma Gandhi on India's Cultural heritage

"It stands for synthesis of the different cultures that have come to stay in India, that have influenced Indian life, and that, in their turn, have themselves been influenced by the spirit of the soil. This synthesis will naturally be of the spirit of the soil. This synthesis will naturally be of the Swadeshi type, where each culture is assured its legitimate place, and not of the American pattern, where one dominant. Culture absorbs the rest and where the aim is not towards harmony, but towards an artificial and forced unity" - M.K. Gandhi



Let us know

## Culture and Civilization

The terms culture and civilization are used interchangeably. People associate culture with the clothes they wear, the architectural monuments etc. They reveal the material development of life and are a part of civilization. Civilization grows with the development of scientific knowledge and application. But, culture depends on the flow of moral and ethical values for its continuity and existence.

## Indian Culture

Indian word for culture is *Sanskriti*. It means *to purify, to transform, to sublimate, to mould and to perfect*. From time immemorial Indians have described their culture as Human Culture (*Manava Dharma* or *Manava Sanskriti*). It has a universal appeal.



History has not been able to trace its beginning. It has always existed in time and it shows no sign of decline. The Vedas, the oldest books known to the world speak about this culture. So it is known as the vedic culture. It is also called the Hindu Culture or Indian Culture, because it flourished on the eastern side of the river *Indus*, which is the same as *Sindhus* or *Hindus* in various languages.

### Features of Indian Culture

- Do we have a uniform culture across India?
- What are the main features of our culture?

### Unity in Diversity

According to the Indian spiritual tradition there is only one source for the universe. But it has infinite manifestations. Many people have described and experienced it in different ways. This is the meaning of *Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti* (*Truth is one although its manifestations are many*). The principle of unity in diversity is the implicit law of nature, universe and life.

People belonging to various religions harmoniously co-exist in India. Numerous styles of architecture, sculpture, painting, music, dance, festivals and customs have developed here. This wide variety has made the Indian culture rich and beautiful.

- Why is there so much variety in our culture?

There are many reasons. The size of the country and the variations in its physical and climatic features are the main reasons for the variety.

Different ethnic groups like Iranians, Greeks, Kushanas, Shakas, Hunas, Arabs, Turks, Mughals and Europeans came to India. They settled here and mingled with the local population. They brought their cultural habits, thoughts and ideas to India. India has always shown a remarkable capacity for the assimilation of ideas. Despite this diversity, there is an intrinsic unity in our cultural heritage. It is reflected throughout the nation in our music, dance forms, drama, art and literature.

### Let us do



Prepare a poster and arrange an exhibition on Indian culture with the theme 'unity in diversity'.

## Continuity and Change

Indian cultural heritage is as old as the Indus Valley Civilization. It still flourishes maintaining its original features together with changes. Even today, the pattern of a house in an Indian village is not very different from that of a Harappan house. There were many great cultures in different parts of the world. However, most of them have disappeared or have been replaced by other cultures. A culture perishes when it fails to absorb changes.

They include the reform movements by Jainism and Buddhism in 6th century BC and the religious and social awakening in the 18th and 19th centuries. Several changes were brought about in Indian thought and practices by various movements. The Indian culture has maintained an unbroken continuity from the Vedic times to the present day, in spite of countless wars and two centuries of the British rule. Thus a process of continuity and change has always been a feature of the Indian culture. It shows the dynamic character of our culture.

## Religious Pluralism

India has been a cradle of religions. It considered religion as a way of life and not just as rituals or dogmas. India has a tradition of giving equal respect for all religions. Due to this, other major world religions flourished in India. *Adhithidevobhava* is a famous mantra of our land. India has always preached and practised tolerance and understanding. These have been the basis of Indian religion, philosophy, art and literature.

The secular character of Indian culture is a result of the intermingling of people from diverse cultural groups. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists,

### From the Chicago speech of Swami Vivekananda (1893)

‘Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the other, to him I say, “Brother, yours is an impossible hope.” Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid. The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.’



Let us know

Jains, Parsees and Jews live together in India. During festivities people come together to share their thoughts and beliefs. Everyone is free to profess, practise and propagate any religion of his/her own choice. There is no state religion and the state gives equal respect for all religions.



### Let us do

Prepare a write-up on secular values based on a local religious practice and display it in the class.

## Universalism

The values of *Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam* and *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu* are the key aspects of Indian tradition. Our scriptures advocate that *Iswar* or the Divine Spirit is in all living beings. So, the Indian culture believes in the oneness of all living beings.

The concept of co-existence is not limited to the geographical and political boundaries of the country alone. India has a universal outlook. It has been promoting the message of peace and harmony in the entire world.

## Spiritual and Material

India is popularly known to be a land of spiritualism. However, Indian history from ancient times shows the development of materialistic culture as well. Our ancient civilizations were proud of its vast knowledge of mathematics, weights and measures. Discoveries of many scientific theories were made by Indians long before the modern science acknowledged them. Similarly, in the areas of astronomy, medicine and other sciences India's achievements in ancient times were significant. There was no resistance from religions in pursuing such knowledge.

## Humanity and Tolerance

The gentleness of Indians has always been there, despite the aggressiveness of the Muslim conquerors and the reformative attitude of the British, the Portuguese and the Dutch. The Indians are noted for their benevolent and calm nature, without any harshness in their principles and ideals. Mahatma Gandhi's satyagraha principle or Ahimsa worked wonders and gave credit to India in the international forum.

## Closely connected Social System

The Indian culture has family-bound traditions and customs. The families are closely connected with grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren. They share the same spirit, values, tradition and property. Indians regard family as an institution or a link, which continues for the rest of their lives.

## Cultural Charisma (Cultural Appeal)

India is a place of infinite variety of culture and tradition. They are the most remarkable features of India. One can identify 'Indian Music', 'Indian Dance', 'Indian Literature', 'Indian Cuisine', 'Indian Fairs and Festivals' and so on. Indian classical music and dance are mentioned in the ancient religious texts and are treasured by its people till now. There are innumerable religious and historical monuments in India that reflect the strong influence of several rulers that ruled the country for ages.

### Let us check



Devotees of Lord Ayyappa visit the Vavar Mosque at Erumeli and offer prayers and rituals. Identify the aspect of Indian culture revealed here. Analyse other features of Indian culture with examples.

## Phases of Indian Culture

Identify the different periods in Indian culture. Discuss

Like any other country, Indian history can be divided into ancient, medieval and modern periods. The ancient period started with human life on earth.

## Indian Culture during the Ancient Era

India has a continuous history covering a very long period. Harappa and Mohanjedaro on the banks of the river Indus around 2700 BC, bear testimony to the early character of Indian civilization. The culture associated with the Harappan civilization is the first urban culture in India. The Harappans built the earliest cities complete with town planning including sanitation, drainage system and broad well-laid roads. They built double storied houses of burnt bricks each one of which had a bathroom, a kitchen and a well. Harappans knew how to write and most of their seals contain some form of script. They were perhaps the first people to cultivate cotton. By 1800 BC the Harappan civilization began to decline.

## Vedic Culture

Which are the four Vedas?

After the decline of the Harappan civilization, a new culture flourished in the same region. It gradually spread across the Ganga-Yamuna plains and came to be known as the Aryan culture. The Aryans settled on the banks of the rivers Indus (Sindhu) and Saraswati. They adopted agricultural and settled life. They composed many hymns in honour of their gods and goddesses. These were compiled in the four Vedas - the *Rig Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharva Veda*. The word *Veda* means sacred spiritual knowledge.

Among the four Vedas the *Rig Veda* is the collection of 1028 hymns for using during the sacrifices of the Aryan cult. The *Sama Veda* is a collection of certain verses from the *Rig Veda* arranged for liturgical purposes. The *Yajur Veda* contains sacrificial formulae in prose and verse to be chanted by the priests who performed the sacrifice. The *Atharva Veda* consists mainly of magical spells and incantations in verse.

These vedas were considered infallible as they imparted the highest spiritual knowledge. Since our knowledge of the early Aryans is based on these Vedas, the culture of this period is called the Vedic Culture. Scholars divide the Vedic period into Earlier and Later Vedic periods. The earlier period is represented by the *Rig Veda*. The later, by all other Vedic literature including the *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*. The two epics - the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*, though compiled much later, also throw light on the life and society of an earlier period.

**Upanisads:** The Upanisads form the concluding portions of the Vedas, and therefore are called the *veda-anta*, or the end of the Veda. They contain the essence of the Vedic teaching. They are the foundations of the Indian philosophy and religions. The central theme of the Upanisads is the search for what is true. They lead us to the central reality which is satchitAnanda. Hence the prayer

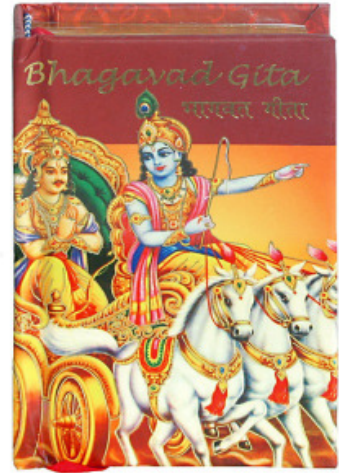
*Asatoma satgamaya*

*Thamaso ma jyothirgamaya*

*Mruthyoma amrutham gamaya*

**Bhagavad Gita:** The *Bhagavad Gita* is a part of the *Bhisma Parva* of the *Mahabharata*. It contains lessons on philosophy, religion and ethics. The *Bhagavad Gita* is

considered to be the most influential work in Indian thought. The message of the *Gita* is universal in its scope. It is considered as the gospel of selfless action and service i.e. *Nishkamakarma*. It is the service to God. The *Bhagavad Gita* embodies an intermingling of *Karmayoga* and *Jnanayoga*.



**Society and Religion:** Though Aryan society was patriarchal, women were treated with dignity and honour. The family was the smallest social unit. Several families (*kula*) formed a village (*grama*). There was no concept of the state or kingdom at this stage. Towards the later Vedic period, society was divided into four *varnas* - Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. This was also called the *Varna-Vyavastha*. It denoted categories of people doing different kinds of functions but with the passage of time this division became hereditary and rigid. The teachers were called the Brahmins; the ruling class was called the Kshatriyas; farmers, merchants and bankers were called the Vaisyas while the artisans, craftsmen, labourers were called the Shudras.

Another important social institution of the time was the system of *chaturashrama* or the division of life span into four distinct stages i.e. *brahmacharya* (period of celibacy, education and disciplined life in Guru's ashram), *grihastha* (a period of family life), *vanaprastha* (a stage of gradual detachment) and *sanyasa* (a life dedicated to spiritual pursuit away from worldly life). However, these stages were not applicable to women or to the people of lower *varnas*. Women were respected by the society, enjoyed freedom, and had access to education.

**Charvaka Philosophy:** Charvaka (also known as *Lokayata*) is a part of the Indian philosophy. It rejected the authority of the Vedas as well as the sacrifices of the Brahmin priests. Those who regard India as an entirely religious and spiritual place might do well to look into this philosophy. The Charvaka School is one of the most irreligious and sceptical systems of thought.

**Religious Developments:** The period (600 BC to 200 BC) is important for political and cultural unity of the country. Ancient India saw the rise of two very important religions i.e. Jainism and Buddhism. They left a lasting influence on Indian life and culture. Basically both these movements were against the orthodox (*Vaidika*) and ritualistic Brahmanical religion. Both the reforms emphasised moral life and founded an order of monks and established monasteries called *sthanakas* in Jainism and *viharas* in Buddhism.

**Jainism :** The founder of Jainism is believed to be *Rishabhadeva*, the first of the twenty four *Tirthankaras* and as the last *Tirthankara* Mahavira developed and gave final shape to the Jain doctrines. According to a popular belief, it was Mahavira who founded Jainism.

The Jains lay great emphasis on severe penance and asceticism. Mahavira asked them to take five vows - not to tell lies (satya); not to injure life (ahimsa); not to steal (asteya); not to own property (aparigraha); and to maintain chastity (brahmacharya). These are popularly known as the *Panchavrihas*. He also asked the Jains to follow the Three Gems (*Tri Ratnas*) of Right belief, Right knowledge and Right conduct.

### Mahavira

Mahavira was born in 599 BC at Kundagram, in Vaishali in modern Bihar. Siddharatha was the name of his father who was the chief of his tribe. He attained enlightenment at the age of 42 and became 'Mahavira'. He spent the rest of his life in spreading Jainism. In his life-time, this religion reached the territories of Videh, Magadha and Anga. He attained salvation near Rajgriha at a place called Pava in 527 BC.



Let us know

### Buddhism

Recall the life of Buddha, from your school classes.

Buddhism was led by Gautama Buddha (563 - 483 BC), a younger contemporary of Mahavira. Buddha was decidedly the greatest of the saints born in India. He preached his religion for a period of 45 years. About 487 BC at Kusinagar he left this world on Purnima of Baisakh. Buddha was an embodiment of sacrifice, service and truth, which attracted the people. Buddha's main teachings include the Four Noble Truths and the Eight Fold Path (*Astangamarga*).



**Four Noble Truths.** a) This world is full of sorrows. b) Desire is the main cause of these sorrows. c) One can get rid of these sorrows by killing desires. d) The desires can be killed only by following the Eight-fold Path.

**Eight Fold Path** (*ashtanga marga*). (1) Right understanding (2) Right thought (3) Right speech (4) Right action (5) Right livelihood (6) Right effort (7) Right mindfulness (8) Right meditation.

### Asoka (304 - 232 BC)

Make a speech about Ashoka and the Kalinga war.

Ashoka stands out as a ruler who combined successful kingship with idealism and philosophy. After the battle of Kalinga he adopted the policy of *Dharmavijaya* that is conquest through *dharma*. His policies were oriented towards the welfare of his people. His dharma was based on social responsibility. Ashoka communicated his thoughts and philosophy to his people by inscribing them on stone pillars and rock surfaces. These edicts are remarkable examples of Mauryan architecture and also of engineering skills. He asked people to practise ahimsa.



#### Let us check

Analyse the features of Indian culture during the Vedic period.

### Indian Culture during the Medieval Era

The Medieval period is considered as an age of great cultural synthesis in India. The Turks and the Mughals introduced fresh ideas in the socio - cultural fields. The Mughal emperor Akbar established a religion named Din Ilahi in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It tried to merge the best elements of the religions of his empire like Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Jainism and Zoroastrianism. It encouraged the purification of soul through the desire for God . The Mughal emperors encouraged the blending of cultures to create a united India.

**Sufism:** 'Sufism' is a term used to refer to mystical religious ideas in Islam. It had evolved into a well developed movement by the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Sufis want to establish a direct communion with the divine. The basis of Sufism is God and Man, and the relation between them which is love. The Sufis were regarded as people who kept their heart pure. They sought to communicate with God through their ascetic practises, doctrine of divine love and union with God. Sufism bridged the gap between Islam and Hinduism in India.

**Bhakti Movement:** The Bhakti movement popularised devotional surrender to a supreme God. Its origins are traced to the Brahmanical and Buddhist



traditions of ancient India. It emerged in South India. This was based on religious equality and social participation.

The Bhakti movement attempted to break away from the orthodox Brahmanism. The Bhakti saints like Kabir, Nanak, Chaithanya and Tulsidas believed in religious equality and identified themselves with the sufferings of the common people.

### Bhakti Movement: Main features

- a) Faith in God
- b) Purity of heart
- c) Hindu – Muslim Unity
- d) Condemnation of idol worship
- e) Opposition to caste system
- f) Preaching in vernacular languages



Let us know

**Sikhism:** The teachings and philosophy of Guru Nanak form an important part of Indian philosophical thought. His philosophy consists of three basic elements: a leading charismatic personality (the Guru), ideology (Shabad) and organisation (Sangat). Nanak was against the prevailing religious beliefs and attempted to establish a true religion, which could lead to salvation. He rejected idol worship and did not favour pilgrimage. He dismissed the theory of incarnation and was against rituals. He laid emphasis on having a true Guru for revelation. He advised people to follow the principles of conduct and worship. He emphasised the concepts of justice, righteousness and liberty.

### Let us check



List out various Bhakti movements and their characteristics.

## Indian Culture during the Modern Era

The social and religious movements in the nineteenth century led to the rise of modern India. Modern literature in Indian languages was influenced by the spread of English education. India thus came in contact with the western ideas and institutions.

Friendly relations existed between Hindus and Muslims and religious tolerance was practised. Members of both the communities participated in each other's festivals. Many Hindus had faith in Muslim saints while many Muslims showed an equal respect for the Hindu gods and saints. The Muslims adapted themselves with the Indian culture so well that it was difficult to distinguish one from the other.

**Social Conditions:** By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the social conditions were unfavourable for women. The birth of a girl child was considered to be a misfortune. Girls were married off in their childhood. As child marriages were common there were a lot of widows including girls. They remained widows for the rest of their lives. Widows could not wear coloured clothes, or attend marriages since their presence was considered undesirable. Inter-caste marriages were not allowed. Polygamy was permitted. Women had no right to property or divorce. The social system did not permit a person from a lower caste to eat with a person of a higher caste.

**Social and Religious Reformers:** Christian missionaries started schools that were also attended by Indian children. They introduced printing for spreading Christian ideals and literature. English education had a great impact on the society. New ideas of liberalism, rationalism, democracy, equality and freedom came through it. Soon English language became popular among the English educated Indians and acted as a bridging force.

**Ram Mohan Roy:** Ram Mohan Roy (1775 - 1833) is known as the forerunner of the modern India. A large number of social practices among the Hindus claimed religious support. But Ram Mohan Roy used the religious texts to prove that this was not true. He fought against them. Brahma Samaj founded by him spread his message of rationalism and the principle of social equality. His followers believed in the worship of one supreme God (monotheism) and opposed idol worship, polytheism and ritualism.

### Let us check



Discuss the changes happened in Indian culture during the Modern Era.

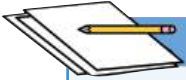
## Mahatma Gandhi: The Embodiment of Indian Cultural Heritage

Mahatma Gandhi upheld the values and spirit of India's cultural heritage throughout his life. His life and activities were based on the age old tradition

and culture of India. He imbibed the finer features of Indian culture and practised them in his life. He was an advocate of Indian cultural heritage.

Mahatma Gandhi believed in the oneness of all human beings. He related himself to all living beings. Gandhi understood the value and importance of non-violence in every moment of his life. The entire living world was his arena and the welfare of all was his mission. He took voluntary poverty and led a simple life. He never accumulated wealth for his private use. He identified himself with the poor. He had a living faith in God. For him, the one and only purpose of life is God-realisation and this can only be possible through selfless service of fellowmen. He was an ardent follower of truth. To Gandhi self-suffering is the means to achieve truth. For him, truth realisation is God realisation. Mahatma Gandhi respected all religions of the world equally for the simple reason that they all lead towards the same goal - God. For him communal unity is the pre-requisite for a happy living.

All the above attributes of Mahatma Gandhi had their base in Indian culture and tradition. The uniqueness of Indian cultural heritage discussed in this chapter clearly indicates this conclusion. Gandhi, in his time, was a great exponent and representative of Indian Culture. Gandhi wrote, "Our culture is a treasure-house of such great values as are hardly found in other cultures. We have not given its due recognition; have seen it and learnt about it disregarding its proper study and undermining its values. We have almost discarded it by not conducting ourselves according to its tenets; [but] without the conduct, more intellectual knowledge is just like a corpse that may be preserved as mummy. It seems good to look at, but fails to inspire."



## Summary

- Culture is the way of life that is vital for the survival of a specific group or people living in a specific society.
- Cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation.
- The terms culture and civilization are used interchangeably.
- The Indian word for culture is *Sanskriti*. It means to purify, to transform, to sublimate, to mould and to perfect.
- The secular character of Indian culture is a result of the intermingling of people from diverse cultural groups.
- The values of *Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam* and *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu* are the key aspects of Indian tradition.
- India has a continuous cultural history covering a very long period.
- The culture associated with the Harappan civilization is the first known urban culture in India.
- The Medieval period is considered as an age of great cultural synthesis.
- Social and religious movements in the nineteenth century led to the rise of modern India.
- Mahatma Gandhi is an embodiment of cultural heritage of India.



## I can

- explain the meaning of culture.
- identify the difference between culture and civilization.
- identify the distinguished features of Indian cultural heritage.
- analyse the features of Indian culture during Vedic, medieval and modern era.
- assess Mahatma Gandhi as an embediment of Indian cultural heritage.



### Let us assess

- 1 Explain the cultural diversity of India.
- 2 Analyse the general characteristics of culture.
- 3 Prepare a short note on culture and civilization.
- 4 Give a detailed write up on 'Indian cultural heritage'.
- 5 Mahatma Gandhi is the embodiment of Indian cultural heritage. Do you agree to this? Justify.
- 6 Prepare a note on Vedic culture.
- 7 Religious pluralism was a unique feature of Indian culture. Discuss.
- 8 The Medieval period is considered as an age of great cultural synthesis in India. Analyse.
- 9 The period 600 BC to 200 BC witnessed the rise of two very important religions. Later these religions became popular. Identify these religions and make short note on them.



# THE TRANSFORMATION OF M.K. GANDHI - Phase I

## Key Concepts

- **Early childhood and school days in India**

Family Background  
School Days of Mohandas - Karamchand Gandhi  
The kettle incident

- **Student Life in London**

London Vegetarian Society  
Theosophical influences  
Religious Influences on M.K. Gandhi  
Hinduism  
Buddhism  
Jainism  
Christianity  
Islam

Impact of London life on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

- **M.K. Gandhi as a barrister in India**

- **Influences**

Srimad Rajchandra (Raychand)  
Gopalakrishna Gokhale

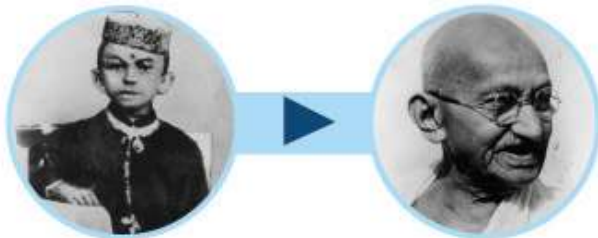
This Chapter discusses the transformation of Moniya (the pet name of M.K. Gandhi) to 'Mahatma'.

### Early Childhood and School days in India

Let us recall the main features of Indian culture, heritage and civilization discussed in the first chapter. Discuss and list them.

- Spirituality
- Oneness and Wellness of all
- Cultural and religious pluralism
- 
- 

These cultural specialties and rich heritage of India had a direct impact on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in his transformation towards Mahatma Gandhi. If we analyse Mahatma Gandhi's life and philosophy we can trace the elements of these influences in his words, thoughts and deeds.





### Let us check

Write at least two values that you have already acquired in life from your culture, tradition, parents or family.

- 1.
- 2.

Compare your answers with that of your partner.

### Family background

Everyone is influenced by their family background, parents, close relatives and friends, their culture, religion, education and the period in which they live. In the case of Mahatma Gandhi these have been unique and significant.

Today modern behavioural scientists and developmental psychologists endorse the influence of parenting and early familial experiences in the formation of one's personality. For Gandhi his family was a blessing with Karamchand Gandhi and Putlibai as his parents.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869 in Porbandar in Kathiawad. He belongs to the Baniya caste of the Vysya Varna. Gandhi's grandparents were known for their honesty, simplicity and loyalty. Gandhi's grandfather Uttamchand Gandhi was the Diwan of Porbandar. Later he quit the post due to some differences with the then Queen of Porbandar, Roopaliba. He returned to his ancestral village Kuthiyana. He spent his days there in prayer. During that time, the Nawab of Junagadh invited Otha (Uttamchand Gandhi). He saluted the Nawab with his left hand. When asked about this, he told that his right hand was already given to Porbandar. Such was his loyalty towards the native place.

#### Porbandar – Geographical History

Porbandar was an old sea port town in Saurashtra, now in Gujarat. The word 'Porbandar' comes from 'Porai' and 'Bandar'. The word 'Porai' is the name of the local goddess and 'Bandar' means port or harbour. It is believed that Porbandar is associated with the birth of Sudama - Lord Krishna's friend, it was also known as 'Sudamapuri'.



Let us know

His father Karamchand Gandhi then became the Diwan of Porbandar. He served Porbandar for 28 years. M.K. Gandhi describes his father in his autobiography as follows:



Karamchand Gandhi and Putlibai  
(M.K Gandhi's parents)

“My father was a lover of his clan, truthful, brave and generous, but short tempered... My father never had any ambition to accumulate riches and left us very little property. He had no education, save that of experience... But his rich experience of practical affairs stood him in good stead in the solution of the most intricate questions and managing hundreds of men.” These words show that M.K. Gandhi inherited virtues like honesty and practical wisdom from his family.

As Gandhi's father was Diwan, religious men of many faiths used to visit his house. They engaged in religious discussions. M.K. Gandhi used to listen to these discussions with great interest. The unique environment at home had sown the seeds of religious pluralism and tolerance in the mind of young Mohandas. In later years, these influences became the foundation of his firm belief that all religions deserved equal respect.



### Let us check

Read a few verses of various religious scriptures in the class and make a note of it.

Mohandas once stole a bit of gold from his brother's bracelet. This was to clear the debt made by his brother. But Gandhi could not stand the pain in deceiving his father who had deep faith in him. He decided to confess to his father in order to clear his conscience. He wrote a confession letter, admitting his guilt. He promised his father that he would never repeat the crime. He also asked to be punished for what he had done. After reading this letter, tears rolled down through his father's cheeks. Gandhi too was in tears. Gandhi felt that his father's tears of forgiveness had cleansed him. For him, it was a good confession. M.K. Gandhi says, “A clean confession, combined with a promise never to commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is the purest type of repentance.”



M.K. Gandhi later acknowledged that this incident was an object-lesson in *ahimsa* (Non-violence). Gandhi writes in his autobiography, “This was for me, an object-lesson in *ahimsa*. Then I could read in it nothing more than a father’s love, but today I know that it was pure *ahimsa*. When such *ahimsa* becomes all-embracing, it transforms everything it touches. There is no limit to its power.”

M.K. Gandhi’s mother was also deeply religious. She frequently visited temples and took children with her. She led a simple life. She took the hardest vows and practised them.

M.K. Gandhi writes about his mother: “The outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness. She was deeply religious. She would not think of taking her meals without her daily prayers.”

This had a lasting influence over Gandhi’s religious outlook such as his faith in God, respect for vows etc. Gandhi formed the image of woman as the embodiment of love and sacrifice from his mother.



### Let us check

Identify the influences of your beloved ones (mother, father etc.) on your personality highlighting some similarities with that of Gandhi. Write a report on it.

### Activity

Discuss with your partner the childhood fears he/she had? How did he/she overcome them? Share the information with the class.

Let us find out how Mohandas overcame his childhood fears.

Rambha, the old servant in his family, also sowed the seeds of faith in God. Gandhi was afraid of ghosts and spirits in his childhood.

Rambha advised him to repeat

‘*Ramanama*’ as a solution for his fear of ghosts. Gandhi later acknowledged that ‘*Ramanama*’ had been sure remedy for him throughout his life.

Another major influence during Mohandas’ childhood was a play about the King Harishchandra. He sacrificed everything for the sake of Truth. Gandhi asked himself, “Why should not all be truthful like Harishchandra?”

Mohandas had always felt a great fascination for Truth. The story of Harishchandra reinforced his faith and determination to stand by Truth.

### The story of King Harishchandra



Let us know

The gods wanted to test Harishchandra. They sent a Brahmin to him. The Brahmin asked for alms. He would not be satisfied until the king gave him all that he had including his kingdom. Harishchandra, true to his dharma, parted with all his possessions. He became a slave. He was put in charge of the cremation grounds. His wife left him after taking their son with her. After a while, when the son died the wife brought the corpse to Harishchandra for cremation. But, he insisted on the customary fee which the woman was unable to pay. The gods were pleased with the truthfulness of Harishchandra. They returned the kingdom to him.

M.K. Gandhi read the *Shravana Pitrubhakthi Nataka* (a play about Shravana's devotion to his parents). He read it with great interest. The image of Shravana carrying his blind parents on his shoulders had a deep impact on Mohandas. Gandhi decided to become as loyal to his parents as Shravana and to serve them with dedication and love. Obedience to parents became his motto. For Mohandas, King Harishchandra and Shravana became living models and an inspiration to do better and lead a pure life. They had left an everlasting impact on his personality.

### The Story of Shravana



Let us know

When king Dashrath ruled Ayodhya, there lived a boy named Shraavan Kumar. His parents were old and blind. He had to do all the work for them. Shraavan Kumar did everything with earnestness and love. He fulfilled all their wishes. One day, Shraavan Kumar's parents expressed their desire to go on a pilgrimage. As an obedient son, he wanted to fulfill their wish. But, how was he going to do that? He couldn't afford any transportation since he did not have money. He found another way. He took a strong bamboo-stick, tied baskets at its two ends, and placed his parents in those baskets. He, then, started on a pilgrimage carrying the baskets on his shoulder. The parents were very pleased with their son's devotion.

### School Days of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

You have come across several real life stories of very young people supporting their parents. What could be the reasons? What qualities would they be developing as part of their personality at this stage? Discuss.

School is one of the most important institutions of socialisation. It had a significant role in forming the behaviour of teenage Gandhi. Teachers and friends greatly influenced M.K. Gandhi. The virtues of Gandhi in his later life had their roots in the school life.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi went to a Primary School in Rajkot in 1876. Later, he attended the Kathiawad High School, Rajkot in 1880, when he was 11 years of age. He was an average student in the class. He had no friends at all. Gandhi never spent more time at school. He never lied. "I do not remember having ever told a lie, during this short period, either to my teachers or to my schoolmates."

### Alfred High School

The School was constructed during the British rule and was the first English school in Saurashtra region. It was founded on October 17, 1853. It was originally known as Rajkot English School. It came to be known as Rajkot High School by 1886. The school was named as Alfred High School in 1907 in the memory of Prince Alfred (H.H. Nawab of Junagadh). Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi did his schooling from Alfred High School. After Independence the name of the school was changed to Mohandas High School.



### Can you imagine what could be the conditions of a school about hundred and thirty seven years ago in a country like India?



The Rajkot High School where Gandhi studied for seven years, was the ninth English school started in Bombay Presidency (find out from your elders what this was) and the first in Kathiawad (now Saurashtra). It had a good building with benches and desks in classrooms (unlike most other schools of the time). Inside the class-room, the teacher had his seat on a raised dais (or platform) facing the boys. Girls did not attend this school. (In fact, there weren't many schools for girls.)

At the age of 11 years, 2 months and 2 days, the young Mohandas was enrolled in standard I-B. The school fee for standard I was 8 *annas* (50 paise) a month. On week days the school worked from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a recess of an hour from 2-3. On Saturdays it worked for half an hour less. The subjects Gandhi had to study in standard I were arithmetic, Gujarati, history and geography. In geography, he scored zero marks in the first terminal examination of standard I. In English dictation, he got no marks at all. In the same exam his rank was 32nd among the 34 students of his division. At the annual exam, though, he was able to secure the sixth rank in both divisions.

*Adopted from "Mahatma Gandhi as a Student"  
edited and compiled by J.M. Upadhyaya.*

Let us discuss what M.K. Gandhi did as a student.

He was not interested in sports and other extracurricular activities. But later he admitted that physical education had its influence on the development of one's personality. Again he was not at all concerned about his handwriting when he was a student. But later he said that good handwriting is the sign of perfect education.

There is an instance in Gandhi's school days where the teacher himself prompted Gandhi to copy down the answer from another student. But Gandhi refused to do so. He showed the purity of character throughout his life right from the very early days.

### The 'kettle' incident

One day the Inspector of Schools, Mr. Giles came to the school. He read out five English words to the class and asked the boys to write them down. Mohandas wrote four words correctly, but he could not spell the fifth word 'kettle'. The teacher noticed this and tried to prompt Gandhi to copy the word from his neighbour. But Gandhi could not bring himself to do this. The other boys wrote all the five words correctly. After the Inspector had left, the teacher scolded him. 'I told you to copy from your neighbour,' he said angrily. 'Couldn't you even do that correctly?' Everyone laughed. He could not believe that his teacher who should have been concerned with the truthfulness and character of his students was himself prompting him to cheat.

### Activity

Tick (✓) the item(s) in that you have participated so far. Specify the event.

Put 'X' if you have not participated in any of them.

1. Race events
2. Throw events
3. Jump events
4. Any games

Ask your partner the reasons for participation/non-participation. What did he/she gain/lose out of it? Share your findings in the class.

### Think and Share

1. If this incident occurs in your life, what will be your reaction?

**Activity**

Select a patriotic song/poem. Discuss its theme and its influence on you. Sing or recite it in the class.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was also influenced by many songs and poems when he was a student. Let us discuss two such poems and their influences on Gandhi.

M.K. Gandhi was patriotic right from his schooldays. Due to the influence of a popular poem by the Gujarati poet Narmad, and the insistence of his friend, Sheikh Mehtab, Gandhi started eating meat. The poet believed that eating meat was necessary for strength. Gandhi believed that he had to eat meat to become powerful so that he can bring an end to English rule in India. This shows his patriotism. Gandhi continued this for one year. But meat eating was strictly forbidden in his family. Then he realised that it was a great sin to deceive one's own parents. So he stopped meat eating.

Mohandas was also influenced by a poem by Shamal Bhatt. It emphasises returning good for evil. Gandhi said, "A Gujarati didactic stanza likewise gripped my mind and heart. Its precept – return good for evil – became my guiding principle. It became such a passion with me that I began numerous experiments in it."

**Poem of Narmad**

Behold the mighty Englishman  
He rules the Indian small,  
Because being a meat-eater  
He is five cubits tall.

*(From Gandhi's autobiography, P 23)*



Let us know

**Shamal Bhatt's poem**

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

*(Gandhi's autobiography, Page 39, 40)*



Let us know

Again M.K. Gandhi pointed out the impact of Shamal Bhatt's poem in following words. "It was from Shamal Bhatt's couplet... that I had first learnt the principle of winning over even an enemy with love."

M.K. Gandhi's marriage took place at the age of 13. He was still a student in the Alfred High School at Rajkot. Kasturba, his wife, was also of the same age. She had never been to school. Recalling the day of their marriage, Gandhi said, "I do not think it meant to me anything more than the prospect of good clothes to wear, drum beating, marriage processions, rich dinners and a strange girl to play with." Later, Gandhi strongly opposed child marriage. According to him it was thoughtless and dangerous. After high school, Mohandas joined the Samaldas College in Bhavnagar. He found the studies difficult. Meanwhile his father died in 1885. A family friend Mauji Deve suggested that if young Gandhi hoped to take his father's place as Diwan in the state service he should become a barrister. He could do the studies in England in three years. Mohandas agreed to this and overcame his mother's objection by taking a solemn vow not to touch wine, women and meat.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was given a send-off by his fellow-students of the Alfred High School, Rajkot, when he was leaving for England. Gandhi in his reply pointed out his intention after his legal studies in London.

"I hope that some of you will follow in my footsteps, and after you return from England you will work wholeheartedly for big reforms in India." In 1888, M.K. Gandhi sailed to England, to study law at University College, London, despite the stiff resistance from elders.

### Student Life in London

Let us discuss what M.K. Gandhi did while he was in England as a student.

Gandhi tried to adopt "English" customs and lifestyles in every possible manner. Gandhi

### Activity

Observe your friends in the classroom and note down the peculiar appearance of their hair style, dress and accessories. Ask the friend the reason behind the change/modification.

### Discussion points

- What is the reason for adopting this style?
- Have you achieved anything out of this?
- Have you lost anything out of this? (money, or time)
- Is it suitable for your culture or family environment? If not, suggest modifications to yourself and your friends.

decided to become an “English gentleman”. So he started practising elocution, western dance and music and French. He began to imitate the British life style. According to Narayan Desai, “Gandhi tried to imitate externally, whom he considered superior. Later Gandhi realised that no one can become civilised just through imitation.”

M.K. Gandhi also advised the Indian students in England how they can survive by economising their needs.

### London Vegetarian Society

M.K. Gandhi was influenced by “Plea for Vegetarianism” written by Henry Salt. The book brought a change in his attitude and convinced him that vegetarianism was ideal for man. He became a vegetarian by choice and by conviction.

In the beginning of 1890, M.K. Gandhi came across the periodicals *The Vegetarian Messenger* of Manchester and *The Vegetarian* of London, and the Vegetarian Societies there. He attended the International Vegetarian meeting with Josiah Oldfield. In September Gandhi joined the Vegetarian Society and became a member of its executive committee. On February 20, 1891 Gandhi made his maiden speech at the Vegetarian Society meeting. He started writing articles in *The Vegetarian*, the journal of the Vegetarian Society.



The Vegetarian Society's May Meeting, held at Portsmouth, in 1891.  
Front row (left-right): T.T. Mozumdar, Josiah Oldfield, Mohandas K. Gandhi  
(From: *The Vegetarian Messenger and Health Review* of September 1936.)

### Henry Salt's speech at London Vegetarian Society's Annual Social Meeting on November 20, 1931

“Mr. Gandhi was put under a vow by his mother to abstain from meat. My position was different, since my mother was frantic because of my abstinence, and she thought I would perish.”



Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Henry S. Salt on the London Vegetarian Society's Social Meeting on November 20th, 1931. (© Photo courtesy of Simon Wild from the Jon Wynne-Tyson 'Henry Salt Collection')

## Henry Stephens Salt

Born	: 20 September, 1851 in India
Died	: 19 April, 1939.
Studied	: University of Cambridge
Profession	: Writer, ethical vegetarian, socialist, naturalist, pacifist and anti- vivisectionist
Notable works	: 1. A Plea for Vegetarianism, 2. Biography of Henry David Thoreau

He founded 'Humanitarian League' in 1891 to prevent cruelty against animals and to protect animal rights.



Let us know

## M.K. Gandhi on Henry Salt

"I launched out in search of a vegetarian restaurant, I would trot ten or twelve miles each day. Go into a cheap restaurant and eat my fill of bread, but would never be satisfied. During these wanderings I once hit a vegetarian restaurant in Farringdon Street. The sight of it filled me with the same joy that a child feels on getting a thing after its own heart. Before I entered I noticed books for sale exhibited under a glass window near the door. I saw among them Salt's *Plea for Vegetarianism*. This I purchased for a shilling and went straight to the dining room. This was my first hearty meal since my arrival in England. . . From the date of reading this book, I may claim to



have become a vegetarian by choice. I blessed the day on which I had taken the vow before my mother. I had all along abstained from meat in the interests of truth and of the vow I had taken, but had wished at the same time that every Indian should be a meat-eater, and had looked forward to being one myself freely and openly some day, and to enlisting others in the cause. The choice was now made in favour of vegetarianism, the spread of which henceforward became my mission.”

### Theosophical influences on M.K. Gandhi

Theosophical Society was established in New York in 1875. Gandhi was introduced to Blavatsky and Annie Besant of Theosophical Society in London. He was attracted towards the principles of Theosophy. On March 26, 1891 Gandhi was enrolled as an associate member of London Theosophical Society. Theosophical involvement and acquaintance with many vegetarians in London helped Gandhi in his spiritual development to a great extent.

#### Theosophical Society

Blavatsky, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott and William Quan Judge with several others, founded The Theosophical Society on September 7, 1875.

#### Objectives of the Theosophical Society

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature, and the powers latent in man.

#### The Key to Theosophy (1889) by Madam Blavatsky

This book was a clear exposition in the form of question and answer, on ethics, science and philosophy. Theosophical Society was founded to study these areas. Gandhi read this book while he was in London and was attracted towards the Theosophical Society.

In May, 1882, a large estate was brought at Adayar, near Chennai in South India and The Theosophical Headquarters were moved there by the end of the year.

During 1899 the Theosophical influence led M.K. Gandhi to read Madam Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy* and other religious literature including Edwin Arnold's *The Song Celestial*, *The Light of Asia*, the Bhagavat Gita in original and the Bible.



Let us know

M.K. Gandhi twice heard the speech of Annie Besant, theosophical leader in London. "How I became a Theosophist" was the theme of the speech. Gandhi went to the Queen's Hall in London to hear the speech of Annie Besant. In it she said, "Write the following lines in my epitaph. This Lady lived for Truth and died for Truth. Then I will be the happiest woman". These words had a profound influence on Gandhi.

### Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891)

Born: 12 August, 1831 in the Russian Empire (now Dnipropetrovsk)  
Died: 8 May 1891 in London, United Kingdom

Notable works:

1. The Voice of Silence
2. The Secret Doctrine
3. The Key to Theosophy



Let us know

### Annie Besant

Born: 1 October, 1847 Clapham, London, United Kingdom  
Died: 20 September, 1933, Adayar, Madras Presidency, British India.

Known as Theosophist, Women's rights activist, Writer and orator.

Supporter of Indian Nationalism .

Founded at the Central Hindu College of Benares in 1898.



Let us know

### Annie Besant Quotes

"India is a country in which every great religion finds home".

"The destruction of India's village system was the greatest of England's blunders"

"Refusal to believe until proof is given is a rational position; denial of all outside of our own limited experience is absurd"



Let us know

### Religious influences on M.K. Gandhi

M.K. Gandhi was raised as a Hindu and never left that tradition. Yet he was also open to other influences. As a youth he absorbed much from the Jain tradition. It was popular in his native state of Gujarat. When he studied law

in London in the early 1890s, he developed a great interest in Christianity, especially in the New Testament. As a young lawyer in South Africa, he became the leader of the movement for legal rights for all Indian people living there, the Muslims as well as the Hindus. He received help from some Jewish friends too. This was the setting in which he first experimented with what he called Satyagraha. But he soon recognised that, for him, political action had to be rooted in religious truth. Since his movement embraced Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Jews, he developed a deeper appreciation for the resources of all these traditions.

### Influence of Hinduism

“No country but India and any religion but Hinduism could have given birth to a Gandhi”, said the editorial in the London Times on the day Gandhi’s assassination (From the preface of ‘Mahatma Gandhi’ Essays and Reflections by S.Radhakrishnan).

Hinduism remained the foundation and framework of all his thought and life. Being born into an orthodox Hindu family, Gandhi was deeply influenced by the religious atmosphere in Kathiawad. The two epics of Hindu religion, the Ramayana and the Mahabharatha left a lasting impact on Gandhi’s mind. He listened to the reading of Tulasidas’ Ramayana at the age of 13. Reading of Ramayana left a deep impression on me before my father. That laid the foundation of my deep devotion to the Ramayana. Today I regard the Ramayana of Tulasidas as the greatest book in all devotional literature.” For Gandhi, the Bhagavat Gita conveyed the message of triumph of good over evil. He was influenced by the relevance of detached duty and purity of means in the Bhagavat Gita.

M.K. Gandhi was introduced to the Bhagavat Gita by Edwin Arnold’s “*The Song Celestial*”. Gandhi read this translation of the Bhagavat Gita and became greatly interested in it. He read the original Bhagavat Gita and was enchanted by the beauty of it.

According to him, ‘Bhagavat Gita is the essence of Hinduism’. The ‘Nishkama karma’ propounded by the Gita attracted him. He said, ‘it opened to me a new view of life’. It became Gandhi’s spiritual dictionary. The Hindu belief in the oneness of all life confirmed and sustained his faith in *ahimsa* (non-violence). According to Gandhi, in it there is a room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. He says ;

*“...a work which persons of all faiths can read,  
It does not favour any sectarian view.  
It teaches nothing but pure ethics.”*

M.K. Gandhi says “It was through the Hindu religion that I learnt to respect Christianity and Islam.” “I am a Hindu because it is Hinduism which makes the world worth living. I am a Hindu hence I love not only human beings, but all living beings.” (Young India, January 12, 1926)

“Hinduism is like the Ganga, pure and unsullied at its source but in its course the impurities in the way. Even like the Ganga it is beneficent in its total effect. It takes a provincial form in every province, but the inner substance is retained everywhere.” (Young India, 3.4.1926)

### Influence of Buddhism

M.K. Gandhi was acquainted with the life and teachings of Buddha from Edwin Arnold’s book, *The Light of Asia*. Buddha’s life of renunciation and his doctrine of compassion and tolerance had influenced Gandhi. For ‘Gandhi, Buddha was a reformer of Hinduism. He admitted that he was influenced by the teachings of Buddha’. According to Gandhi, “I am trying my level best to follow Buddha’s life.”

#### Sir Edwin Arnold

Born : June 10, 1832, Gravesend, United Kingdom

Died : March 24, 1904

Profession : journalist, editor, poet and teacher.

Nationality : English

In 1856 he came to India as the Principal of the Government Sanskrit College, Puna, a post he held for seven years, which included a period during the first war of Indian independence in 1857.

He was of the view that "There is no caste in blood"

Notable works: 1. The Light of Asia, 2. The Song Celestial



Let us know

The **Noble Eightfold Path** is one of the main teachings of Buddha. He described it as the way leading to happiness and self-awakening.

## Influence of Jainism

Gujarat has a rich history of Jainism. Gujarat is the region which gave birth to great Jain sanyasis like Acharya Hemachandra, Acharya Sheel Gun Soori, Shrimad Raj Chandra, Kanaji Swami and others.

Kathiawad was greatly influenced by Jainism. So was Mahatma Gandhi. He was influenced by the overall Jain environment of his native place, his mother Putalibai's affiliation to Jainism and his friendship with the great Jain philosopher Shrimad Rajchandra.

Gandhi adopted all the five vows of Jainism for laymen, with a higher degree. The vows include Non-violence, Truth, Non-stealing, Non-possession and Celibacy.

But beyond that, he seems to be a true Jain when we consider his braveness. We do not see any instance in which he behaved like a coward. He was a brave man without a weapon, throughout his life. Another great influence of Jainism on Gandhi was simplicity in life and simple dress code.

Mahatma Gandhi was very much influenced by the *PanchamahaVritas* of Jainism. Gandhi was also influenced by the three Retnas (Jewels) of Jainism. Gandhi says "No religion of the world has explained the principle of non-violence so deeply and systematically, with its applicability in life as in Jainism...Bhagawan Mahaveera is sure to be respected as the greatest authority of non-violence."

## Influence of Christianity

Gandhi was introduced to the Holy Bible when he was in England. He was influenced by the New Testament. According to him, "But the New Testament produced a different impression especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart. I compared it with the Gita. The verses, 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too', delighted me beyond measure and put me in mind Shamal Bhatt's 'For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal', etc. My young mind tried to unify the teaching on the Gita, *The Light of Asia* and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly." Gandhi insisted always that Jesus occupied in his heart the place of one of the greatest teachers who had a considerable influence in his life ... Gandhi often affirmed: "It is that sermon which has endeared Jesus to me."

But what did Jesus mean to Gandhi? He says “I regard Jesus as a great teacher of humanity”. What really attracted Gandhi to Jesus’ life and message is the aspect of Jesus’ suffering. Suffering for others form one of the pillars of Gandhi’s message to the world. It is worth noting that Gandhi’s philosophy of non-violence – *satyagraha* has three principles: Truth- *Sat/Satya*, Non-violence- *Ahimsa* and self-suffering- *Tapasya*. These are called the pillars of Satyagraha. Failure to grasp them is a handicap to the understanding of Gandhi’s non-violence. Gandhi saw all these principles in Jesus’ life and the one that really attracted him was the third aspect that is *Tapasya* – willingness to self-sacrifice or suffering. Gandhi declares: “the example of Jesus’ suffering is a factor in the composition of my undying faith in nonviolence which rules all my actions, worldly and temporal.” Jesus for him was the prince of *satyagrahis*.

### Influence of Islam

The meaning of the word Islam is peace. Gandhi read “*Heroes and Hero Worship*”, by Thomas Carlyle when he was in London. Gandhi wrote, “I read the chapter on the Hero as prophet and learnt of the Prophet’s greatness and bravery and austere living.” He was influenced by the concept like non-exploitation, justice and charity in the Holy Koran. Islam is against caste system. The aim of life according to the Holy Koran is happiness and well-being of the individual. It also preached religious tolerance and universal love.



#### Let us check

What are the influences of various religions in Gandhi's life?  
Discuss in groups and make a report.

### Impact of London life on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

- Became a vegetarian by choice.
- Acquired good command over English language.
- Developed skills in writing and publishing articles.
- Internalised organisational skills and techniques.
- Came in contact with progressive movements.
- Became familiar with scriptures of various religions.
- Became more spiritual.

- Became a barrister
- Passed the London University Examinations in English, Latin, French, Mechanics, Chemistry, Physics, History, Geography, and Mathematics
- Became familiar with the English life style and Modern civilisation
- Practised punctuality
- Started writing diary about daily life.
- Interacted with thinkers and writers like Sidney James Webb and George Bernard Shaw.
- Came in contact with philosophers like Edward Carpenter, Madam Blavatsky and Annie Besant

### Activity

Select five most important impacts from the list and rank them from 1-5. Discuss in group and present it in the class.

The transformation of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to Mahatma was the outcome of so many influences. India's cultural heritage, civilization, his family background, childhood experiences, school and his three years' stay in London are some of them. Gandhi was initially shy by nature. But in London his shyness did not stop him from learning new things. He engaged in debates and social activities with great interest.



### Let us check

Discuss various influences and their impact on the transformation of M.K. Gandhi.

### M.K. Gandhi as a Barrister in India

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi returned to India on June 12, 1891. The death of his mother was his first shock. Later he enrolled in Bombay High Court in May, 1892. But the first case itself was a failure to Gandhi.

He returned to Rajkot and helped his brother Lakshmidas. He was asked to make a recommendation for his brother before E.B.K. Olivent, the Political Agent. Gandhi had known him while he was in London. But Olivent was angry and furious towards Mohandas because his brother Lakshmidas was guilty. He insulted Gandhi for trying to persuade him. After this incident, Gandhi decided not to exploit friendship for anybody.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi became unhappy about his life in India. He eagerly wished to get out of India. At that point of time he got an offer from Dada Abdulla & Company in South Africa for a period of one year. He took the offer and proceeded to South Africa in 1893 at the age of 24.

### Influences

#### Rajchandra (Raychand)

The famous Jain philosopher Shrimad Rajchandra was one of the best friends of M.K. Gandhi. Rajchandra was a genius with deep knowledge of Jain philosophy. Gandhi met him when he returned from England. Raychand was a man of great character. He was also known as 'Shatavadhani', (one having the faculty of remembering or attending to a hundred things simultaneously). He had a wide knowledge of scriptures. Gandhi realised the spiritual wisdom of Raychand from his speeches and articles on religion and God. Gandhi discussed the concept of self-realisation and the passion to see God face to face with Raychand. When Gandhi was in South Africa, he sent a long questionnaire to Shrimad Rajchandra. The questionnaire had 27 questions which were promptly answered by Shrimad Rajchandra. Gandhi admitted the influence of Raychand in his spiritual development in his autobiography.

#### Gopalakrishna Gokhale

M.K. Gandhi acknowledged Gokhale as his political guru. Gokhale treated Gandhi as his younger brother. Gandhi was greatly influenced by Gokhale's style of work. According to Gandhi, 'To see Gokhale at work was as much as a joy as education.' Gokhale never wasted a minute and he always worked for his countrymen. He was very much concerned about India's poverty. Gokhale's spirit of freedom attracted Gandhi. In general, the personality, life style, practical wisdom, the simplicity of Gokhale influenced M.K. Gandhi very much and helped him shape his own personality.





## Summary

- The transformation of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to Mahatma was the result of his numerous experiments with truth.
- The cultural uniqueness of India, family background, parents, education in India, London, and other influences have contributed to his transformation.
- In London M.K. Gandhi read numerous books including scriptures of various religions.
- M.K. Gandhi had numerous discussions with thinkers, writers and social activists which contributed to his intellectual development.
- M.K. Gandhi came in contact with progressive ideas and movements while in London. This is a significant stage in his inner transformation.
- M.K. Gandhi had acquired inner strength and developed convictions in the first phase of his transformation to Mahatma during this period.



## I can

- explain how the family background and parenting influenced Gandhi in the formation of his personality.
- draw out the role of Truth and Non-violence from Gandhi's early experiences.
- analyse the early childhood and student life of M.K. Gandhi.
- identify various London influences and their impact on M.K. Gandhi.
- explain how London Vegetarian Society helped Gandhi to overcome his shyness and develop leadership qualities in M.K. Gandhi.
- evaluate various influences and its impact on transformation of M.K. Gandhi.
- identify various religious influences and its impact on Gandhi.
- explain the influences of Rajchandra and Gopalakrishna Gokhalae on M.K. Gandhi.



## Let us assess

1. The cultural specialties and rich heritage of India had a direct impact on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in his transformation towards Mahatma Gandhi. Evaluate.
2. Everyone is influenced by their family background, parents, close relatives and friends, culture, religion, education and the period in which they live. In the case of Mahatma Gandhi this has been unique and significant. Analyse.
3. Gandhi writes in his autobiography: "This was for me, an object-lesson in ahimsa. Then I could read in it nothing more than a father's love, but today I know that it was pure ahimsa." Identify the incident and say how will it be an object lesson for you?
4. For Mohandas, King Harishchandra and Shrivana became living models and an inspiration to do better and lead a pure life. How is their influence reflected in Gandhi's life and ideology?
5. The 'kettle' incident shows that Mohandas never made a compromise with his basic principles even when he was a school student. Comment on this with reference to Mr. Giles' school inspection.
6. "Mr. Gandhi was put under a vow by his mother to abstain from meat. My position was different, since my mother was frantic because of my abstinence, and she thought I would perish." This was Henry Salt's speech at London Vegetarian Society's Annual Social Meeting on November 20, 1931. How did Gandhi become a messenger of vegetarianism?
7. "It was through the Hindu religion that I learnt to respect Christianity and Islam." Evaluate how the Hindu religious values influenced M.K. Gandhi?

# THE TRANSFORMATION OF M.K. GANDHI - Phase 2

## Key Concepts

- Pietermaritzburg Incident
- Disfranchising Bill and Natal Indian Congress
- Three Pound Tax
- The Green Pamphlet
- *Indian Opinion*
- Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion
- Western thinkers and M.K. Gandhi
- Experiments in Community Living
- Advent of *Satyagraha*

## EXPERIMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The previous chapter discussed the experiences of M.K. Gandhi before he left for South Africa. This chapter deals with various experiments, experiences, influences and the impact of different campaigns on M.K. Gandhi's transformation in South Africa. They are Pietermaritzburg incident, Disfranchising Bill and Natal Indian Congress, Three Pound Tax campaign, the *Indian Opinion*, Indian Ambulance Corps, influence of John Ruskin, Tolstoy and Thoreau, experiments in community living, vow of brahmacharya and advent of *Satyagraha*.

### Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in South Africa

Let us discuss;

- When you think about South Africa who comes to your mind first?  
(He passed away in 2013.)
- What made him great and different from others?
- Who influenced him the most?
- How come he in South Africa?

In 1893 M.K. Gandhi went to South Africa, accepting the offer from Dada Abdulla & Co. at the age of 24 for a period of one year.

**Activity**

Let us discuss

- Do we have similar dress style across India?
- What are the different dress codes in India?
- Why do people prefer them?
- How will you react if someone asks you not to wear your traditional dress which you are proud of?

Now look at Gandhi's experiences and his reactions to a similar situation.

M.K. Gandhi arrived in Durban where he remained for a week before leaving for Pretoria by train. His employer, Mr. Seth took him to the Durban court after two days. He was introduced to many important people there. He was seated next to the main lawyer. But "the magistrate stared at me and finally

asked me to take off my turban. This I refused to do and left the court." Mr. Seth informed Gandhi about the reason behind the Magistrate's demand; only Muslims from India were allowed to wear their traditional costume. But all others had to remove their turban while entering the court.

M.K. Gandhi felt that removing the turban was an act of demoralising one's own self. The incident was reported in *Natal Advertiser*. Gandhi wrote to the paper explaining his stand and it was published in it. This gave Gandhi unexpected publicity in South Africa in the first week of his arrival. Thus, on the first days of his arrival itself, the media began to describe M.K. Gandhi as an 'unwanted visitor'.

**Pietermaritzburg Incident**

After spending a week in Durban Gandhi went to Pretoria by train in first-class. During the journey a white passenger complained about sharing the compartment with a 'coolie'. Gandhi was asked to move to a third-class compartment. Upon his refusal he was forcibly removed from the train at Pietermaritzburg Station. He spent the night at the platform. The event became a turning point in his political career. According to Gandhi, "I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship which I was subjected to was superficial



Pietermaritzburg Railway Station

- only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice."

Finally, his determination made him take the difficult path - stay there and fight the cause. He knew the path was not smooth at all, but he decided to take the tough way. In the next available train, he continued his journey to Pretoria. Gandhi had faced similar insult on his journey to Pretoria in a stage coach in Pardekoph. He was not allowed to sit inside the coach because he was a coloured man.

The incidents before the Magistrate and at the railway station, brought the social activist out of Gandhi.

### *Think to act*

**While you are travelling in a reserved compartment, one passenger asks his fellow passenger to move out because he is shabbily dressed. The other passengers also support him. How will you intervene?**

### **The discovery of his Mission**

M.K. Gandhi was successful in solving Dada Abdullah's cases out of court. Both the parties agreed to the conditions put forward by a young, hard working and truthful barrister. Tyeb Seth agreed to pay 37,000 pounds to Dada Abdulla's firm. Both the families became closer and their friendship and commitment to each other became stronger.

M.K. Gandhi then returned to Durban. By this time he had become famous among the Indians. Everyone began to address him as *Gandhi Bhai*. Dada Abdullah organised a send-off for Gandhi at Sydenham. But it turned out to be a long meeting during which Gandhi pointed out to the news that appeared in that day's news paper *Natal Mercury*. The news was about a new bill, denying Indians the right to vote. Gandhi enquired that matter with Dada Abdullah. He admitted that being a business person, he was not at all aware of such things. Gandhi asked whether it would be possible for him to organise the Indians who were born and brought up in South Africa. Such an organisation could fight against the exploitation of Indians. The guests unanimously requested Gandhi to postpone his trip back to India for a month. They offered Gandhi due fees for his work. But Gandhi refused to accept it. He stated that "there can be no fees for public work." He needed only a place to stay and some money to purchase legal books. The people assembled there decided to collect the necessary amount. Thus, the send-

off meeting turned out to be a working committee meeting. This was a very important day in Gandhi's life. He said, "Thus God laid the foundation of my life in South Africa and sowed the seed of the fight for national self-respect."

### Disfranchising Bill and Natal Indian Congress

Natal Legislative Assembly made a Franchise Amendment Bill to limit the rights of Indians to vote. Gandhi realised that petitions alone will not be effective in opposing the bill; therefore, an organisation was essential. "The name Congress I knew was in bad odour with conservatives in England and yet Congress was the very life of India. I wanted to popularise it in Natal ... I recommended that the organisation should be called Natal Indian Congress".

The enthusiasm and determination of Indians during this time is vividly described by Gandhi in the following words:

"Meetings were held every day and more and more persons attended them. The requisite funds were oversubscribed. Many volunteers helped in preparing copies, securing signatures and similar work without any remuneration ..."

The activities of Natal Indian Congress gave several friends for Gandhi. They had a proper schedule of activities. The first action thus, of the Natal Indian Congress was to take measures to stop the grant of permission to the Disfranchising Bill. He took up the tasks of drafting petitions, arranging meetings with politicians and writing letters to newspapers. He made an appeal to Lord Ripon, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies in India. Finally, the Bill was withdrawn by the Natal Legislative Assembly. The bill was not authorised by the British throne and was not passed. This was the first victory for Gandhi in South Africa. Gandhi understood the importance of a regular organisation to resist the humiliation against Indians in South Africa. This marked the birth of the first permanent political organisation, the Natal Indian Congress on 22 May 1894. The formation of Natal Indian Congress helped Gandhi in the art of making an organisation, mobilising Indians and improving his leadership qualities.



#### Let us check

List out personal qualities developed by M.K. Gandhi during the formation of Natal Indian Congress and the agitation against the Disfranchising Bill.

- Positive attitude
- Team building
-

### Three Pound Tax

The withdrawal of Disfranchising Bill did not end the hostility of the Europeans against Indians. The life style of Indians – their simplicity, trade practices and unclean living conditions – was disliked by the whites. So they decided to introduce the Immigration Bill. It imposed a tax on the indentured labourers. The bill had the following conditions.

1. Indians should return to India after the end of their contract.
2. If they stayed back, they should renew their contract every two years. Their remuneration may slightly be raised.
3. If they failed to do the above, they should annually pay a tax of 25 pounds.

#### *Think to act*

*If you are in a similar situation in another country, how will you react to these conditions?*

The Natal Indian Congress under the leadership of Gandhi started an agitation against the bill. The Natal Government sent two representatives to India to pressurise the British-Indian Government on this. But the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, did not accept this and cut down the taxes to 3 pounds instead.

Thus by 1896, Natal Indian Congress had two partial successes to its credit. They were

- The Indian Franchise Amendment Bill which was not approved in its original form and
- The Immigration Bill, which was passed with 3 pounds instead of 25 pounds.

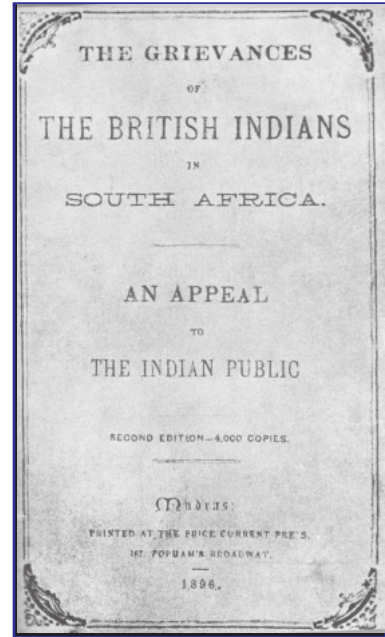
Thus, the Natal Indian Congress and M.K. Gandhi both became famous not only among the Indians but also among the whites in South Africa.

#### *Think and Share*

- You have already prepared notices, posters, pamphlets etc. in your earlier classes. What are their differences?
- What is the difference between a pamphlet and newspaper?
- Did Gandhi make use of pamphlets for communication?

## The Green Pamphlet

M.K. Gandhi returned to India in 1896 to take his family back to South Africa. While he was in Rajkot he began to write a pamphlet – *The grievances of British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public*. In this pamphlet, he exposed the conditions of indentured labourers in South Africa. As it had a green cover it was popularly known as the Green Pamphlet. Gandhi attended the special sessions of All India Congress Committee and distributed the pamphlet in various towns in India. People became aware of the pathetic conditions of Indians in South Africa. M.K. Gandhi also realised his skill in journalism. He understood the power of print media in mobilising and publicising social causes.



## The Indian Opinion

M.K. Gandhi wanted his views to reach the people concerned directly. So he decided to start a news paper for the people. Thus, the *Indian Opinion* was started in 1904. But Gandhi did not want to be its chief editor because being a lawyer, he thought that the editorship would be viewed as his own advertisement. Therefore, Mansukhlal Nazar, became its editor. It was first printed in Durban and the printing press was moved to Phoenix a year later. The newspaper not only reported matters concerning the Indian population, but also became the mouthpiece of the Natal Indian Congress.



It was simultaneously published in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil and English. Many a time, Gandhi took money from his own pocket to continue its publication. But later, it had more than 3,000 subscribers and 20,000 readers. The Indian community, the white colonists and the government officers were its main readers. Many years later Gandhi felt that the *Indian Opinion* had served the people and that this service was an expression of his inner thoughts. In his autobiography Gandhi writes, "Indeed the journal became for me training in self-restraint and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts".



**Think to act**

*If you would get an opportunity to start a newspaper / to become the chief editor of a newspaper, what would you do?*

**The Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion**

On the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899 and Zulu rebellion in 1904, Gandhi organised an Indian Ambulance Corps to nurse the sick and wounded soldiers.

Gandhi did this to show the Indian support for the British Government in South Africa. He thought

that this will help the Indian community to obtain their legal rights as British citizens. Gandhi's non-violent actions during the war increased his conviction about the power of non-violence. His nursing skills also improved during the time.



(Gandhi with the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer War of 1899-1900)

**Western Thinkers and M.K. Gandhi**

M.K. Gandhi was influenced mostly by John Ruskin, Leo Tolstoy and Henry David Thoreau.

**Influence of John Ruskin**

John Ruskin's book *Unto This Last* made immediate and deep impact on Gandhi. His friend H.S.N. Pollock gave a copy to Gandhi in 1904. The focus of Ruskin's work was on the nature of economic inequality in society. It was seen to be morally wrong because it caused poverty among large sections of the population.

According to M.K. Gandhi the three



**John Ruskin**

Born : 8 February 1819, 54 Hunter Street, Brunswick, Square London, England

Died : 20 January 1900

Profession : Writer, Art critic, draughtsman, Water colourist, Social Thinker

Notable works:

1. *Modern painters* (5 volumes)
2. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*
3. *The Stories of Venice* (3 volumes)
4. *Unto this Last*

important principles of Ruskin's book are as follows:

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.
3. That a life of labour i.e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living.

The first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realised. The third had never occurred to me. I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice".

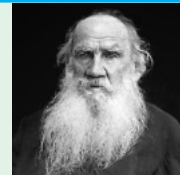
Thus the teaching of Ruskin touched the depth of Gandhi's heart. It had a revolutionary impact on his mind. He accepted Ruskin's ideas. He made them universally applicable.

Soon after reading *Unto This Last*, Gandhi set about establishing the Phoenix settlement. It was based on the values that Ruskin promoted. Gandhi translated Ruskin's book into Gujarati with the title *Sarvodaya* which literally means 'welfare of all'.

### Influence of Tolstoy

M.K. Gandhi had long association with Tolstoy and his ideas. As a member of the Vegetarian Society in London, he was familiar with Tolstoy's name. But it was his book, *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* that impressed him the most. The book highlighted passive resistance to evil. This seemed to come so close to the Jain doctrine of *ahimsa* and Gandhi embraced it with open arms. He became a passionate reader of Tolstoy and read *Gospels in Brief*, *What to Do*, *The First Step*, *How Shall We Escape* and *Slavery of our Times*.

M.K. Gandhi found a common idea, in all the works of Tolstoy: a true Christian is one who avoids violence, avoids conflicts with his neighbour,



**Leo Tolstoy**

Born : September 9, 1828 Tula Province (Yasmaya Polyana) Russia

Died : November 20, 1910

Full Name : Lev Nikolayevie Tolstoy

Profession : Author, Novelist and creative writer.

Notable works:

1. *War and Peace*
2. *Anna Kareina*
3. *The Death of Ivan illich*
4. *The Kingdom of God is within you.*

gains freedom for himself and helps to liberate the world. Gandhi paid tribute to Tolstoy in the following words.

“Tolstoy was the greatest apostle of non-violence that the present age has produced. No one in the West, before him or since has written and spoken as he. True *ahimsa* should mean complete freedom from ill-will and anger and over-flowing love for all. For inculcating this true and higher type of *ahimsa* amongst us, Tolstoy’s life, with its ocean-like love, should serve as a beacon light and never-failing source of inspiration”.

### Influence of Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau, the great American thinker had also influenced Gandhi. His essay *On the duty of Civil Disobedience* captured Gandhi’s imagination. Thoreau himself was a man who practised what he preached. Gandhi pays his respect for Thoreau in the following words:

“You have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa.” Gandhi read Thoreau during a crucial stage of his life in South Africa. He wrote that Thoreau’s essays contained ‘the essence of his political philosophy’.



**Henry David Thoreau**

Born : July 12, 1817 Concord, Massachusetts, USA

Died : May 6, 1862

Profession: Philosopher, Journalist, Poet.

Notable Works :

1. *Walden; or Life in the Woods*
2. *Civil Disobedience*

### The values from Ruskin, Tolstoy and Thoreau

- Recognition and respect for the sanctity of all life.
- Commitment to upholding the principle of greater equality for all.
- Deep appreciation and regard for nature and working with her in sustainable and respectful ways.
- Trust in individuals.
- Acknowledgement that a mutually reliant community ultimately serves the individual better.

- Desire to engage with simplicity in every aspect of life.
- Need to pull away from the industrialised modes of manufacturing, in order to support work that is localised, socially useful and meaningful to the participants.
- Spiritual renewal that unifies humanity in feelings of collective compassion and understanding.



### Let us check

What were the impacts of the following works upon M.K. Gandhi?

- *Unto This Last*
- *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*

Though M.K. Gandhi was very much influenced by the Western writers, he did not blindly imitate them. He tried to take what was good in their teachings. He adapted them for the needs of India. Thus M.K. Gandhi developed his own thoughts and maintained his identity.

### Let us reflect

We have seen that some literary works made deep impact in Gandhi's life. Have you ever experienced the power of a book/work in changing your thoughts? Share it in the class.

## Experiments in Community Living

During his life in South Africa, M.K. Gandhi set up two major community settlements.

### (i) Phoenix Settlement

Gandhi set up the Phoenix Settlement in 1904 by purchasing 100 acres of land. It was "14 miles from Durban and two and a half miles from Phoenix station", near Mount Edgecombe. It was John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, that motivated Gandhi to begin the settlement.

The settlement was based on the ideals of community living. All persons irrespective of their social status and occupation would receive equal wage. They should contribute to the common good and welfare of the settlement.

The settlement comprised of M.K. Gandhi's house, the settlers' homes and a printing press. There were fruit trees and acres of crop for the residents in the settlement.

During the Passive Resistance of 1913, the Phoenix Settlement served as a stronghold of the movement. The settlement became the centre of the strikes. Hundreds of Indians came to the settlement to seek advice and shelter. It became somewhat risky to live at Phoenix. A group of 500 resisters were beaten up and fired at in Phoenix, for refusing to work during the struggle.



Phoenix Settlement

### (ii) Tolstoy Farm

In Transvaal, Gandhi set up the Tolstoy Farm in 1910. It was on the principle of self-reliance. The farm was named after Tolstoy. A German friend, Herman Kallenbach, purchased the farm of 1100 acres at Lawley, 35 kilometres from Johannesburg. The victims of the Passive Resistance took refuge here. The inmates were comprised of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, whites as well as blacks. Non-violence or non-injury (*ahimsa*) was the guiding principle in the farm. All were to be strict vegetarians and were to lead an upright moral life.



Tolstoy Farm

### Ashram Living

Both Phoenix settlement (1904) and Tolstoy Farm were early experiments in ashram living. Gandhi understood the power of community prayer. So it was introduced in the phoenix settlement and Tolstoy farm. They became training grounds for some of his basic ideas including *Brahmacharya*, *Satyagraha*, *Ahimsa*, Truth etc.

M.K. Gandhi showed the skill to influence other people. His undying faith in Hindu-Muslim unity, the principle of equal respect for all religions and his experiments in taking women as equal partners in the struggle against oppression were all evolved and experimented in these places. South Africa turned out to be the real *prayogabhumi* (land of experiments) of M.K. Gandhi's ideas and ideals.

## Advent of *Satyagraha*

A new ordinance was published in an extraordinary gazette by the Transvaal Government in 1906. According to the ordinance every Indian 'coolie' from the age of eight and above should register his or her name with the Registrar of Asiatics and obtain a certificate. The certificate would contain the personal identification marks and thumb impressions. Anybody failing to comply with the ordinance was to be fined or imprisoned for three months or even deported. Any police officer had the right to ask for the certificate at any time. Police also could enter into houses to verify these certificates. A person refusing to produce the certificate or show the personal identification marks would be treated as an offender and punished.

M.K. Gandhi realised that it was against the interests of the Indian community. He translated it into Gujarati for the benefit of the common people. He also convened a meeting of leading Indians and explained the contents. Everyone agreed to start an agitation against the ordinance.

Gandhi called the movement 'passive resistance' in the beginning. As the struggle continued Gandhi found that 'passive resistance' was an unsuitable phrase to express its real meaning. He thought it was shameful that the Indian struggle should be known by an English name. So a contest was announced in *the Indian Opinion* to find a suitable word for the movement. "*Sadagraha*" meaning "firmness in good cause" was suggested by Maganlal Gandhi. Gandhi modified it into "*satyagraha*": *satya* meaning truth, *agraha* meaning "force or holding firm". The Indian movement in South Africa thus came to rely on the force born of truth. The non-violent aspect of the movement eventually gained much prominence. Thus the phrase 'Passive Resistance' was dropped.

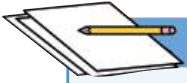


M.K. Gandhi adopted *Satyagraha* for the first time against the Asiatic Registration Act. He asked Indians to defy the new law and to suffer the punishments for doing so. They faced the repressive actions of the Government through non-violent resistance for the next seven years. The public opinion turned against the Government for its harsh treatment against the peaceful Indian protesters. It forced the South African Government to

reach a compromise with Gandhi. Thus the concept of Satyagraha took a more definite shape during this struggle as a new weapon of mass struggle.

### **Significance of the South African Life**

Gandhi's personality was the product of the experiences and experiments in three nations – India, England and South Africa. When Gandhi arrived in South Africa he was young and had no first hand knowledge about the conditions here. However, twenty-one years later he had matured into a true politician and a leader. He fought racism and discrimination. He upheld the principles of non-violence as means to solve political problems. His African life was an indicator of greater things to come. In South Africa, he mobilised hundreds of resisters but in India he mobilised thousands, and became the true leader of a mass movement. After an enormous struggle he helped to secure the independence of India in 1947. Without the South African experience this may not have been possible. Thus it was in South Africa that M.K. Gandhi's personality went through a real transformation. From an ordinary person, M.K. Gandhi became the Mahatma.



## Summary

- M.K. Gandhi, an unsuccessful lawyer in India, became a successful lawyer in South Africa.
- The *Indian Opinion* helped him to really master the best technique of reaching out to the masses.
- Helped Indians in South Africa to boost their own morale by improving their living conditions.
- Influences of great thinkers like Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau helped him in community living as well as in *Satyagraha*.
- Experiments in community living marked the first phase of ashrams established by Gandhi in India.
- M.K. Gandhi showed the public how to lead a simple life as a public servant.
- It was here in South Africa that he experimented with and developed the technique of *Satyagraha* which is widely accepted today.



## I can

- analyse the Pietermaritzburg incident which brought out the social activist out of M.K. Gandhi.
- explain the agitations and movements led by M.K. Gandhi against the immigration bill introduced by Natal Government.
- analyse the movements undertaken by M.K. Gandhi as a loyalist of the British Government.
- evaluate M.K. Gandhi's experiments in community living.
- analyse the influences of great thinkers on M.K. Gandhi which helped him to evolve his own ideas.
- explain how M.K. Gandhi developed *Satyagraha* through the technique of Non-violent resistance.



**Let us assess**

1. How did M.K. Gandhi become famous in South Africa immediately after his arrival?
2. Explain the experiences of M.K. Gandhi at the Railway Station in Petermaritzburg.
3. How did M.K. Gandhi carry out his social reforms in South Africa through an organisational set up?
4. M.K. Gandhi adopted different strategies to achieve success to his first ever movement in South Africa. Explain?
5. Tax is the revenue of a Government and it is required for day to day governance. But M.K. Gandhi led the agitation against the tax of 25 pounds. Analyse the reasons.
6. Many of us never use time creatively during our journey. But Gandhi often used his time effectively. He prepared and distributed leaflets during his travel from South Africa to India in 1895. These leaflets caused several problems among the Whites. Gandhi was even assaulted for these leaflets. Identify these leaflets and specify their main contents.
7. News papers play an important role in bringing to light social issues and their campaign. Describe Gandhi's journalistic activities in South Africa?
8. Evaluate the activities organised by M.K. Gandhi to prove that Indians in South Africa were loyal to the British Government even during such emergency time as war.
9. The influence of others is noticeable in our personal life. Identify the great people who influenced M.K. Gandhi in formulating his ideals. How did they influence him?
10. M.K. Gandhi showed through action the solution to any social issue rather than preaching about it. Explain such activities of Gandhi in South Africa ?
11. The methods adopted during a movement are as important as the movement. Were the means of Satyagraha in South Africa helpful in realising the end? How did M.K. Gandhi formulate such means of agitation?
12. Compare the Gandhi who arrived in South Africa in 1893 with the Gandhi who left South Africa in 1915.

# ROLE OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

## Key Concepts

- **Brief evaluation of Indian National Movement before the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi**
- **Mahatma Gandhi's entry into Indian Political scene through local issues (Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad Satyagraha)**
- **Mahatma Gandhi's entry into Indian National political scene**
  - Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala Bagh massacre
  - Khilafat Movement
  - Non-cooperation Movement
  - Civil Disobedience Movement
  - Gandhi Irwin Pact
  - Round Table Conferences
  - Poona Pact
  - Anti-war Satyagraha
  - Quit India Movement
  - The Indian Independence Act
- **Mahatma Gandhi's intervention to stop communal riots**
- **Mahatma Gandhi as social and political activist**
  - Constructive Programmes
  - Vaikom Satyagraha
  - Guruvayoor Satyagraha
  - Harijan Sevak Sangh
  - Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

This chapter discusses the role of Mahatma Gandhi in freedom movement. It deals with Gandhi's intervention in local level issues, his entry into the National political scene, his intervention to stop communal riots and his record as a social and political activist.

Let us look at the nature of welcome given by people of India when he returned from South Africa.

A GRAND WELCOME TO MR. GANDHI  
VENUE: MR. JEHANGIR PETT'S HOUSE,  
BOMBAY.

Why did the people give such a grand welcome?

In January 1915 Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa. He established an ashram at Kochrab in Ahmedabad to accommodate the Satyagrahis who accompanied him from South Africa. Later, he shifted it to Sabarmati and established another at Wardha. Upon Gokhale's advice, he kept away from politics for a year. He toured the country in a second class compartment to understand India in a better way. But due to illness he couldn't

complete the journey. The India Mahatma Gandhi came back to was rather different from the one he had left in 1893. Although still a colony of the British, it was more active in a political sense.

### **Brief evaluation of Indian National Movement before the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the birth and growth of modern Indian nationalism. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century India came under the British rule. There were also resistances and revolts against British colonialism. Of these, the most important was the Revolt of 1857.

The rise of nationalism was the result of various factors. The following were important among them.

- Political unity
- Western education
- Socio-religious movements
- Development of modern means of transport and communication
- Role of press
- Role of writers
- Racial discrimination
- Illbert Bill controversy
- Rise of middle class
- Influence of historical research
- Lord Lytton
- 
- 

Another important event in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the formation of Indian National Congress.

The first phase of the freedom movement was the period of moderate politics. The national leaders like Dadabai Naoroji, P.M. Mehta, Denesh Wacha, W.C. Banerjee, Surendra Nath Banerjee and Gopala Krishna Gokhale dominated Congress politics during this period.

Most of these leaders were western educated. They were influenced by western ideology. They considered the British rule beneficial to India. They thought that British rule would make India a modern country like Britain. So these leaders were against any mass agitation. Most of the moderate leaders were not full time politicians. Some of them came from the upper strata of the society. The moderate leaders lacked mass support.

The second phase of the freedom movement was the period of extremist politics. Aurobindo, Bala Gangathar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai were the main leaders. Several factors contributed to the rise of extremism which includes reactionary policies of the viceroys, famine, plague, poor economic conditions, revival of Hinduism, racial discrimination, impact of revolutions and international events, spread of education etc.

The programmes of the extremist were Swaraj, Swadesi, boycott, non-cooperation and national education. They set up co-operative institutions for rural sanitation. The policy of extremists produced good results. The partition of Bengal was cancelled in 1911. It gave fresh confidence to Indian nationalists.

On December 30, 1906 the Muslim League was formed. It also emerged as a powerful political force in the national scenario.



### Let us check

Analyse the main features of Indian national movement before the arrival of Gandhi?

## Mahatma Gandhi's entry into Indian political scene through local level issues

### Champaran Satyagraha (1917)

The early struggles of Mahatma Gandhi in India were for peasants and workers. In December 1916, Raj Kumar Shukla, a peasant from Champaran

approached Gandhi. He told Gandhi about the harsh treatment of peasants by the British Indigo planters. The peasant had to plant indigo on every three out of twenty parts of his land for his landlord. This was known as 'Tinkathia' system.

### Activity

Who were the victims of British rule in India? Discuss and complete the list.

- Peasants
- Working class
-

Early in 1917 Gandhi left Calcutta for Champaran. Mahatma Gandhi said, "My object was to enquire into the condition of the Champaran agriculturalists and understand their grievances against the Indigo planters. For this purpose it was necessary that I should meet thousands of ryots. But I deemed it essential, before starting on my enquiry, to know the planters' side of the case, and see the Commissioner and the Diwan. I sought and was granted appointment with both". The Secretary of the Planters' Association said that Gandhi was an outsider. So he had no business to come between the planters and their tenants. But if he had any representation to make, he should submit it in writing. The Commissioner advised him to quit Champaran immediately.

On his way to Champaran to enquire about the ill- treatment of a tenant, Mahatma Gandhi was given a notice to leave Champaran. But he was not ready to leave without completing his enquiry. Gandhi received a summons to take his trial the next day. News about the notice and summons spread like fire. Gandhi might have legally resisted the notices served on him. Instead he accepted them and his conduct towards the officials was correct. His co-workers also helped the officials to manage the crowds.

When Mahatma Gandhi reached there, peasants gave him a warm welcome. Gandhi writes in his autobiography that "it is no exaggeration, but the central truth to say that in this meeting with peasants I was face to face with God, *Ahimsa* and Truth". Sir Edward Gait, the Lieutenant Governor expressed his willingness to appoint an enquiry. He invited Gandhi to be a member of the committee. After consultation with his co-workers Gandhi accepted the invitation. But he put forward a condition that he should be free to advise the ryots as to what line of action they should take, in case the result of the enquiry failed. Sir Edward Gait accepted the condition and announced the enquiry. The enquiry was in favour of the ryots and the Champaran Agrarian Bill was passed. Gandhi also started many constructive activities in Champaran which include setting up of schools for primary education, sanitation work and medical relief.

### **Ahmedabad Mill Strike (1918)**

Mahatma Gandhi got a letter from Anasuya Behn about the condition of the mill-workers in Ahmedabad. The wages were low. The labourers had long been agitating for an increment. Gandhi reached Ahmedabad. Gandhi's relations with the mill owners were friendly. Gandhi held consultations with them, and requested them to refer the dispute to arbitration. But they turned

down the request. Gandhi had therefore to advise the labourers to go on strike. Before Gandhi did so, he explained to them the conditions for a successful strike. They included the following.

1. Never to resort to violence
2. Never to trouble the blacklegs
3. Never to take up arms and
4. To remain firm, no matter how long the strike may continue, and to earn bread, during the strike, by other honest means

The leaders of the strike understood and accepted the conditions. The labourers took a pledge at a general meeting. They would not resume work until their terms were accepted or the mill owners agreed to refer the dispute to arbitration.

It was during this strike that Mahatma Gandhi came in close contact with Vallabhai Patel and Shankarlal Banker. Gandhi and his colleagues had daily meetings with the strikers under the shade of a tree on the banks of Sabarmati. The strike went on for twenty one days. During the strike Gandhi contacted the mill owners from time to time. He entreated them to do justice to the labourers. But they did not like the interference of a third party. They were not even ready for arbitration.

For the first two weeks the workers showed great courage and self-restraint. But they began to show signs of restlessness. Gandhi began to fear an outbreak of rowdiness on their part. So he decided to fast. It generated an atmosphere of goodwill and confidence. The mill owners came forward for talks. Anasuya Behn's house became the venue of their discussions. Finally, an arbitrator was appointed and the strike was called off after three days of Gandhi's fasting. The mill owners celebrated the event by distributing sweets among the labourers and thus a settlement was reached after 21 days.

### **Kheda Satyagraha (1918)**

Frequent famine was the result of British rule. How did it affect life of the peasants in Gandhi's native place? How did he intervene in this issue?

Let us discuss the background and the course of the Satyagraha conducted by Gandhi to tackle this issue.

There was widespread failure of crops in the Kheda District of Gujarat. The peasants faced famine. They wanted suspension of revenue assessment for

the year. As per the land revenue rule, if the crop was worth four *annas* or less, the cultivators should claim full suspension of the revenue assessment for the year. The official figures put the crop value over four *annas*. But the actual value was less. The Government did not listen to the popular demand for an arbitration. Gandhi and his followers requested the Government to suspend the collection of revenue. But the Government rejected the request. Mahatma Gandhi then requested them to start Satyagraha.

The people exhibited much courage. The Government initially tried to ignore them. Then it began to use force against the peasants. The officers captured and sold people's cattle. Penalty notices were served.

Mahatma Gandhi advised the people to remove onion from a field which had been, in his opinion, wrongly attached by the Government. This was a good opportunity for the people to learn a lesson in courting fines or imprisonment - the necessary consequences of such disobedience. So Mohanlal Pandya, one of Gandhi's co-workers, removed onions from the field with the help of some friends. The Government arrested Mohanlal and his companions. This added to people's enthusiasm. A procession escorted Mohanlal Pandya and others. The people then gave the title of 'Dungli Chor' (Onion thief) to Mohanlal Pandya.

The people gradually became exhausted. Mahatma Gandhi looked for some suitable way to end the struggle. The authorities agreed that if the well-to-do *patidars* paid up their dues poorer ones would be granted suspension. Gandhi asked for a written undertaking to that effect, which was given and the Satyagraha was withdrawn. Gandhi observed that he was not happy with the Satyagraha. The end of a Satyagraha campaign can be described as worthy only if it left the satyagrahis stronger and more spirited than they were in the beginning. The government official's behaviour suggested that there was no settlement at all. Though the poor were to be granted suspension, hardly any one got the benefit. But it had some other benefits. The Kheda campaign brought the educated public workers closer to the actual life of the peasants. They learned to identify themselves with the peasants. Vallabhai Patel emerged as a national leader through the Kheda Satyagraha.

Thus, Champaran, Ahmedabad and Kheda Satyagrahas were Gandhi's intervention at the micro level to redress the grievances of peasants and labourers. They proved the universality of *Satyagraha* as a powerful weapon to fight injustice.



### Let us check

Complete the chart given.

Champan Satyagraha	Ahmedabad Mill Strike	Kheda Satyagraha
Reasons		
Features		
Benefits		

## Gandhi's entry into the Indian National political scene

### Rowlatt Act (1919)

It was on 6 April, 1919...

A day of hartal called by Gandhi...

The hartal was called against the introduction of Rowlatt Act. It was also known as the 'Black Act'. The British Government wanted to evaluate political revolutionary activities in Bengal and Punjab. A committee was appointed with Justice Rowlatt as its president in 1918. Thus, on the basis of the recommendations of the committee the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crime Act was passed on 10 March 1919. This is popularly known as the Rowlatt Act.

According to the Act, anyone can be arrested and imprisoned without trial. It provided for speedy trial of offences by a special court. The provincial Governors were given wide powers to search any place and arrest a suspected person without warrant.



### Let us do

Evaluate the relevance and nature of the first ever hartal in Indian history and prepare a report.

### Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (1919)

The Punjab region responded positively to Gandhi's call. In Punjab, nationalist leaders like Dr. Satyapal and Kitchlew addressed mass protest rallies. Mahatma Gandhi himself travelled to Punjab to address a rally. But he was arrested and taken back to Bombay. On April 10, Satyapal and Kitchlew were arrested. People organised a march to Miles Irving's (Deputy



Commissioner) bungalow, demanding the release of their leaders. Some of the people were killed and wounded. The infuriated mob rioted in Amritsar, burning British institutions and killing certain Britishers.

On April 11, General O'Dyer took charge of the city and imposed martial law. On 12<sup>th</sup> he declared Section 144 of the criminal code, banning all meetings and processions. On the 13<sup>th</sup> evening, a public meeting was held at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar affected to condemn police cruelties.

Jallianwala Bagh was a large open space enclosed on three sides by walls. Nearly 20,000 peaceful and unarmed people assembled there. General Dyer reached there and ordered his troops to fire the crowd. He stopped firing only when the ammunition was over. According to official estimate 379



Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

were killed and 1500 were wounded. Unofficial estimates put the death toll at more than 1000.

Michael O'Dyer justified the massacre. The Indian National Congress reacted sharply. It demanded a high level

enquiry. Tagore gave up his knighthood in protest. Sir C. Sankaran Nair resigned his membership from Viceroy's executive council. Finally the British appointed an enquiry committee under Lord Hunter in October 1919.

Michael O'Dyer was shot dead by Udham Singh at the Caxton Hall, London in March 1940. Udham Singh was hanged on 31 July 1940.



Let us know

“Plassey laid the foundation to the British rule and Jallianwala Bagh shook it”. Gandhi remarked after the massacre.

It was the agitation against Rowlatt Act that made Gandhi's entry into the national political scene. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre turned millions of moderate Indians from loyal supporters of British Raj into nationalists.



### Let us check

On the basis of Jallianwala Bagh, identify the following individuals and their role.

Person	Role
Michael O'Dyer	
Miles Iriving	
Kitchlew	
Tagore	
Sir C Sankaran Nair	

### Khilafat Movement (1920) - Mahatma Gandhi's intervention for Hindu - Muslim unity

Communal harmony is a basic principle of Gandhian ideology. Gandhi always stood for Hindu-Muslim unity. The Khilafat Movement started under Ali brothers gave Gandhi the opportunity to work for Hindu-Muslim unity.

After the First World War, the nature of the Indian National movement underwent a rapid change and entered into a new phase. This new phase was one of mass politics and mass mobilisation. During 1920 - 1921 two mass movements sprang up in India. They were the khilafat and non-cooperation movement. During the First World War Turkey allied with Germany and Austria against the British. The Muslims all over the world considered the Sultan of Turkey as their spiritual leader. But after the War, the British put an end to the Caliphate. In September 1919, an All India Khilafat Committee was formed under the leadership of Maulana Muhammed Ali and Shoukat Ali, popularly known as Ali brothers.

In November 1919, Gandhi along with Motilal Nehru and Madan Mohan Malavya took part in an All India Khilafat Conference at Delhi. Mahatma Gandhi urged the Khilafatists to turn to non-cooperation to get their demands accepted by the British. Accordingly, the Central Khilafat Committee declared a programme of non-cooperation towards the Government. Gandhi and Ali brothers toured throughout India for the Hindu-Muslim unity. However the Khilafat movement did not last long. In November 1922, a democratic revolution took place in Turkey under Mustafa Kamal Pasha and Turkey became a Republic.

Through the Khilafat Movement Gandhi brought the Muslim masses into the national movement. The Khilafat movement strengthened Hindu-

Muslim unity. It carried the anti-British sentiments to the remotest corners of India.



### Let us check

How did Gandhi use Khilafat movement for the promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity and Indian nationalism?

## Mahatma Gandhi as an undisputed leader

### Non-cooperation Movement

Let's examine the background, methods and significance of the movement. Encouraged by the success of the agitation against the Rowlatt Act, Gandhi called for a campaign of non-cooperation with British rule. The Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920 endorsed his programme. The attainment of Swaraj was the main aim of non-cooperation movement.

Mahatma Gandhi gave the following programmes for the movement

1. Boycott of law courts, educational institutions, elections, official functions, British goods etc.
2. Non- payment of taxes.
3. Surrender of honours and titles (Gandhi returned the KAISER-I-HIND medal awarded to him by the British Government for his services during the war in South Africa).

Indians were asked to stop attending schools, colleges, law courts, and not to pay taxes. There were also several constructive activities. National educational institutions like the Kashi Vidyapith, the Gujarat Vidyapith and Jamia Millia College were established. Promotion of local goods, charka and Khadi was also part of constructive activities.

There was great response to Gandhi's call for non-cooperation. Lakhs of students left schools and colleges. Hundreds of lawyers gave up their practice. Foreign cloths were burnt up. Factory workers and peasants were at the forefront. Thousands of women offered their jewellery to the Satyagraha fund. In Malabar, the Mappila peasants revolted against the land lords. The tenants refused to pay illegal taxes in the state of Andhra Pradesh, U.P., Bihar and Orissa. The visit of the Prince of Wales in November 1921 was decided as the occasion for demonstrations, hartals and political meetings.

The Government took repressive measures. The Congress and the Khilafat organisations were declared unlawful. Public meetings and processions

were banned. By the end of 1921, important leaders except Gandhi were arrested. The movement continued with great vigour until the beginning of 1922. But an unfortunate incident made Mahatma Gandhi to suspend the Non-cooperation Movement.

### **Chauri-chaura and the suspension of the Movement**

The police opened fire at a Congress procession of nearly 3000 peasants. The angry crowd burnt down the police station and killed 22 policemen on 5 February, 1922. Gandhi took a very serious view of the incident. He felt that the people were not properly trained in non-violence. So he suspended the entire Non-cooperation Movement. He urged the Congress men to concentrate on Constructive Programme. The Congress Working Committee meeting at Bardoli endorsed the suspension of the movement.

The sudden withdrawal of the movement surprised the nation. It created widespread disappointment among the masses. National leaders like C. R Das, Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai who were in jail could not digest the decision. Subash Chandra Bose called it a 'national calamity'.

However, this movement made Mahatma Gandhi an undisputed leader of the freedom movement. Common people for the first time became an integral part of the main stream of the national movement. They developed self confidence and self esteem.



#### **Let us check**

- Examine how the methods of non-cooperation introduced by Gandhi brought in the different sections of Indian society to the mainstream of Indian nationalism?
- The sudden suspension of Non-cooperation Movement after the Chauri-Chaura incident weakened Indian Nationalism'. 'The withdrawal of non-cooperation movement indicates Gandhi's strong faith in Ahimsa, and it proves that he is different from other politicians'.
- Based on these two arguments, conduct a debate in your class and consolidate the different viewpoints in your notebook.

### **Civil Disobedience Movement**

The Lahore Congress in 1929 gave Mahatma Gandhi full freedom to plan a Civil Disobedience Movement. Soon after the observance of the 'Independence Day' Mahatma Gandhi announced that he would start civil disobedience movement by breaking the salt law. Gandhi had given advance

notice of his salt march to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin. But Irwin failed to grasp the significance of the action.

### **Programme of Civil Disobedience Movement**

- a. Violation of salt law.
- b. Boycott of educational institutions by students, law courts by lawyers and services by government servants.
- c. Boycott of foreign goods and burning of foreign clothes.
- d. Non-payment of taxes to the Government.

Gandhi along with 78 followers began the historic Dandi March on 12 March, 1930. The march started from the Sabarmati Ashram. Gandhi broke the salt law on 6th April 1930. Similar marches were organised in other parts of the country.

Lakhs of Indians broke the salt laws. Millions participated in hartals, demonstrations and boycott of foreign goods. Women, peasants and industrial workers participated in large numbers. In many parts of India, peasants violated forest laws that kept them and their cattle out of the forest. In some towns factory workers went on strikes while lawyers boycotted British courts and students refused to attend Government-run educational institutions. The movement was extended to the Pathans of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Nagaland and Manipur. In NWFP Khan Abdul Gafar Khan (Frontier Gandhi) under the banner of "Khudai Khitmatgars" (Servants of God) actively participated in the movement. In the North East, the Manipuris took a brave part in it.

In Kerala, on April 1930, under the leadership of K. Kelappan Satyagrahis marched from Kozhikode to Payyannur. They reached Ulliyath Kadavu near Payyannur and broke the salt law. Hundreds of Satyagrahis reached Payyannur under the leadership of Muhammad Abdul Rahman and E.Moidu Moulavi. Hundreds of women too participated in the movement. The names of A.V Kuttimalu Amma, Mrs L. S Prabu and Eswari Ammal deserve special mention.

C.Krishnan Nair (Neyyattinkara), Titus (Kottayam), Raghava Poduval (Shornur) and Sankarji (Mayannur) accompanied Gandhi in his Dandi March.



Let us know

### Rani Gaidilliu

Responding to the call of Gandhi she organised a popular Naga rebellion at the age of 13. She was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment at the age of 13. She spent 15 years in jail and was released only after India's independence. Jawaharlal Nehru visited her in jail in 1937. Nehru described her as the Rani of 'Nagas' .

This movement was mercilessly suppressed by the Government. Indian National Congress was declared illegal. Gandhi and nearly 90,000 Satyagrahis were arrested. Thousands of acres of land were attached. Following the Gandhi-Irwin pact, the civil disobedience movement was temporarily suspended in March 1931. The Congress officially called off the movement only in March 1934.



### Let us check

Why did Mahatma Gandhi decide to start civil disobedience movement by breaking the salt law?

### Gandhi -Irwin Pact (1931)

The British parliament felt that without Congress no decision could be taken. So Lord Irwin was directed by the British government to settle things with Gandhi. On 5 March 1931 the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed with the following conditions.

1. Only the political prisoners involved in violence will be retained in jail; others should be set free.
2. Indians can make salt from the sea.
3. The Indians can protest in front of shops that sold liquor and foreign goods
4. The Government shall be liberal towards those who resigned from their posts in protest.

Mahatma Gandhi accepted the following:

1. The civil disobedience movement would be withdrawn.
2. The Indian leaders shall participate in the Second Round Table Conference.
3. Indians will not boycott all foreign goods.
4. Indians will not demand for investigations into police cruelties.

The Congress leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, Subash Chandra Bose opposed the pact. They argued that the Government had accepted none of the major nationalist demands. They were angry with the Government's refusal to commute the death sentence of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Raj Guru to life imprisonment.

Gandhi's decision to break the salt law was his tactical wisdom as a political activist. This law was the most widely opposed one in British rule because salt was a common household item. Civil Disobedience Movement also had several other significances. It awakened the political consciousness of the Indian masses. The British realised that they would have to hand over some power to the Indians. It affected the prestige of British rule before the world.

### Round Table Conferences

The first Round Table Conference was held in London in November 1930. But it was not attended by any national leader. The Second Round Table Conference was held in London in 1931. Following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Gandhi represented India. Other prominent leaders who attended the conference were Madan Mohan Malavya, Muhammed Iqbal, Sarojini Naidu, G.D. Birla and Ambedkar.

The Congress reiterated Poorna Swaraj as its goal. Ambedkar demanded separate electorate for the depressed classes. Gandhi opposed the separate electorate. Gandhi saw in it the British Government's policy of divide and rule. The conference in London was not successful. So Gandhi returned to India and resumed the civil disobedience movement.



The Second Round Table Conference

The third Round Table Conference was in November 1932. Congress did not attend the meeting. An agreement was prepared in this conference for the future constitutional set up. These were published later as the White Paper which became the basis of the Government of India Act 1935. This Act gave autonomy to the provinces.

## Communal Award

The Second Round Table Conference was a failure. So the proposal for minority representation was announced by the British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald on 6 August 1932. This is known as the Communal Award. Its main features were:

1. Muslims were to continue having separate electorate besides a certain percentage of seats reserved in Central and Provincial Legislature.
2. Communal Award gave separate electorates for minorities.
3. It gave 71 seats to the depressed classes.

## Poona Pact

Mahatma Gandhi strongly opposed the Communal Award. He decided to oppose it with a 'fast unto death' at Yerwada prison. This led to the signing of the Poona Pact. As a result, the Communal Award was withdrawn. The main clauses of Poona Pact included:

1. Joint electorate was retained.
2. 148 seats were reserved for the depressed classes against 71.
3. The members of the depressed classes were to elect by single transferable vote.
4. Nearly 20% of seats were reserved for the Harijans in the Central Legislature.
5. Adequate representation was given to Harijans in local bodies and public services.
6. Financial aid was promised to promote literacy among Harijans.

## Anti-war Satyagraha (1940)

Through non-cooperation movement and civil disobedience movement Gandhi practised Satyagraha at the collective level for a national cause. Through anti-war satyagraha he proved that Satyagraha can also be practised at the individual level. But care should be taken in the selection of the Satyagrahi.

Let us analyse an incident from the freedom movement to prove the fact.

During the initial stages of the Second World War the situation was not favourable for the British. So Britain wanted to win the Indians. Thus the British Government put forward some promises popularly known as 'August Offer'. Through the August Offer Britain promised Dominion status to India.



The August offer was rejected. The left wing of the Congress led by Subash Chandra Bose wanted to launch a strong movement against the Government. But Gandhi was not opposed to the idea as it would adversely affect the war efforts of the British. So he launched the Individual Satyagraha, which is also known as Anti-war Satyagraha, in October 1940. Individual Satyagraha gave a new life to Indian freedom movement. Gandhi laid down very strict rules and drew up a pledge for the successful conduct of the Satyagraha. He chose Vinoba Bhave as the first Satyagrahi.

Vinoba started the Satyagraha on 17 October 1940. But he was soon arrested, on October 21. However, there were several individual Satyagrahis after Vinoba who tried to continue the anti-war satyagraha. All of them were arrested one after the other. This Satyagraha continued till the end of 1941. In the meanwhile, the Viceroy's executive council was expanded with more Indians. The Government released the satyagrahis on 4 December 1941 following the opinion of other parties.

Anti-war Satyagraha proved that 'Satyagraha' can be practised at the individual level for a national cause. Through the selection of Vinoba, Gandhi showed the importance of the qualifications of a Satyagrahi. Another dimension of this Satyagraha was that for the first time Gandhi protested directly against Britain's war policy.



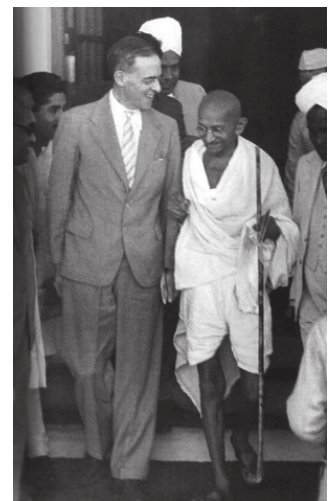
### Let us check

Prepare a brief report of the life and activities of Vinoba Bhave and find out why Gandhi selected Vinoba Bhave as the first individual satyagrahi.

### Quit India Movement (1942)

Quit India Movement was the last mass movement under Mahatma Gandhi. Let us analyse the background, methods and significance of the 'Quit India' Movement.

Britain was forced to reconsider its Indian policy as a result of the Second World War. In 1942 Churchill sent Sir. Stafford Cripps to India. His mission was to find a settlement with Gandhi and the Congress. Cripps was a member of the Labour Party. It always sympathised with the Indian National Movement. Cripps put forward some proposals. Important among them were the following:



Mahatma Gandhi with Sir. Stafford Cripps

- Dominion status would be granted to India immediately after the war ended.
- A committee would be set up to draft the constitution.
- The constitution so framed would be accepted by the British Government on condition that any province could remain outside the Indian Union, if it desired so.

The Congress demanded immediate transfer of power. It wanted a responsible Government with full powers. But Britain rejected the demand. Mahatma Gandhi described Cripps' proposals as a 'post dated cheque' on a crashing bank. The Muslim League rejected the Plan and repeated the demand for Pakistan. Thus Cripps Mission failed. Then Mahatma Gandhi decided to launch his third major Satyagraha against the British rule in August 1942, the 'Quit India' campaign.

In May 1942 Gandhi said that if the British did not agree to leave India he would launch a Civil Disobedience Movement. On 8 August 1942 the All India Congress Committee passed the historic Quit India Resolution. Gandhi gave the nation the slogan 'DO OR DIE'. During a public meeting in Bombay, Gandhi said, 'Here is a mantra, a small mantra that I give you, you shall imprint it in your heart, let every breath of yours to give expression to it, we shall either free India or die in our attempt, we shall never live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. The mantra is Do or Die'.

The Congress did not provide any clear line of action. But the Government had been making all the preparations to crush the movement. On 9 August 1942, in the morning itself all prominent leaders were jailed. The people came out to the streets protesting against it in many parts of India.

Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, and Aruna Asaf Ali led the movement from underground. Many meetings and processions were held in Kerala. There were many attacks on Government offices and police stations. Chemancheri Railway station, the sub court of Tellichery, the Registrar's office at Naduvannur and the salt godown of Chompalla were destroyed. There was an attempt to destroy the Faroke Bridge.

Large scale violence made Quit India Movement different from Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement. All the leaders were arrested at the very beginning. Without the leaders the movement lost its proper direction. It was the repressive policy of the Government that provoked the people into violence. The Muslim League kept away from the movement. The Government finally succeeded in suppressing the movement.

However, the slogan 'DO OR DIE' captured the imagination of Indians. It removed their fear about the British rule. This movement showed Indians' intense desire to be free, whatever be the suffering and sacrifice. The British also felt that their days in India were numbered.



### Let us check

Compare and contrast Quit India Movement with other movements of Gandhi. Prepare a brief report.

### Wavell Plan (1945)

Lord Wavell came to India as Viceroy on 14 June 1945. Wavell announced new proposals to introduce further constitutional changes in India. This is known as Wavell Plan. A conference of political parties was called in Simla. But Wavell called off the conference due to Jinnah's disagreement.

### The Cabinet Mission (1946)

The Labour Government under Clement Attlee came to power in England. By 1946 the British Government realised that a graceful withdrawal from India was the only option left to them. To work out the details of transfer of power, the British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to India under the leadership of Sir Stafford Cripps.

The mission refused to accept the demand of the League for a full fledged Pakistan. At the same time, it pacified the League through the creation of autonomous Muslim majority areas. Therefore, both the Congress and the League were ready to accept the plan. But after the results of the election to Constituent Assembly, the League changed its stand.

The Muslim League began 'Direct Action' for Pakistan. The call for Direct Action was given in Calcutta on 16 August 1946 with the battle cry 'We will fight and get Pakistan'. There were bloody communal riots in several parts of the country. Thousands lost their lives. Nearly 5000 people were killed in the so called 'Calcutta Killings'. Gandhi travelled through East Bengal and Bihar on foot to check the communal riots.

### Attlee's Statement, 20 February 1947: Divide and Quit Policy

Prime Minister Attlee announced the 'definite intention' in the House of Commons. Britain wanted to transfer the power to India by a date not later than June 1948.

Lord Mountbatten became the Viceroy of India in March 1947. He started discussions with Indian leaders to bring about a solution agreeable to all

parties. Mountbatten understood that a compromise on the issue of Pakistan was impossible. So he offered a plan for the partition of India. Mahatma Gandhi strongly opposed the partition plan.

### **The Indian Independence Act (July 1947) and Partition of India (15 August 1947)**

The Indian Independence Act was passed by the British parliament in July 1947. It had provided for two independent dominions of India and Pakistan with effect from 15 August 1947. Thus on 15 August 1947 India celebrated its first Independence Day with mixed feelings of grief and joy.

#### **Communal Riots at Naokhali**

During the Independence day celebrations, Mahatma Gandhi was spending the night at Naokhali in Calcutta. It was worst affected by communal riots. He said "I invoke the aid of all embracing power to take me away from this 'vale of tears' rather than make me a helpless witness of the butchery by man become savage, whether he dares to call himself a Muslim or Hindu or what not".

### **Mahatma Gandhi as a social and political activist**

You have already learnt about Vaikom and Guruvayur Satyagrahas. Why did Gandhi involve himself with these Satyagrahas?

Through freedom movement Gandhi not only aimed at freedom from foreign rule but also social, political, economic and moral elevation of man. His Constructive Programme, encouragement to Vaikom and Guruvayoor Satyagraha, formation of Harijan Sevak Sangh, and Kasturba National Memorial Trust were examples of such dimensions of freedom.

#### **Constructive Programme**

Gandhi designed Constructive Programme after the suspension of non-cooperation movement. It aimed at the total development (social, political, economic, moral and spiritual) of the nation. The details of this programme will be discussed in the chapter 'The social ideas of Mahatma Gandhi'.

#### **Vaikom Satyagraha (1924)**

Vaikom is a big village in Travancore, now in Kottayam district of Kerala state. There is a famous temple surrounded by public roads on four sides. For centuries the untouchables were not allowed to use the public roads. In 1924 T.K.Madhavan, Krishna Swami and Kelappan formed an anti-touchability committee. They began Satyagraha against untouchability. The Congress anti-untouchability committee decided to take part in a procession

of mixed castes along the prohibited roads. They also sent representations to the Travancore Durbar. They wanted quick measures to protect Vaikom temple against untouchability.

The anti-untouchability committee decided to send 3-4 volunteers at a time along the prohibited road on 30 March 1924. When the first batch marched on they were stopped by the police and imprisoned. Other batches also met the same fate. Gandhi sent a message congratulating the volunteers who courted arrest for a noble cause. Meetings were held all over the state to propagate the ideal of Satyagraha. Hindus, Muslims and Christians attended them to show the spirit of inter-caste solidarity.

Mahatma Gandhi, his co-workers accompanied by his private secretary Mahadev Desai, his son Ramadas Gandhi, C. Rajagopalachari and others reached Vaikom. They tried to bring about a change in the attitude of the orthodox Hindus towards the Satyagraha. Gandhi met the Maharani Regent, Sri. Narayana Guru, the Diwan and prominent orthodox leaders in March 1925 and discussed the details of the Satyagraha.

Finally on the basis of an agreement the Satyagraha was called off on 23 November 1925. The agreement stated that all the roads around Vaikom temple except two lanes, were open to all castes without distinction. K. Kelappan (Kerala Gandhi) in a statement expressed satisfaction at this agreement.

Vaikom satyagraha influenced the Temple Entry Proclamation of Sri. Chithira Thirunal Bala Rama Varma in 1936. This Satyagraha was an attempt against the social evil of untouchability. One of the highlights of the satyagraha was the 'Savarna Jatha' organised under the leadership of Mannath Padmanabhan, by the caste Hindus who supported the movement.

### **Guruvayur Satyagraha (1931-32)**

Guruvayur Satyagraha was a very important struggle against untouchability. The Satyagraha was started on 1 November, 1931 by the Kerala Provincial Congress to get the Guruvayur temple opened to all Hindus. The leader of the Satyagraha was K. Kelappan and the captain of the Volunteer Corps was A.K. Gopalan. The Satyagraha attracted country wide attention. Political workers from all over India arrived at Guruvayur.

The Zamorin, who was the trustee of the temple strongly opposed the demand. T. Subramanian Tirumumbu, the captain of the temple entry campaign was arrested in November 1931. P. Krishna Pillai was brutally

beaten up by the temple officials for ringing the bell in front of the Sreekovil, a privilege enjoyed by the Brahmins only. One of the major incidents connected with the Satyagraha was the assault on A.K. Gopalan on 26 December. The people became angry and attempted forcibly to enter into the temple by removing the barricades. The temple was closed and all Pujas were suspended for about a month.

K. Kelappan began an indefinite fast before the temple on 21 September 1932. But he ended the fast on 2 October, 1932 on Gandhi's advice. A limited referendum was held thereafter among the Hindus of Ponnani Taluk to get the views of the people on the issue. About 70% of the people, mostly women were in favour of temple entry for Harijans.

Thus the Guruvayur Satyagraha helped to create a climate in favour of the eradication of untouchability. People became more aware of the concept of Satyagraha. There was also change in women's attitude towards caste system.



### Let us check

- Locate Vaikom and Guruvayur in the map of Kerala.
- How far the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi influenced Vaikom and Guruvayur Satyagrahas

### **Harijan Sevak Sangh (1932)**

It was founded in September 1932 in the wake of Gandhi's fast at Yerwada Jail against Communal Award. Its headquarters were in Delhi. Gandhi himself drafted the constitution of the Sangh. It was registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 in Delhi. It worked for the social and educational uplift of the Harijans. The objective of Harijan Sevak Sangh was eradication of untouchability through truthful and non-violent means.

### **The Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust**

It was established in 1945 by Mahatma Gandhi to address the issues of women in rural India. The growth of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust is set against the backdrop of the history of India's freedom struggle. People from all walks of life as well as the masses gave their resources to set up the Trust. Its headquarters were in Kasturbagram (Indore). It has 22 state branches all over the country.

Sarojini Naidu, dedicated her time and energy for the Trust. At the beginning of the new century, the role of Kasturba Trust was very powerful. The trust has remained true to its ideals for over 50 years of constructive work among women and children in rural India. It did constructive work among women and children in rural India in the fields of healthcare, education, literacy, vocational training, relief work and employment generation. Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhai Patel, Thakkar Bapa, Dada Saheb Mavlankar, Prem Leela Thakarasi, Laxmi N. Menon, Maniben Patel and Dr. Sushila Nayar were its chairpersons.

### **Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to Indian politics**

Mahatma Gandhi completely dominated the Indian political scene from 1919 to 1947. So this period is rightly called the 'Gandhian Era' in Indian history.

What were the major changes that Gandhi brought about in Indian politics?

#### **Spiritualisation of Indian politics**

Mahatma Gandhi was a unique politician. He was a saint-politician who employed moral means for the attainment of political ends. Through his political campaigns of non-cooperation, civil disobedience, individual civil disobedience and the Quit India movement, Gandhi convinced Britain of India's cause. He converted Congress into a mass movement.

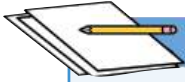
#### **Non-violence through Satyagraha**

Mahatma Gandhi combined in himself the roles of a prophet, a religious reformer, a social reformer and a nationalist while fighting for independence. For humanity in general he had the message of non-violence and *ahimsa*. Through Satyagraha he used *ahimsa* as a political weapon. He used soul-force against brute force. People can practise non-violence as a weapon for a new social order free from the evils of casteism, untouchability and exploitation through Satyagraha.



#### **Let us check**

Identify Gandhian influences, if any, in shaping contemporary Indian democratic values?



## Summary

- Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad Satyagraha marked Mahatma Gandhi's entry into the resolution of local level issues.
- Mahatma Gandhi's call for a nationwide hartal against Rowlatt Act marked his entry into the Indian politician scene.
- Clubbing Khilafat Movement with Non-cooperation Movement Gandhi made an attempt to bring the Muslim community into the main stream of freedom movement.
- Non cooperation movement made Mahatma Gandhi an undisputed leader of Indian politics
- Civil disobedience movement proved Mahatma Gandhi as a political activist
- Mahatma Gandhi strongly opposed separate electorate for minorities.
- The anti-war satyagraha designed by Mahatma Gandhi expressed his strong protest against Britain's war policy.
- Quit India movement was different from non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement because of violence by the people in the absence of leaders.
- Mahatma Gandhi's slogan 'DO OR DIE' captured the imagination of all.
- Mahatma Gandhi made a genuine attempt to check communal riots.
- Through the freedom movement Gandhi envisaged not only freedom from foreign rule but also the social, political economic and moral elevation of India.
- The strategies and tactics adopted by Gandhi in the Indian freedom movement gave the world a new weapon 'Satyagraha' based on truth and non-violence to fight against injustices of all kinds all over the world.



**I can**

- explain the significance of Mahatma Gandhi's intervention at the local level issues to redress the problem of common people.
- explain the major events that helped Mahatma Gandhi's entry into the national scene.
- evaluate Mahatma Gandhi's effort for Hindu-Muslim unity while waging the struggle for India's freedom.
- describe the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as an undisputed leader of Indian freedom struggle.
- assess Mahatma Gandhi's tactical wisdom as a political leader.
- compare the potency of collective and individual Satyagraha for a national cause.
- analyse the strategies and tactics adopted by Mahatma Gandhi through Satyagraha for the liberation of India from foreign rule.
- evaluate Mahatma Gandhi's interventions to tackle communal riots.
- evaluate Mahatma Gandhi as a social reformer and a political activist.
- evaluate Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to Indian politics.

**Let us assess**

- 1 The first Satyagraha initiated by Mahatma Gandhi was against the 'Tinkathia System' in Champaran. By analysing the Satyagraha, find out its significance?
- 2 Mahatma Gandhi intervened in the problem of industrial workers at Ahmedabad. Examine the strategies and tactics adopted by him to find out a suitable solution to their problems?
- 3 British Government's land revenue system in India resulted in the poverty and unemployment of the peasants. Analyse Gandhi's intervention in his native place against the land revenue system of the British Government and find out its significance.
- 4 Examine two major events in Indian history that resulted in the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi in the national political scene?

- 5 Through non-cooperation movement Gandhi emerged as an undisputed leader of Indian politics. But this movement also made an attempt for hindu-muslim unity in the freedom movement. Substantiate the statement by analysing the corresponding events in the freedom movement.
- 6 The sudden withdrawal of the non-cooperation movement stunned the masses as well as the congress leaders. Analyse the incident and find out the reasons for Gandhi's suspension of the movement?
- 7 Civil disobedience movement showed Mahatma Gandhi's tactical wisdom as a politician. Do you agree with the statement? Substantiate your answer.
- 8 The anti-war satyagraha designed by Mahatma Gandhi was a unique attempt in the history of India's freedom movement. Substantiate the statement by analysing the background and significance of the movement.
- 9 Quit India Movement was totally different from non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement. Justify the statement by analysing the background and methods of the movement.
- 10 Examine Mahatma Gandhi's interventions to redress the grievances of the victims of communal riots in the context of freedom movement in India.



## CENTRAL PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

### Key Concepts

- **Meaning of Philosophy**
- **The Indian philosophical perspective**
- **Gandhian philosophy - Basic concepts**
  - Truth
  - Non-violence
  - Ends and means
  - Mahatma Gandhi's views on human nature
  - Mahatma Gandhi's vision of religion
  - Means to practise religion
- **Mahatma Gandhi as a practical idealist**

This chapter discusses the central philosophical ideas of Mahatma Gandhi with a general introduction to Philosophy. The introductory section gives some general concepts of philosophy and the Indian philosophical perspective. The succeeding sections present the basic concepts of truth and non-violence, the doctrine of ends and means, Mahatma Gandhi's views on human nature and his vision of religion. The chapter closes with an analysis of Mahatma Gandhi as a practical idealist.

### What is philosophy?

Literally 'philosophy' means 'love of wisdom'. What is meant by wisdom here is the knowledge and skill to live life meaningfully. Thus, in the broadest sense, philosophy involves answering such fundamental questions as: What is the meaning and purpose of human life? What are the goals we must pursue in order to lead a purposeful life? Which is the best way to organise individual and social life so as to achieve these goals? Naturally, philosophers down the ages have arrived at different answers to these questions. But, basically, they have helped clarify the



notions of 'man' or 'self', 'God' and 'world'. They have identified 'Truth' (the principle of science), 'Beauty', (the principle of art) and 'Goodness' (the moral principle) as the ultimate principles that should govern life. Religions, the world over have identified God as the basis of these principles and suggested that God-realisation is the ultimate aim of life.

Philosophy is a critical inquiry in the sense that it employs reasoning and logic to clarify concepts, resolve confusions, make necessary distinctions, examine contrary opinions and present a systematic world view. Conscious use of logic and argumentation is thus an integral part of the philosophical method. But philosophy is not all dry logic. It is essentially a creative enterprise. It is creative in the sense that new and original concepts are developed, new doctrines are formed and new synthesis of different ideas is achieved. Reason and imagination thus go hand in hand in the philosophical exercise. The purpose of all this is clearly stated in the ancient Greek saying, 'Know Thyself'.

Indian philosophy has self-knowledge (*atmajnana*) as its motto. It employs the same method of reason and argumentation to establish its doctrines. Individual doctrines are linked together into a system. A system of philosophy will normally have doctrines about the nature of reality, about the method of knowing that reality, an ethical theory about what constitutes moral life and so on. Thus we have systems like the *Sankhya*, the *Mimamsa* and the Vedanta. These systems differently interpret the Vedas and the *Upanishads* which are regarded as fundamental. The difference between systems is mainly in their focus and emphasis. Thus the *Mimamsa* emphasises action while the Vedanta emphasises on knowledge, though both systems admit that knowledge and action are essential. Then there are systems which do not base themselves on the Vedas or *Upanishads*. Systems like the materialistic *Charvaka*, the *Baudha darshana*, and the *Jaina darshana* each have a different focus. Though different, all these systems have the self-same purpose of enabling us to go beyond our finite, limited existence to achieve our full potential.

### The Indian philosophical perspective

Indian thought has a distinct religious flavour. But it is not all about religion: there is ontology (theory of Being), cosmology (theory of the world), ethics (moral theory), aesthetics (theory of art), political theory, theory of meaning and language. However, there is this unmistakable religious and spiritual

quality about it. It is spiritual in the sense that it aims at self-fulfilment through self-discipline.

However, the ultimate spiritual goal often described as *moksha*, *nirvana*, *kaivalya*, etc. is not the only goal of life. Wealth and power (*artha*), pleasure (*kama*), and moral goodness (*dharma*) are also necessary to make life meaningful. This is, in fact, the Indian doctrine of the fourfold aim of life (*chaturvidha-purushartha*).

In concrete life situations there can be conflicts among the spiritual, moral, aesthetic and material values. For example, if one goes simply after accumulation of wealth, or after pleasure, the moral-spiritual goal will be blocked. And if the spiritual goal is sought to the neglect of the material needs of self and others, it amounts to a kind of escapism, running away from life's responsibilities. Likewise, there can be conflict between two kinds of the same value, say, pleasure. Thus, if one indulges too much in the pleasure of food and drink, then the higher pleasures of art, music and literature may be difficult to come by. These are the actual dilemmas of life we face from day to day.

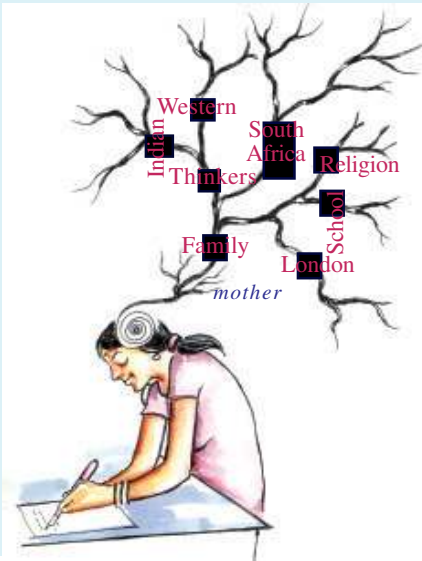
Yet the *purushartha* doctrine presupposes that these are all right goals. There is no contradiction among them. That is, proper search of any one of these goals will not harm the search of other goals. In fact, the art of living is the art of balancing all these different aspects in life.

Wealth, power and pleasure are not to be sought ignoring man's moral and spiritual needs. This basic unity of values is a characteristic feature of the Indian perspective. Indeed, this is also the Gandhian perspective.

Understanding this perspective is essential to know Mahatma Gandhi better and to adopt him intelligently. For instance, in the light of this perspective we can see better Gandhi's insistence on Truth and Non-violence even in statecraft. This perspective explains why it is so natural for Gandhi to be a thoroughly religious person and at the same time a strict politician. This makes him at once a saint among politicians and a politician among saints. If this is so, then the religious idiom that Mahatma Gandhi uses and the spiritual dimension he emphasises are not the weak points of Gandhian thought. Rather, they are indicative of the comprehensiveness and continued relevance of his philosophy.

**Activity**

Recollect your previous knowledge and try to complete the mind map of various influences on Gandhi.

**Gandhian Philosophy**

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy was a unique outcome of his family background, native place, parentage, education, contacts with the western and eastern personalities and above all the highly religious philosophies of India. He himself says that "Children inherit the qualities of the parents, no less than their physical features. Environment does play an important part, but the original capital on which a child starts in life is inherited from its ancestors. I have also seen children successfully surmounting the effects of an evil inheritance. That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul".

**Let us do**

What are the ideas of Gandhi that you are familiar with?  
Discuss and share your ideas.

**Basic concepts of Gandhian philosophy****God**

"Everyone has faith in God though everyone does not know it. For everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to the highest degree is God. The sum total of all that lives is God. We may not be God, but we are of God, even as a little drop of water is of the ocean."

To clarify his concept of God Mahatma Gandhi wrote in *Harijan* "There is an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it". Gandhi felt the presence of this unseen power though he could not prove it. He says, "I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, and Light. He is Love. He is the Supreme Good." According to Mahatma Gandhi, every living being carries a divine spark within. This faith is a unifying force based on the inherent goodness in all beings. His concept of God, therefore, stands for universal

goodness. It calls for service to others. "For me the Voice of God, of Conscience, of Truth or the Inner Voice or 'the still small Voice' mean one and the same thing".

### God is Truth to Truth is God

Mahatma Gandhi accepted that God has as many names like the numerous creations of God. To those who say God is Love, God is Love. But as far as Gandhi is concerned, God may be Love. But above all, God is Truth. Truth is everlasting and can best describe God. But later on, Gandhi modified even this idea. Nobody denies the supremacy of Truth. Even the atheist who denies the existence of God believes in reality or truth. For this reason, Mahatma Gandhi changed his idea from God is Truth to Truth is God. He said, "My prayerful" search gave me the revealing maxim 'Truth is God', instead of the usual one 'God is Truth'.

### Truth

"The word *Satya* (Truth) comes from *Sat*, which means 'being'. Nothing exists in reality except Truth. That is why *Sat* or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact, it is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth... it will be realised, that *Sat* or *Satya* is the only correct and fully significant name for God. And where there is Truth, there also is knowledge which is true. Where there is no Truth, there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word *Chit* or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (*Ananda*). Sorrow has no place there. As Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence, we know God as *sat-chit-ananda*, one who combines in Himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss".

### Relative truth and Absolute truth

According to Mahatma Gandhi truth is of two kinds – absolute truth and relative truth. Absolute truth is the eternal principle i.e. God. Human beings with their limited capacity cannot fully grasp the absolute truth; we can only try to understand it. Truth as we understand is only the relative truth. If we sincerely follow relative truth, it is enough to progress towards the absolute truth. For Gandhi, truthfulness means not only truthfulness in word but in thought and deed as well. Gandhi said, "I worship God as Truth only. But as long as I have not realised this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold by the relative truth as I have conceived it. I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood". We can grasp only the relative truth. Each one

approaches reality from his own perspective. So there is scope for differences in opinion. We should therefore learn to see the truths of others from their perspective. Here we can see the influence of the doctrine of '*Anekandavada*' of Jainism. According to this doctrine reality is many sided and each one has only a partial view of it.

Realisation of the absolute truth or God-realisation is the ultimate aim of man. This is the meaning of describing *moksha* as the *paramapurushartha*. All our activities, social, political and economic should be for the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The only way to find God is 'altruism' or selfless service to others. According to the *Gita*, service to others is similar to the service of God. "*Manava Seva, Madhava Seva*". "Service to humanity is equivalent to service to God".

### Non-violence

"*Ahimsa* is my God, and Truth is my God. When I look for *Ahimsa*, Truth says 'find it out through me'. When I look for Truth, *Ahimsa* says 'find it out through me'.

The Sanskrit word *Ahimsa* is a derivation of the negative prefix '*a*' (not) and '*himsa*' (killing or injury). *Ahimsa* thus means giving up the desire to injure or kill. It is generally translated as non-violence. But this gives the impression that non-violence is limited to not causing physical injury. In fact, non-violence has a much wider and positive meaning. Gandhi identifies harsh words and painful decisions, ill-will, anger, unkindness, cruelty, torture of

### Activity

Look at the picture and the different views about it. Share the reason for the dissimilarities of views on a same object.



Select different objects and develop different views on it. Eg: pen, desk etc.



man and animals, the suppression of the weak, hurting their self-respect etc. as forms of *himsa*. To him the essence of violence is exploitation. The positive dimension of *Ahimsa* is love and service to fellow beings, even to those who harm us.

Before the Gandhian era the practice of non-violence was generally understood as limited to the *Rishis* and saints. But Gandhi made it clear that it is meant for all. It is not only for their personal growth but also as a tool for social change and development. Gandhi said “*Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute*”. According to Gandhi the self-esteem of man requires submission to a higher law, to the strength of the spirit, and not submission to the law of the brute. Gandhi realised this insight of *Rishis*, who were also well aware of the use of arms.

Self-mastery is a necessity to love the opponent. For self-mastery one must go through strict practice of self-suffering and self-discipline. This will enable the individual to engage actively in the process of social reconstruction. So Mahatma Gandhi considered *Ahimsa* both as a personal and social virtue.

### **Non-violence and bravery**

Mahatma Gandhi makes a clear distinction between non-violence of the strong and non-violence of the weak. If we adopt non-violence because we are not strong enough to fight against the opponent, it is non-violence of the weak; it is not truly non-violence. Similarly those who run away from danger leaving the dear ones are not really non-violent. This ‘non-violence’ of the coward is in fact worse than violence. A violent man may once become conscious of the problems of violence. There is also an opportunity for him to change his attitude. A coward will never get such a choice. Gandhi said: “Between violence and cowardly flight, I can only prefer violence to cowardice”.

The bravery of the non-violent is very much higher than that of the violent. The badge of the violent is his weapon—spear, sword or rifle. God is the shield of the non-violent. An armed soldier relies on his weapons for his strength and even sometimes becomes helpless. But the non-violent soldier relies fully on the God-given strength of his weapon. “Non-violence of the strong is any day stronger than that of the bravest soldier fully armed or a whole host”. Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction. *Ahimsa* is thus matchless bravery.

## Forms of Non-violence

<b>Non-resistance</b>	It rejects all physical violence and concentrates on maintaining one's own integrity.
<b>Active reconciliation</b>	A faith-based rejection of force and a belief in active goodwill to resolve conflicts.
<b>Moral resistance</b>	It actively resists evil with peaceful and moral means such as education and persuasion.
<b>Selective non-violence</b>	The refusal to participate in certain kind of wars, e.g. nuclear war.
<b>Passive resistance</b>	It uses non-violent tactics because the means for an effective violent campaign are not likely to succeed.
<b>Peaceful resistance</b>	It believes that non-violent methods are more effective than other means.
<b>Non-violent direct action</b>	It views non-violence as a moral principle or practical method. The object is victory rather than conversion.
<b>Gandhian non-violence</b> ( <i>Satyagraha</i> )	It aims to attain truth through love and right action. It demands the elimination of violence from the self and from the social, political and economic environments.
<b>Non-violent revolution</b>	Revolutionaries believe in the need for basic individual and social change but focus on major social problems. E.g. the campaigns of Jayaprakash Narayan and Vinoba Bhave.



### Let us check

Analyse the Gandhian concept of Non-Violence

### Ends and means

What kind of means should we adopt to attain a particular end?

Even when we are clear about our goal, we may not be sure about the appropriateness of the means to that goal.

These issues deal with the concept of ends and means. There are two opposite views on ends and means. One says the end justifies the means and the other, says it does not. When we say the end justifies the means, it is meant that to achieve a desirable goal we may adopt any means whatsoever.

Even means like cheating and violence are justified if we can somehow achieve the goal. The opposite view is that the end does not justify the means. According to this view, if the end is pure and noble, the means must also be pure and noble. For Gandhi, the end and the means are so closely connected. The end grows out of the means. *“The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end. As the means so the end”*.

During the fight for our independence some leaders suggested the use of violent methods such as war against the British. But Gandhi was totally against this view. According to him our goal was not only political independence but *poorna swaraj*, that is political, economic, moral and spiritual freedom for the nation. When the goal is so noble, it is foolish to think that it can be attained by violent means. Violent means will bring violence, and peace if the means are non-violent. As regards the ends and means Mahatma Gandhi clearly stated: *“Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life.”* (*Young India* : July 1924). *“I feel that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.”* (*Amrita Bazar Patrika*: September 1933)

Truth is the end and non-violence the means. The pursuit of *Satya* gives us the humility to accept the need for *ahimsa* in our relationship with others. Here *Satya* facilitates the practice of *ahimsa*. The practice of *ahimsa* takes us closer to *Satya*.

### Think and Share

Read the following conversation.

*My aim is to get A+ in all subjects. So I work hard.*



*My aim is to get A+ in all subjects. Therefore I resort to copying.*

Which one do you Prefer?

Prepare a write up with your justification.

## Mahatma Gandhi's views on human nature

### Freedom of will

According to Mahatma Gandhi, man is higher than the brute in his morality. Man has reason, discrimination, and free will. The brute has no such thing. Reason enables man to identify the goal, discrimination reveals the good as against the evil. Free will provides the scope for responsible action.

Free will is a unique characteristic of man. But there is dispute among philosophers as to whether man is free or not. According to the materialistic view, man is a part of the material world. He is governed by physical, psychological and social forces. So he is not really free to choose his course of action. In this sense the human will is governed by natural laws. It denies our capacity to decide what we will do and what we will not do.

As against this, Gandhi held that man is gifted with free will. Man has the capacity to choose his course of action. He has to take responsibility for his actions. Gandhi said, "We are the makers of our destiny. We can mend or mar the present, and on that will depend the future". One must decide to act in such a way that he will not harm the community or the natural environment.

Saying that man is free does not mean that he has the freedom to do anything and everything. We are not bound to act in any particular manner. Freedom of will is a very important part of any system of ethics, because if we are not acting as free agents, we would not be responsible for our actions. According to Gandhi, "no action which is not voluntary can be called moral. So long as we act like machines, there can be no question of morality. If we want to call an action moral it should have been done consciously as a matter of duty". In short, freedom of will includes morality.

### The inherent goodness of man

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of man is ultimately based on the metaphysical idea of the inherent goodness of human beings. Every human being carries a divine spark within. But, there is also a brute in him. Gandhi makes a distinction between the 'higher self' and the 'lower self'. At the lowest point of the lower self he identifies the 'brute'. In a sense man is a mixture of good and evil. However, man is essentially good. This implies that the good wins over the evil in him. He has the natural tendency to grow in goodness and rise to the highest level of divinity.

This view of the essential goodness of human nature can be contrasted with the view that human nature is essentially evil. Then an external force like a powerful ruler is required to bring order into the self and the society. This is a pessimistic view of human nature. Gandhi takes the opposite view. Though there is the element of brute in man, he is essentially good. He is capable of cooperating with others and growing in his goodness.

Mahatma Gandhi is thus an optimist. As goodness is man's basic nature, there is a possibility for him to rise to the higher level: personally he can rise to the level of divinity and, interpersonally, he can build a society marked by co-operation, love and compassion. According to Gandhi, the human race itself is supposed to be moving towards higher levels of existence. The highest level of attainment at the social level is *Ramarajya*. The individual's progression towards self-realisation and the society's progression towards *Ramarajya* go hand in hand.

Every human action has an individual and social dimension. As father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter, friend or neighbour, colleague or citizen, employer or employee each one of us engage in different activities. They can promote our own individual development and social upliftment. This is possible because the good of the individual is linked to the good of the society.

### **Human interdependence**

According to Gandhi human beings are necessarily interdependent and form an organic whole. At the same time, each one is a unique individual with a body, mind and spirit. The body is self-enclosed, distinct and clearly separated from others. It is capable of maintaining its integrity. The body is also the seat of the senses, wants and desires. In addition to the body, the human being also has a mind.

For Mahatma Gandhi, mind is primarily an instrument of knowledge and action. Although distinct from the body it is closely tied up with it. Reflecting on its worldly experiences the human mind develops the notion of ego or self. The ego is the source of the human sense of individuality. Thus is born the individual.

Individuals are generally indebted to their parents for existence. This dependence implies many obligations on their part. By fulfilling these obligations we contribute to a collective well-being.

### Think and present

Look at a club activity organised by a group of higher secondary students.

**FOOD DONATION CLUB**  
Service is our motto

*We can collect food packets and serve so that nobody will be hungry in our school.*



Think of similar activities and complete the list below.

- Maintenance of the house of one of the students from your school
- Students sponsorship programme
- 
- 

Prepare an action plan on one of them and present it in the class.

### Oneness of man and of all life

Mahatma Gandhi had the conviction that man is the manifestation of the Absolute. He believed in the unity of mankind. This belief is in tune with the *Advaita* view of the essential oneness of everything. Gandhi said, "I believe in the absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity".

We have different bodies but there is one Soul. There are several rays from the sun. Likewise, there is a common spirit within us. It regulates our behaviour. In the society which is an organic whole everyone has a role, value and significance.

There is an important difference between Gandhi and those who deny the spiritual element in man. Those who deny the spiritual element do not believe in the creation of a harmonious society. If we are working for the creation of such a society, there are equally strong forces to oppose this. There is no reason to think we will succeed in creating harmony. On the other hand, Gandhi's view that one spirit resides in all, serves as a sure basis for our aspiration for peace and harmony.

Naturally, the question arises: Why, then, there is inequality, discrimination, exploitation, separation and violence in the society? Gandhi's answer is clear: these are the consequences of our going against our own nature and against the law of God.

Not only human beings but the whole world have the same ultimate origin, God. They are all united in Him. This is a re-statement of the Vedic concept of "*VasudhaivaKutumbakam*" ("*vasudha*", the earth; "*eva*", is; and "*kutumbakam*", family). It means that the whole world is one single family. Every human action has an impact on society and nature. Gandhi said, I believe in Advaita, I believe in the essential unity of man and, for that matter, of all that live. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent". Therefore, it is the duty of every individual to become conscious of the divine spark within and to listen to the voice of conscience.

### Let us do together



Find out a song that sings about the spirit of oneness. Sing it together in the class.



## Mahatma Gandhi's vision of religion

### Concept of religion

The concept of religion in most civilizations is centered on realisation of the Supreme, Almighty God. Yet belief in God is not the only important thing about religion. Religion is the vehicle for peaceful relation with oneself, others and God. It involves mainly three aspects: (1) a set of beliefs and principles, (2) various rites and rituals (3) code of moral conduct. These are the elements of creed, cult and code respectively. The creed includes belief in God, immortality of soul, heaven and hell, *avathars*, prophets, saints, sacred books etc. The cult involves worship, prayer, fasting, vows, *yagas*, *yajnas*, pilgrimages, etc. The code is more or less common to all religions. It includes moral principles like truthfulness, *ahimsa*, love, mercy, compassion, brotherhood, charity, forgiveness etc.

In India the word '*Dharma*' is used to indicate 'religion'. But this word has a wider meaning compared to that of religion. '*Dharma*' comes from '*Dhre*' which means to 'sustain'. *Dharma* is thus the greatest sustaining force or the binding force of society. The function of *Dharma* is to generate mental and spiritual relationship among all men and to manage its relation with all living entities. It thus attempts to keep the world in perfect balance. It is clear that the word *Dharma* was not used in connection with any particular religion. Any religion, any custom, any creed that served the purpose of binding all creatures together in a spiritual relationship could be brought under this broader humanitarian concept.

What is the meaning and purpose of life? This is basically a philosophical question. The religious answer to the question is stated in different ways as self-realisation, God-realisation, attainment of heaven, nirvana, etc. Human beings can and should perfect themselves morally and spiritually to attain self-fulfillment. Religions show us different ways of attaining this ultimate goal.

### **Mahatma Gandhi's views on religion**

"By religion, I do not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker".

Mahatma Gandhi was deeply influenced by his religious background. Faith in God was central to his life and his philosophy. However, true to the Indian tradition, Gandhi was flexible about the individual characteristics of particular religions. Instead, he focused on their universal elements with special emphasis on the moral aspect. Gandhi envisioned a universal religion which sought Truth and pleaded for help to the helpless. It was a religion based on social justice and promoted brotherhood, peace and happiness.

Every religion is linked to some belief supported by a number of rituals. Gandhi accepted the importance of these beliefs. At the same time some of these beliefs may be unacceptable. If a particular belief goes against reason, it may be rejected. But such rejections should happen only after extremely careful study. Similarly, a belief or ritual may go against the principles of morality. Mahatma Gandhi did not accept such immoral beliefs and rituals.

The single most important feature of the Gandhian approach is that the pursuit of the ultimate goal should go hand in hand with the pursuit of



other goals such as economic well-being and political empowerment. He firmly believed that, for human life to have meaning, it must embrace the economic, social, political, moral and aesthetic dimensions along with the spiritual dimension. Further, he was convinced that there was no contradiction between the spiritual and secular goals. It meant that we should ensure both material and spiritual well-being. Here we see the definite impact of the *purushartha* doctrine of Hinduism.

### Morality and Religion

It is generally admitted that morality is an integral part of religion. There is no religion without morality. Gandhi repeatedly emphasised this. So his religion is called '**ethical religion**'. There are many reasons for Gandhi to emphasise the ethical dimension of religion. First, he intended to correct the misunderstanding that to attain *moksha* it is enough to believe in some dogmas and follow certain rituals. Second, there are different religions. The rituals also differ a lot. But the moral principles of different religions are more or less common. Therefore, Gandhi wished to emphasise the moral aspect, especially when he used to address people of different religions. Finally, Gandhi did not wish to limit himself to the religious and moral aspects alone. The socio-political dimension was also important to him. When one enters the practical field of social action, questions of morality become more important than beliefs and rituals. Therefore, Gandhi emphasised the ethical part of religion. But, can there be morality without religion?

There are those who think that one can be moral without being religious, that it is just enough to be moral and one need not even follow any religion. Their argument is that there are superstitions in religions. They divide people while morality unites them. But Gandhi differed from this. He says that religion can be purified of its superstitions. Divisions can be settled with the help of reason and moral principles. To him morality is the ultimate criterion to judge whether a doctrine is religious or not.

Morality needs to be anchored in religion. It is in the sense that one's ethical relations with others should be firmly established on the basis of one's internal purity and strength. In other words, my relation with others (the moral dimension) cannot be proper without my relation with myself and/or God (the religious dimension) is proper. According to Mahatma Gandhi, without religion morality is unstable. He says, "Religion is to morality what water is to seed that is sown in the soil". That is why religious observances like prayer and fasting were part and parcel of Gandhi's *ashrams*.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, religion and morality are inseparable. There is no religion without morality and no morality without religion. In fact, he went to the extent of saying that religion and morality are interchangeable terms.

### *Sarvadharmā samābhava*

Mahatma Gandhi grew up in an atmosphere of inter-religious dialogue. It increased his intellectual and spiritual curiosity. It developed in him a deep sense of toleration and respect for all religions. Later, he made religion the main subject of his study. He studied scriptures of major world religions like Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism and the Parsi faith along with those of his own religion, Hinduism. Then Gandhi came to the conclusion that all religions were equal. Therefore, we should develop '*Sarvadharmā samābhava*', equal respect for all religions.

He understood that religions came up as answers to the search for the meaning and purpose of existence. God is the inspiration behind all these religions. Moreover, the essential truths of different religions are the same. There is also similarity among the moral principles of various religions. No religion is superior or inferior. So there was no need for changing one's religion. As the ultimate goal of all religions was to guide the believer to his/her deliverance (*mukthi*), it was possible to attempt it through the religion into which one was born. Mahatma Gandhi rejected the practice of forcing someone to change his/her religion.

*Sarvadharmā samābhava* was not merely a theory for Gandhi. For him it was a vow, an observance and an act of faith. He practised it constantly in his life. Thus he removed the dividing line among religions. Gandhi showed us how to live a creative religious life through the spirit of *Sarvadharmā samābhava*. He called upon every one of us to do 'a reverential and sympathetic study' of the scriptures of other religions. He said that it was the duty of every cultured man and woman to do so. Such a study, he believed, would certainly create an atmosphere of mutual understanding, tolerance and respect.

*Sarvadharmā samābhava* is the answer to communal conflicts. As Gandhi himself put it, "The need of the moment is not one religion but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of different religions. We want to reach not the dead level but unity in diversity."



### Means to practise religion

*Moksha* or self-realisation is possible through self-suffering and the highest sense of spiritual life. So, Gandhi strictly followed prayer, fasting and ashram vows in order to practise religion in his daily life. "My religion teaches me that, whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray."

#### Prayer

Mahatma Gandhi called himself as a man of faith and prayer. He did not do anything without prayer. To Mahatma Gandhi prayer is the most vital part of religion and it is the soul of religion. The object of prayer is not to please God but to purify oneself. Real prayer is an absolute shield and protection against the evils of thoughts, words and deeds. A man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world. It is man's urging to unite with the divine. As food is necessary for body, prayer is necessary for soul.

Gandhi speaks about different characters of prayer. He speaks about silent prayer when he says prayer needs no speech. In prayer he prefers a heart without words to words without a heart. Prayer requires living faith in God. Gandhi emphasises the need for constant prayer. "Prayer is the first and last lesson in learning the noble and brave art of sacrificing self in the various walks of life culminating the defense of one's nation's liberty and honour."

Prayer was an integral part of Gandhi's life. There were specific time schedules for prayer in Gandhi's *ashrams*. He gave equal importance to the hymns from every religion. He had strong faith in the power of prayer. "A sincere prayer can work wonders. It is an intense longing of the soul for its even greater purity. Purity thus gained, when it is utilised for a noble purpose, becomes a prayer".

## Fasting

Do you fast in your life? Why do you do so?

Mahatma Gandhi regarded fasting and prayer as the two sides of a coin. "I believe there is no prayer without fasting and there is no fast without prayer". A genuine fast cleanses the body, mind and soul. It crucifies the flesh and to that extent sets the soul free. Fasting quickens the spirit of prayer. Fasting is a spiritual act and, therefore, it is addressed to God.

Fasting cannot be done mechanically. It should come from the depth of one's soul. There can be no room for selfishness, anger, lack of faith or impatience in a pure fast. It requires perfect calm and clear purpose. It is a very powerful thing and at the same time dangerous if not handled properly. Gandhi wants truth and *ahimsa* as the bases of fast. He was strongly against fasting with selfish objectives.

### Ashram vows

**Gandhian ashrams** : "The Sanskrit word ashram means "a hermitage," a place where hermits stay. But for Gandhi, it was a place for community life, where people lived together. To Gandhi community life is working together, enjoying together, suffering together, and praying together. Mahatma Gandhi applied the spiritual and religious values in everyday life of the inmates. The ashram did not enforce on its inmates any theology or ritual, but only a few simple rules of personal conduct.



Let us know

**Meaning of vow** : A vow means a strong determination. It helps us against temptations. Determination is nothing, if it bends before discomfort. Progress is impossible without determination. Vows can be taken only on points of universally recognized principles. The possibility of sin in such a case is more or less imaginary. Taking vows is not a sign of weakness, but of strength. To do something at any cost that one ought to do constitutes a vow.

A good community life is possible by following certain principles. These vows deepen spirituality. Practice of vows give a different level and meaning to God-realisation. These vows help people to overcome worldly temptation. Therefore, after consulting the inmates and friends Mahatma Gandhi recommended eleven *ashram* vows viz. Truth, Non-violence, *Brahmacharya*, Non-stealing, Non-possession, Control of palate, Body labour, *Swadeshi*, Removal of untouchability, Respect for all religions and Fearlessness.

1. **Satya - Truth**

(Already explained. Recall its features)

2. **Ahimsa - Non-violence**

(Already explained. Recall its concepts)

3. **Brahmacharya - Celibacy or Chastity**

'*Brahmacharya*' means 'moving towards *brahma*' that is, realisation of *brahman*. A person who takes this vow should have control over all the senses. He should keep away from worldly connections. In *brahmacharya* lies the protection of the body, the mind and the soul. Such a step would free them from excessive attachment for each other. It will free them for the service of mankind. *Brahmacharya* for Gandhi means self-control of all the senses in thought, word and action.

4. **Asteya - Non-stealing**

A person following truth and non-violence should not steal. But according to Gandhi non-stealing means not only taking other persons belongings without permission but also receiving something which one does not need. If one takes anything that one does not need for an immediate use and keeps it, it becomes stealing. Therefore, Gandhi wants everyone to have enough and nothing more. A person who wishes to practise *Asteya* should lead simple life. Then there would be no poverty and starvation. Gandhi wants everyone to adjust their wants and even undergo voluntary practice of poverty.

5. **Aparigraha - Non-possession**

It is an extension of the vow of non-stealing. This vow denies private property. It also emphasises the importance of simple living. According to Gandhi what is required is not the reduction of wants but their refinement. He said, "This principle is really a part of Non-stealing. Just as one must not receive, so must one not possess anything which

one does not really need. It would be a breach of this principle to possess unnecessary foodstuffs, clothing or furniture. For instance, one must not keep a chair if can do without it. In observing this principle one is led to a progressive simplification of one's own life."

### 6. *Sharirashrama* - Physical labour or Bread labour

It wants every person to perform some manual labor to earn his daily bread. An intellectual, an artist or a person with any other talent should make use of that ability for the service of society. But according to Gandhi every man must do body labour for his food and living. It is the law of nature. One who takes the necessities of life without body labour is a thief. According to him man is designed to do body labour. Gandhi revived the art of spinning and decided that spinning the *charkha* should be the symbol of *ashrama-yagna*. The inmates were expected to spin for an hour every day without fail.



#### Let us check

How will you practise Gandhi's concept of bread labour in your present personal life.

*Hint : One hour of cleaning the surroundings of your classroom, house, garden etc.*

### 7. *Asvada* - Control of palate

The observance of *Brahmacharya* becomes easier if taste is conquered. The conquest of taste is also helpful in the conquest of other senses. This determines a limit to the use of food. The most important condition of *Asvada* is the belief that food is meant only to sustain the body. We must use body for the service of others. "A man who wants to control his animal passions easily does so if he controls his palate. I fear this is one of the most difficult vows to follow ...."



*Think and share*

**EAT TO LIVE  
Don't  
LIVE TO EAT**

### 8. *Abhaya* - Fearlessness

Fearlessness means freedom from all external and internal fears. The easy way to become fearless is to cultivate non-attachment to the human body. "Fear the God most" is Gandhi's principle. According to Gandhi, "One cannot follow Truth or Love so long as one is subject to fear. As there is at present a reign of fear in the country, meditation on and cultivation of fearlessness have a particular importance. Hence its separate mention as an observance. A seeker after truth must give up the fear of caste, Government, robbers etc. and he must not be frightened by poverty or death." The fear of God is really the fear of wrong doing. So removal of fears from mind is a must to realise God. The fear of God keeps us on guard against further growth of unpleasant behaviour of the mind and helps us in going beyond ordinary fears.

### 9. *Sarvadharmasamabhava* - Equal respect for all religions

(Recall from previous classes)

### 10. *Swadeshi* - Duty towards the neighbour

As a vow *Swadeshi* demanded that everyone should use the products and services from one's own country. This is nothing but love of neighbour. Gandhi said, "the vow of swadeshi is a necessary vow. We are departing from one of the sacred laws of our being when we leave our neighbourhood and go out somewhere else in order to satisfy our wants." *Swadeshi* is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings. *Swadeshi* is an attitude and conviction of a person who prefers domestic goods and services instead of foreign goods and services.

"If we follow the *Swadeshi* doctrine, it would be your duty and mine to find out neighbours who can supply our wants and to teach them to supply them where they do not know how to proceed, assuming that there are neighbours who are in want of healthy occupation. Then every village of India will almost be a self-supporting and self-contained unit, exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages as are not locally producible."

### 11. *Asprishyata* - Removal of untouchability

According to Gandhi it is wrong to consider anybody as untouchable. Through this vow he wanted to consider all human beings equal. According to him, "untouchability, which has taken such deep root in Hinduism, is altogether irreligious. Its removal has therefore, been treated as an independent principle. The so-called untouchables have equal place in the Ashram with other classes." The removal of untouchability for Gandhi meant love for and service of the whole world. Gandhi gave important place for untouchability in his constructive programme. This vow meant that the inmates would mix as freely with so called untouchables as with all the other people.

"I DO NOT want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. I, therefore, prayed that, if I should be born again, should do so not as a *Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya* or *Shudra*, but as an *Atishudra*."

M.K. Gandhi



#### Let us check

1. Which of the *ashram* vows do you prefer to practise? Explain how?
2. Gandhi said, "nothing was to be wasted - food, water, clothes or even paper".

Identify the *Ashram* vow that can be related to this? What are the resources that are usually wasted at your school and home? Suggest the ways to save them for others.

#### Hints:

- Leaking water taps - I will close the tap tight / report the matter to the authorities/Organise an awareness campaign against wasting public resources.
- 
-



## Mahatma Gandhi as a practical idealist

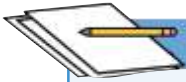
Mahatma Gandhi practised *Ahimsa* in its highest form which is *Ahimsa* in thought, expression and action. “*Ahimsa* is the attribute of the soul, and therefore, to be practised by everybody in all the affairs of life”. Non-violence cannot be preached. It has to be practised. Consequently Gandhian ideals have practical suggestions in every walk of daily life. Gandhi described himself as a *practical idealist*.

Mahatma Gandhi’s religion was rational and ethical. He would not agree to any belief which did not appeal to his reason and conscience. Gandhi affirmed that he was not a visionary but a practical idealist. Non-violence is not merely for saints but for the common people as well.

Mahatma Gandhi was the first in history to extend the principle of non-violence from the individual to the social and political levels. He entered politics for the purpose of experimenting with non-violence and establishing its validity.

Some think that truth and non-violence have no place in politics and worldly affairs. But Gandhi accepted them as the means for individual salvation. Gandhi experimented and applied his ideals in everyday life. According to Mahatma Gandhi the great principles of *satya* and *ahimsâ*, truth and non-violence, will guide us for centuries. To Gandhi nobody will fear of the wrong doers. Those who have nothing to hide are truly fearless. He will consider the whole nation in his thought, word and deed.

Mahatma Gandhi's relevance, and the relevance of his philosophy make us ask ourselves: How are we relevant to our times? Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy has many lessons for us in making our life meaningful and satisfying.



## Summary

- Philosophy is a critical inquiry in the sense that it employs reasoning and logic to clarify concepts, resolve confusions, make necessary distinctions, examine contrary opinions and present a systematic world view.
- Indian thought has a distinct religious flavour. It is not all about religion: there is ontology (theory of Being), cosmology (theory of the world), ethics (moral theory), aesthetics (theory of art), political theory, theory of meaning and language and so on.
- Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy was the unique outcome of his family background, native place, education, contacts with the western and eastern personalities and above all the highly religious philosophies of India.
- Mahatma Gandhi moved on from God is Truth to Truth is God.
- The word *satya* (Truth) is derived from *sat*, which means 'being'. Nothing exists in reality except Truth.
- The positive dimension of *Ahimsa* is love and service to fellow beings.
- Truth is the end and non-violence the means.
- Free will is a unique characteristic of man.
- Mahatma Gandhi had the conviction that man is the manifestation of the Absolute and he believed in the unity of mankind.
- The concept of religion in most civilizations is centred on realisation of the supreme, almighty God.
- Mahatma Gandhi envisioned a universal religion which sought Truth and pleaded for help to the helpless. It was a religion based on social justice and promoted brotherhood, peace and happiness.
- To Mahatma Gandhi all religions were fundamentally equal. Therefore, we ought to develop '*sarvadharmasambhava*', equal respect for all religions.
- Mahatma Gandhi strictly followed prayer, fasting and *ashram* vows in order to practise religion in his daily life.
- Gandhian ideals have practical suggestions in every walk of day-to-day life of human beings. So Gandhi described himself as a practical idealist.



### I can

- identify the meaning of philosophy.
- analyse how philosophy is understood in India.
- analyse Gandhian philosophy.
- explain basic concepts of Mahatma Gandhi.
- evaluate Gandhian concept God is Truth to Truth is God.
- differentiate between absolute truth and relative truth.
- analyse the concept of Non-violence in contrast with bravery.
- evaluate Gandhi's concept of ends and means.
- analyse the elements of Mahatma Gandhi's views on human nature.
- identify and analyse Gandhi's concepts of religion.
- locate and evaluate Gandhian means of practising religion.
- evaluate the application of Gandhian philosophical concepts in daily life with reference to Mahatma Gandhi's experiments and practices.



### Let us assess

1. Gandhian philosophy was a unique outcome of the Indian philosophical perspective. Examine.
2. Prepare a detailed note on the basic philosophical concepts of Gandhi.
3. To Gandhi Truth is God. Evaluate.
4. Distinguish between *absolute* and relative truth.
5. Mahatma Gandhi considered *ahimsa* as a personal and social virtue. Discuss.
6. Prepare a chart of various forms of non-violence.
7. Analyse the Gandhian views on ends and means.
8. Ends justifies the means. As the means, so the ends. Which statement do you prefer? Why?
9. Make a detailed study of Gandhi's views on human nature.
10. *Sarvadharmā samabhava* was the only solution to the problems of religious intolerance. Examine.
11. Explain the Gandhian means to practise religion.
12. Critically evaluate how far gandhian philosophical concepts can be applied in daily life with reference to Gandhi's experiments and practices.



## THE PRAXIS OF SATYAGRAHA

### Key Concepts

- Influence on Mahatma Gandhi
- Aim of Satyagraha
- Basic Principles of Satyagraha
- Purity of Ends and Means
- Basic components of Satyagraha
- Rules for Satyagraha
- Qualifications of a Satyagrahi
- Code of Discipline
- Steps in Satyagraha
- Forms of Satyagraha
- Passive Resistance
- Relevance of Satyagraha
- Non-violent Direct action

*Satyagraha* is considered as the most revolutionary contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to the whole world. Mahatma Gandhi applied *Satyagraha* as a non-violent strategy in Indian freedom struggle. He believed that *Satyagraha* was birth right and sacred duty of an individual against injustice and corruption. This chapter discusses the theory, practice and relevance of *Satyagraha* organised by Mahatma Gandhi.

Let us recall the first *Satyagraha* Movement conducted by Mahatma Gandhi.

- What is the meaning of *Satyagraha*?
- How did Mahatma Gandhi find the name?
- What is the first instance where Mahatma Gandhi applied it?

### 6.1. Influence on Mahatma Gandhi

It is important to recognise the influence of personalities apart from those in epics and history, who influenced Mahatma Gandhi in framing his new technique of *Satyagraha*. Thoreau's essay 'On Civil Disobedience' gave Gandhi the idea of peaceful resistance.



In civil disobedience the non-violent activists maintain respect for the rule of law even while disobeying a specific law. Mahatma Gandhi himself said that it was the New Testament which really awakened him to the rightness and value of 'passive resistance'. Bhagavad Gita deepened his impression and reading of Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is within you* gave it a permanent form. Gandhi acknowledged the role of Kasturba in giving him the lesson of *Satyagraha*. He said: 'I learnt the lesson of non-violence (*satyagraha*) from my wife. I tried to bend her to my will. Her determined resistance to my will on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering my stupidity involved on the other, ultimately made me ashamed and cured me of my stupidity....and what I did in South Africa was but an extension of the rule of *Satyagraha* she unwittingly practised in her own person'.

### Henry David Thoreau



Henry D. Thoreau was arrested and imprisoned for one night in 1846 for non-payment of his poll tax. This was his way of protest against slavery and against the Mexican War, which Thoreau regarded as a means to expand the slave territory. If a law "is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another," he said, "then, I say, break the law."



Let us know

## 6.2. Aim of *Satyagraha*

The aim of *Satyagraha* is to save the opponent from error by love and patient suffering. It does not aim to crush, defeat or punish the opponent or break his will. It is not meant even to harm or embarrass him. A *satyagrahi* loves the opponent as a human being and aims at converting him by an appeal to the best in him. Conversion implies that the opponent realises his mistake, repents and a peaceful adjustment of differences take place. Gandhi wrote in 1940, "the end of non-violent war is always an agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent". Thus *satyagraha* fights with a view to achieve bilateral and not unilateral victory.

The aim indicates the method. *Satyagraha* should try to avoid all intentional injury to the opponent in thought, word and deed. A *satyagraha* will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, *himsa* by *ahimsa*. A *satyagrahi* should treat the opponent as a member of his family. Says Gandhi,

“I must apply the same rules to the wrong doer who is my enemy as I would to my wrong doing father or son.” *Satyagraha* involves no hatred or harm. It can even be applied among near and dear ones.

### **The Dynamics of *Satyagraha*: Power and Consent**

Gandhi knew that all systems of oppression are based on some sort of consent of the oppressed. Once that consent can be withdrawn, the system of oppression will no longer sustain. Colonialism thrived because Indians cooperated with the British by collecting taxes for them. They served in their armies, courts and administration. Once they refused to perform these tasks the administrative structure of the colonial system began to collapse. Once people refused to pay their taxes and engaged in civil disobedience of laws, the very bases upon which the colonial state was constructed was shaken. By withdrawing consent people can exercise the hidden power in them and bring the administration to its knees.

In order to achieve the aims of *Satyagraha*, Gandhi laid down certain fundamental principles.

### **6.3. Basic Principles**

In *Satyagraha* one would co-operate with all that is good and non-cooperate with all that is evil. *Satyagraha* has no room for hatred against ‘others’. It proceeds on the active principle of love. It is easy for one to love one’s friends. But to love one’s enemies demands a deep sense of oneness with them. The whole conception of *Satyagraha* rests on the psychological assumption that the basic goodness of the most brutal opponent can be aroused by the pure suffering of a truthful man.

### **6.4. Purity of Ends and Means**

In *Satyagraha* Mahatma Gandhi gave prime importance to the purity of ends and means. Gandhi rejects the difference between means and ends. He states that it is means, rather than ends, that provide the standard of morality. Although we can choose our ends, we do not have much control over it – we cannot know in advance whether these ends will be achieved. The only thing that is completely within our control is the means with which we approach our various ends. In *Satyagraha* the progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of the means adopted by the *satyagrahi*.

## 6.5. Basic Components

Three basic components of *satyagraha* are Truth, Non-violence and Self-suffering. All the three components go hand in hand in *satyagraha*. An action cannot be called *satyagraha* only because it is non-violent. Missing of any one of the basic components prevents an action to be called *Satyagraha*. Let us examine each of the components separately.

### a. Truth

For a *satyagrahi*, Truth is the supreme end and non-violence or love, the only means to attain it. We must cleanse our mind of prejudices and selfishness. We should purify ourselves in order to know truth in its fullness. It is said that as long as we do not become true to ourselves, we would not know the truth. The ideal is to know the whole truth. It may never be fully realised in our mortal lives. What we ought to do is to strain every nerve to approach that ideal. As Gandhi grew and evolved the science and art of *Satyagraha*, truth got a far more significant and comprehensive meaning than the term God. This is because many would deny God but not truth. Denying truth means denying oneself.

### b. Non-violence or *Ahimsa*

Gandhi preferred to use the word *ahimsa* to non-violence. *Ahimsa* does not only mean non-killing and non-injury and non-destruction of property. It includes not only non-hatred, but also love. Love is the very essence of all identity. It is the greatest creative force behind growth, harmony and happiness.

### c. Self-suffering

Self-suffering is an inevitable component of *Satyagraha*. *Satyagrahi* believes in returning good for evil. Instead of inflicting pain on the opponent, the *Satyagrahi* undergoes self-suffering. Gandhi has proved that such suffering for the cause of common good will bring positive results. Without willingness to undergo suffering, a *Satyagrahi* cannot function successfully.



### Let us check

Some employees of a factory stage a peculiar kind of *Satyagraha* for better salaries. They lay down flat on the ground to completely block the entrance to the factory. They held aloft placards that said: '*you may enter the factory by walking over our bodies.*' The leader also resolved to go on a one-day fast. Identify and explain the principles of *Satyagraha* in this context and prepare a write-up.

## 6.6. Rules for Satyagraha

### *Think and Share*

Should there be some rules for the effective implementation of Satyagraha?

Can you suggest some of them?

Now let's discuss Gandhi's rules for *Satyagraha*.

1. Never retaliate against assaults or punishment.
2. Neither salute nor insult the flag of your opponent or your opponent's leaders.
3. Harbour no anger.
4. Suffer the anger of the opponent.
5. Voluntarily submit to arrest or confiscation of your own property.
6. If you are a trustee of property, defend that property (non-violently) from confiscation with your life.
7. Do not curse or swear.
8. Do not insult the opponent.
9. If anyone attempts to insult or assault your opponent, defend your opponent (non-violently).
10. As a prisoner, behave courteously and obey prison regulation (except any that are contrary to self-respect).
11. As a prisoner, do not ask for special favours.
12. As a prisoner, do not fast in an attempt to gain conveniences.
13. Joyfully obey the orders of the leaders of the civil disobedience action.
14. Do not pick and choose among the orders you obey; if you find the action as a whole improper or immoral, stop your connection with the action entirely.
15. Do not make your participation conditional on your comrades thinking of your family. While you are engaging in the campaign or in prison, do not expect them to provide such support.
16. Do not become a cause of communal quarrels.
17. Do not take sides in such quarrels, but assist only that party who is right; in the case of inter-religious conflict, give your life to protect (non-violently) those in danger on either sides.



18. Avoid occasions that may give rise to communal quarrels.
19. Do not take part in processions that would wound the religious sentiments of any community.



### Let us check

Identify the rules from the above list which you can follow. Do you follow any of them in your life? Present it before the class.

## 6.7. Qualification of a *Satyagrahi*

### Activity

Can everybody become a *Satyagrahi*? What qualifications you would like to see in a *Satyagrahi*? Discuss in groups and prepare a chart.

Let's see a *Satyagrahi*'s qualifications put forward by Mahatma Gandhi.

In 1921 Mahatma Gandhi drew up a pledge laying down the discipline required of every *Satyagrahi* volunteer. In 1930 he laid down a set of rules.

1. He must have a living faith in God.
2. He must believe in truth and non-violence.
3. He must be leading a chaste life.
4. He must be a habitual *khadi* wearer and spinner.
5. He must be a teetotaler.
6. He must carry on with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.
7. He should carry out the Jail rules unless they are specially devised to hurt his self respect.

## 6.8. Code of discipline

If intense preparation is necessary for *Satyagraha*, rigid discipline is even more necessary. There would be no physical or violent sanction against indiscipline.

Mahatma Gandhi's remarks on the importance of discipline are worth studying. He says "there is no deliverance and no hope without sacrifice, discipline and self-control. Mere sacrifice without discipline will be unavailing". While addressing school children's conference in Ahmedabad,

Gandhi said. "It is discipline and self control that separate us from the brute." His own life is an example of the most rigorous discipline. He never missed his morning and evening prayers, his spinning and his silence. Wherever he was, ill or well, imprisoned or free, even if he slept late at night, he would be ready at 4 am for his prayers. He would not take his food, if he failed to spin his daily quota.

In short discipline in essence is obedience to order. All organisations demand discipline. No organisation is possible without discipline.

### 6.9. Steps in *Satyagraha*

No field of activities-social, economic, political, national or international - is excluded from *Satyagraha*. Whenever there is a conflict or grievance or a wrong which can be redressed by the application of mass or group *Satyagraha*, a *satyagrahi* must first convince himself of the truthfulness of the cause. If after a full, careful and truthful investigation he finds the grievance is real, the next thing he has to see is whether those who are suffering from it are keenly feeling the necessity to get rid of it. As soon as a *satyagrahi* realises the seriousness of the grievance he should bring it to the notice of the people behind it. It should be done in the gentlest language possible. He should try to convince them of their responsibility for it. Then he should give due and truthful publicity to the facts of the situation without any exaggeration. An agitation based on the appeal should be carried on through peaceful means.

In the meanwhile the *Satyagrahi* should appeal to the consciousness of the suffering people. He must make himself sure whether they are ready to suffer and follow the path of *Satyagraha*. If a substantial majority of the people agree to offer *Satyagraha*, they should be strengthened in their resolve. If the majority is not willing, it is no bar to launch individual *Satyagraha*. He should request the wrong doers to redress the mistake. If nothing comes out of it, and when a serious struggle becomes inevitable, a suitable form of *Satyagraha* is decided upon. The form ought to meet the requirements of the situation. It should take in the largest number of people. All other means should be tried before the *Satyagraha* is finally launched. It should be launched after due notice to the wrong doers and after adequate preparation.

The *satyagrahis* must first of all take a pledge and begin with a programme of self-purification. It will be useful in strengthening them in their resolve. It should be emphasised that the weapon they are using is morally superior

to that of their opponents. Success is certain if they carry on the struggle bravely. As the fight gathers momentum there may be times of depression and gloom. The struggle is sure to end in victory, if there is sufficient faith in the higher powers, in the truthfulness of their cause and readiness to suffer to the end without ill-will. Never bend, never lower the flag, but be ever ready to concede in non-essentials when the opponent is sufficiently moved or compelled.

In conclusion, a typical satyagraha may pass through some or all of the following stages.

1. Realisation of injustice in the situation.
2. Expression of unhappiness with the situation.
3. Approaching the people behind the injustice.
4. Explaining the *satyagrahi's* case to the adversary.
5. Appealing to the adversary to redress the injustice.
6. Educating the public about the issue.
7. Protest.
8. Direct action.
9. Voluntary and cheerful self-suffering.
10. Maintaining solidarity among the *satyagrahis*.
11. Keep the door always open for negotiation.
12. Never exploit the weaknesses of the opponent
12. Constructive work.
13. Continuing communication with the adversary.
14. Accepting arbitration.
15. Direct talks with the adversary.
16. Truce (peace treaty).
17. Establishing justice by bringing about concrete changes.
18. Thus reaching a solution which would enhance the honour of both the parties.
19. Celebrating victory in humility and in the spirit of thanks giving.

We can see all these stages in various satyagraha movements launched by Gandhi in South Africa and India.

### Think to act

Your group is planning to organise a satyagraha to resolve the issue of waste management in your locality after failing in bringing the attention of the Panchayat/Municipality to address the issue. What are the preparations that you will be making in this regard? Prepare an action plan.

## 6.10. Forms of *Satyagraha*

Mahatma Gandhi put into practice all the principles and theories through various forms of *Satyagraha*.

There are three main categories of *Satyagraha*. They are constructive, purificatory and aggressive. All constructive activities including constructive programme of Gandhi are forms of constructive *Satyagraha*. Hartals, fasting, prayer and other self denying actions are cleansing or purificatory in effect. When the *satyagrahi* takes the initiative in attacking the evil by a direct act of his own, it is a purposeful breach of law. It is called aggressive *Satyagraha*. He invites repression and suffering and is willing to die in the attempt to abolish the evil.

### a. Non-Cooperation

The technique of non-cooperation in *Satyagraha* is based on the assumption that exploitation is impossible without the co-operation of the victim. Therefore in order to put an end to exploitation the first step is the immediate withdrawal of co-operation by the victim. The first condition for Gandhi was that it must be fully non-violent. He said: "Non-violence is the most vital and integral part of non-cooperation. We may fail in everything else, and still continue our battle if we remained non-violent. But we capitulate miserably if we fail in adhering to non-violence".

So the *satyagrahi* must make sure of the correctness of his position. Through his humility he should convince the opponent of his intention. In certain cases non-cooperation is likely to cause inconvenience and even some suffering to the adversary.

The act of non-cooperation may invite the anger of the authorities. Therefore, the *satyagrahi* must be ready to undergo any difficulty. Non-cooperation can be undertaken only after due preparation. The result of hasty non-cooperation can lead to harm.

### b. Civil Disobedience

Mahatma Gandhi considered it the duty of every *Satyagrahi* to resist and disobey all the laws that are unjust and immoral. But he insisted that such disobedience must be civil, polite, dutiful and non-violent. Gandhi wanted everyone to accept that civil disobedience was the inherent right of citizen. One should not give it up under any pressure. Civil disobedience could be used by a son against his father if he tried to impose upon him a law that was against his conscience. It should be used against the state when it becomes lawless, autocratic or corrupt. Thus, civil disobedience becomes a person's sacred duty. But Gandhi warned that as it was sharp as a knife it should be used most carefully and sparingly if at all.

Mass civil disobedience is also possible and sometimes necessary. But it can be manipulated for selfish ends. Therefore, extreme care should be taken to organize it in a calm manner. Civil resisters must be prepared to face the severest trial and undergo any suffering. Even crowds must be disciplined like soldiers if mass civil disobedience is to be employed.

Civil disobedience is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion for it can never be put down if the civil resisters are prepared to face extreme hardship. It is based on an implicit belief in the absolute efficiency of innocent suffering. Disobedience combined with love is the purest form of agitation. If organized and conducted according to the rules of the game, it is the quickest and the best remedy for the removal of abuses and injustices.



Gandhi and his followers on Dandi March.

**Think to act**

*A young man approaches a clerk in the Transport Office seeking an application form for a driving license. He has got a vehicle and intends to earn his living by plying it as a taxi. The clerk says the forms are unavailable and he is advised to come later. The young man knows that the clerk really wanted him to submit the application through an agent from whom bribes are routinely collected by the clerk. He said he would drive his vehicle without a license and he would notify the police also about it. If caught and taken to court, he would narrate the story and he requested the clerk to give his name so that he could mention it to the judge. The clerk quietly went to an inner chamber and brought an application form.*

*Discuss the above case. Is the young man justified in threatening to drive his vehicle without a valid driving license in the above circumstances?*

**c. Fasting**

Fasting is the most powerful and last weapon in the armoury of the *Satyagrahi*. Gandhi said, “fasts may be limited or unto death. Either way, it is a fiery weapon and has its own science. No one as far as I am aware, has a perfect knowledge of it”. Yet it cannot be undertaken by everyone. One must earn a right to fast by devotedly following the laws of *Ahimsa* and thus achieving complete self-purification. Without a living faith in God accompanied by infinite patience, firm resolve, single mindedness of purpose, perfect calm and no anger or ill will, no one can attempt to undertake it. One must be pure in body, mind and spirit to deserve the right to fast.

Fasting unto death must be handled with extreme care and devotion. Gandhi had reminded: “It is a sacred thing. But it must be accepted with all its implications. It is not the fast itself but what it implies that matters”. In spite of all the training and discipline and purest of motives, fasts can become compulsive. Gandhi’s fasts were acts of obedience to the dictates of his conscience. Still in his Rajkot fast an element of force crept in. This throws light on how difficult and risky a task is to undertake a fast, whether limited or unto death.

**Let us check**

How does a Gandhian fast differ from the hunger strikes routinely employed in present Society?

### 6.11. Passive Resistance

Passive resistance is distinct from *Satyagraha*. Among the English people, whenever a small minority did not approve of some bad piece of legislation, instead of rising in rebellion they refused to follow the law. Thus they invited penalties. The great movement of the English women for the right to vote was also known as passive resistance. Passive resistance was considered as a weapon of the weak. The movement of women for the right to vote did not rule out the use of physical force. Some women fired at buildings and even assaulted men. Since passive resistance has no objection in using arms and hurting opponents it cannot be used against near and dear ones.

#### *Satyagraha* and Passive Resistance

Both *Satyagraha* and passive resistance are methods of meeting aggression, settling conflicts and bringing about social and political changes. Passive resistance and non-resistance are generally interchangeably used. The following are the major differences between the two.

<i>Satyagraha</i>	Passive Resistance
1. Moral weapon based on the superiority of soul force over physical force.	1. Political weapon of opportunism.
2. <i>Satyagraha</i> can be practised only by the bravest who have the courage of dying without killing.	2. Passive Resistance is the weapon of the weak.
3. <i>Satyagraha</i> seeks to cleanse opponent from error through love and patient suffering.	3. Aim is to bring the opponent into submission.
4. In <i>Satyagraha</i> there is no room for hatred or ill-will.	4. There is hardly any place for love for the opponent.
5. <i>Satyagraha</i> is dynamic.	5. Passive Resistance is static.
6. <i>Satyagraha</i> acts positively and suffers with cheerfulness.	6. Passive Resistance acts negatively and suffers reluctantly.
7. <i>Satyagraha</i> does not permit violence in any form even under the most critical circumstances.	7. Passive Resistance does not exclude suitable use of violent methods.

*Satyagraha* can thus offer more effective and determined opposition to justice and tyranny than passive resistance.

### 6.12. Relevance of *Satyagraha*

Is there a better and more effective movement than *Satyagraha* movement?

The significance of the Gandhian philosophy of *Satyagraha* is more relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than when he himself was applying it. The world is yet to discover alternatives to non-violent action to combat terrorism, violence and many other present problems. History tells us that the power of the gun has always failed before the power of the people. Unlike violent acts of resistance, in *Satyagraha*, not only the able-bodied are valuable but also women, children and the elderly can be a part of it. It may be noted that Gandhian *Satyagrahas* were characterised by a high presence of women.

Some analysts have claimed that *Satyagraha* worked in India only because the British were familiar with democratic principles. It may not work against a tyrant. Gandhi believed that even the hardest metal can be melted when sufficient heat is applied and this applies to tyrants.

The basic philosophy of Gandhian *Satyagraha* or non-violent struggle is winning over the heart and mind of one's opponent. He is seen as a friend. There is suffering in non-violent struggle. However, instead of attempting to inflict it upon the wrong-doer, the *Satyagrahi* suffers for his wrongs. If we indulged in violence and then discover that we are faulty, we would be unjustly making the enemy suffer for our mistake. The harm caused is irreversible. When we practise non-violence, however, we alone suffer for our own errors.



Martin Luther King Jr.'s Civil Rights Movement  
(Application of *Satyagraha*)



In summary, it can be said that the method of non-violence is the necessary condition of progress in history. Increasingly people are making use of the power of nonviolence. Even the Arabs embraced non-violent action when they decided to overthrow authoritarian governments in countries like Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt. The 'Arab spring' is now part of the history of mass protest.

### 6.13. Non-violent Direct Action

Non-violent direct action refers to the co-ordinated action of people to influence or change government policy through non-violent means. It includes public demonstration and protests lobbying and media campaigns. The techniques used are non-violent pressure such as sit-ins, blockades, persuasion and gathering public sympathy for the particular cause and in some cases civil disobedience. Non-violent action is increasing all over the world. It may not be the pure type that Gandhi had envisaged, but it makes use of several Gandhian methods and elements.

What is unique to Gandhian *Satyagraha* is a firm commitment to non-violence as a principle rather than employing it as a mere tactic. This makes *Satyagraha* different from many other non-violent movements where the activists employ non-violence as a strategy with the intention of defeating the opponent rather than having any firm commitment to it. Gene Sharp has popularised non-violent action the world over devoid of its extreme moral overtones.

#### Methods of non-violent action

Major non-violent theorist Gene Sharp said people engaged in three types of behavior in non-violent protests. First, they engage in symbolic protest such as marches, vigils and distributing leaflets. Second, the resisters refuse to continue existing co-operation or to begin new co-operation with the opponent or with certain practices. This has social, economic and political forms. For example, the resisters discontinue economic co-operation by refusing to supply or transport goods and services or refusing to buy or sell materials. Similarly labour strikes take various forms such as a short symbolic strikes, a single factory strike, a massive general strike or an economic shut down of a city.

Third, the resisters engage in active intervention and disruption of the normal operation of the system. It is applied in various psychological, social,

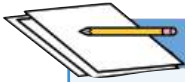
economical, physical and political forms. The methods of non-violent intervention include occupation of offices, hunger strikes, establishment of new economic institutions, non-violent invasion, seeking imprisonment and creation of parallel government.

According to Gene Sharp, the methods of non-violent action are identified and categorised by the type of action applied, not by the motives or beliefs of the people applying it. This technique has been applied by people of diverse beliefs and does not require a commitment to ethical or religious non-violence. He had documented 198 methods of non-violent action.



Prof. Gene Sharp

Gene Sharp interprets Gandhi in strategic terms and does not subscribe to the principled form of non-violence. His politics of non-violent action has been translated into several languages and had influenced several movements for democracy all over the world.



## Summary

- The aim of *Satyagraha* is to save the opponent from error by love and patient suffering.
- The basic principle of *Satyagraha* is to arouse the innate goodness of the opponent through the self-suffering of a truthful man.
- Success of *Satyagraha* depends on the purity of means.
- Truth, Non-violence and self-suffering are the basic components of *Satyagraha*.
- Though passive resistance is a form of resistance it differs from *Satyagraha*.
- Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience and Fasting are the three main categories of *Satyagraha*.
- In 1930 Mahatma Gandhi laid down a set of rules for *Satyagraha*.
- A code of discipline is inevitable for the success of *Satyagraha*.
- A typical *Satyagraha* consists of 19 steps.
- Non-violent direct action refers to the co-ordinated action of people to influence or change Government policy through non-violent means.



## I can

- analyse the influences of great personalities on Mahatma Gandhi in framing his new technique of *Satyagraha*.
- explain the aims of *Satyagraha*.
- explain the dynamics of *Satyagraha*.
- list out and explain the basic principles of *Satyagraha*.
- identify the rules of *Satyagraha*.
- draw out the qualifications needed for a *Satyagrahi*.
- analyse the importance and necessity of discipline for *Satyagraha*.
- list out the steps followed in *Satyagraha*.
- identify and explain various forms of *Satyagraha*.
- differentiate between Passive resistance and *Satyagraha*.
- evaluate the relevance of *Satyagraha*.



### Let us assess

1. 'The success of *Satyagraha* depends on the self-suffering of the *Satyagrahi*'. Do you agree to statement? Justify.
2. Suppose your locality is suffering from air pollution due to a nearby factory. You and your friends have decided to protest against this. List out the various steps you will follow in your movement.
3. '*Satyagraha* and Passive resistance are suitable methods of protest.' Do you agree. Explain.
4. List out and analyse various forms of *Satyagraha* with reference to Mahatma Gandhi's *Satyagraha* in freedom struggle.
5. Code of discipline is an essential component behind every success. Analyse the importance of code of discipline in *Satyagraha*.

# POLITICAL IDEAS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

## Key Concepts

- State - concept and features
- Political values
- Gandhian concept of politics
- Mahatma Gandhi's views on State
- Democracy - concept, features, forms and significance
- Mahatma Gandhi's views on democracy
- Political decentralisation
- Significance of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian Politics

This chapter discusses political ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. For a better understanding of Gandhi's political ideas it is essential to know certain basic concepts in modern political science such as 'state' and 'political values'.



### *Think and share*

*What do you understand by politics?*

*Identify some of the political activities that your parents and relatives engage in. Discuss.*

Politics is a part of life whether one likes it or not. There are people who say they hate politics and will have nothing to do with it. They are infact, making a political statement on the existing political state of affairs. When we go to polling station to vote, when we criticise a Government policy, when we submit a petition to the local Panchayat and when we attend the Gram Sabha, we are actually acting politically.

### **What is Politics?**

The beginning of modern political thinking is often attributed to the ancient Greek



philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. The ancient Indian writings also contain valuable insight into politics. Notable among them are the *Manusmriti*, the *Santi Parva* of the *Mahabharata* and Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. In many Indian languages politics is called "*rajniti*". In one sense, it meant the principles of administration of the king or ruler.

'Politics' comes from the Greek word "Politikos" which means dealing with the affairs of the citizens. It implies the principles and applications that guided the governance of the Greek city States. State was a holistic concept for the ancient Greeks, which covered every public activity.

Political Science is the systematic study of institutions and processes associated with the state. The state alone has the monopoly of taking binding decisions in society. Here 'political' covers the subject matter of its study and 'science' refers to a systematic way of studying it. Politics means the activities involved in getting and using power in public life, and being able to influence decisions that affect a country or society.

When power is used in a right way, with the consent of the people, it is called authority. When it is used in a wrong way, it is known as coercion.

In common language, 'political' is generally associated with the problems related to governing a state. It has been used to mean the structure and functioning of a state as well as its relation with other states.

### What is State?



#### Think and share

What do you understand by 'state'?

List out your ideas and present it in class

The word "state" comes from the Latin word '*status*' which means condition or status and is the central theme of political science. State is a political organisation of society. It acts through the institutions of government.

State varies in culture, forms of government, natural resources, language, shape and size. However every state has four elements- 1) People, 2) Territory, 3) Government and 4) Sovereignty. The state is distinguished from other social groups by its purpose (establishment of order and security), methods (its laws and implementation) and territory (its area of jurisdiction) and sovereignty.



Let us know

Woodrow Wilson defined 'state' as "a people organised for law within a definite territory".

Harold Laski defined 'state' as "a territorial society divided into Government and subjects claiming within allotted physical area, supremacy over all other institutions.

According to Garner, "The state is a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent (or nearly so) of external control and possessing an organized government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience."

The concept of 'State' in the Indian political thought is as old as the Vedas, which are elaborated in the *Ramayana*, the *Shantiparva* of the *Mahabharata*, the *Manusmriti*, the *Arthashastra* and the *Sukranthi*. Buddhism and Jainism also refer to the nature of political organisation. The Indian concept was deeply rooted in the broad philosophical basis of 'Dharma' which is more than a religious concept. It has much broader and deeper meanings as law, duty, social order, justice and righteousness.



Let us know

### State Vs Nation

- State is a political concept while Nation is a cultural concept. The idea of nation can include more than one state.
- State is not subject to external control while nation may or may not be independent of external control.
- A single State may consist of one or more nations or people.



Let us know

### Theories of State

**Divine origin theory:** State was the creation of God and the rulers ruled as the representatives of God. Hence subjects are bound to obey them.

**The Force theory:** the state came into being through conquest and domination of weaker tribes by the stronger one.

**Social Contract theory:** Before the state came into being men lived in a state of nature in which life was either uncertain or there was no mechanism to bring order. People then entered into a contract with the ruler and created the state.

**Evolutionary theory:** It is a generally accepted theory based on a pluralistic explanation of the origin of the state. It says that state evolved from the family and kinship when they gradually expanded into tribes. Political consciousness also contributed to its origin.

## Elements of State (population, territory, government and sovereignty)

### Population



#### Think and present

*What is the primary and greatest asset of a state?*

*Prepare a chart showing state-wise population of India. Highlight the five states with higher population. Find out the total population of India.*

The state is a human institution. Hence population is its first and foremost element. People are the inhabitants of the state. There is no specific number of people suggested for a state to be considered so. However, it is important that the number must be adequate to be self-sufficient and small enough for administration.

*Highest populated State - China - 1.3 billion*

*Lowest populated State - the Vatican - 826 citizens*

The population of a state comprises of all individuals who, in principle permanently inhabit within the territory. It consists of nationals and foreigners. The population of a state need not be completely uniform in culture, language, and race. Modern states greatly vary in population. But it is the kind of people that matters more than their numbers. Aristotle rightly said that a good citizen makes a good state. So what is important is the quality of people, their character, culture and sense of belonging to the state.

### Territory



#### Let us do

Draw India's map showing its territories. Display it in the class.

A state as a political and legal community of human beings must function in a given territory. Territory is the geographical area that is owned and controlled by the state. It exercises its sovereignty within it.

People cannot constitute a state unless they inhabit a definite territory. When they reside permanently in a fixed place, they develop common interests and a sense of unity. It becomes easy to organize them into a political unit and control them. So the state requires a fixed territory with clear boundaries through which it exercises undisputed authority. Territory is its material basis.



The territory of a state includes: 1) land, mountains, rivers and lakes within its frontiers, 2) territorial water, extending six nautical miles into the sea from the coast and 3) air space, lying above its territory.

There is no accepted rule as to the size of a state's territory. More important than the size are the natural resources and the location of the state. A geographically clear territory is an asset. There will not be problems of administration and control. Nomadic tribes do not have any territory of their own. Therefore they cannot succeed in creating a state.

## Government

Government is the machinery by which the state maintains its existence, carries out its functions and realises its policies and objectives. A community of persons does not form a state unless it is organised through an established government.

The state can be divided into unitary (Saudi Arabia) or federal (USA) based on the concentration of power. There are also federal states like India with strong unitary features.

Governments usually have three branches: (a) the Legislature, (b) the Executive and (c) the Judiciary. The legislature makes laws. The executive implements them.

The judiciary looks at the validity of such laws. The executive acts in accordance with the constitution. In India there are central, state and local governments.



## Sovereignty

The most essential element of the state is its sovereignty. It is the element which distinguishes the state from all other associations. The word 'sovereignty' denotes supreme and final legal authority beyond which no further legal power exists. The sovereign body may be a person or a body of persons.

Sovereignty has two aspects: internal and external. Internal sovereignty is the supreme authority of the state over all individuals and associations within its geographical limits. External sovereignty implies

### Characteristics of sovereignty

- Absoluteness
- Permanence
- Universality
- Indivisibility
- Exclusiveness
- Inalienability



Let us know

the freedom of the state from foreign control. No external authority can limit its power.



### Let us check

Discuss in groups whether states like, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, etc. come under the concept of state? Substantiate your ideas and present it in the class through a brief report.

## Major political values



### Think and present

*What are the political values that you want to have in a state. List them in a chart and display in the classroom.*

### Freedom

Freedom means absence of restraints. An individual could be considered free if he/she is not subject to external controls and is able to make decisions independently. However, absence of unreasonable



restraints (negative freedom) is only one dimension of freedom. Freedom is also about expanding the ability of people to freely express themselves and develop their potential (positive freedom).

### Justice

Justice can be considered as giving every man his due. It deals with fair, moral and impartial treatment of individuals ensuring social justice. It also unifies political values. There is also conservative and reformative justice. Conservative justice seeks to protect the established order of society. Reformative justice calls for the revision of a social order to suit the changing needs of the society.



### Equality

Equality implies equal distribution of rights to individuals by the state. The concept of equality in political theory gives some basic rights for all irrespective of sex, race, religion, culture or wealth.

Equality implies three things. First, it means the absence of special privilege. Everyone should have an equal access to the avenues of authority. Second, equality means the provision of opportunities to all. Finally, it means the urgent claims of all must be met before we can meet particular claims of some.



### Let us check

What are the political values essential for a State and how can we achieve them? Prepare a seminar paper and present it.

### Mahatma Gandhi's views on state

Mahatma Gandhi opposed the present form of state because it has military, police, prisons, courts, tax collectors, and bureaucrats. These will lead to violence in some form or the other. State imposes certain compulsions. So it damages the moral value of individuals. Gandhi says "The state represents violence in a concentrated and organised form. The individual has a soul, but as the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence."

To Mahatma Gandhi violence is an evil. Violence includes physical, economic and structured social compulsion. Since state is rooted in violence and exploitation Gandhi stood for its abolition. State was opposed to the free nature of man. It slowed down the growth of individuals' personality. "While apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, [the State] does the greatest harm to mankind".

Mahatma Gandhi rejects the state in all its forms. He wants to establish a stateless society free from compulsion, exploitation, inequality, class conflict, communal disturbance and violence. He had in mind the ultimate vision of the perfection of mankind. Gandhi stood for a divine kingdom on earth. So he was against the force used by political institutions. He supported a stateless democracy.

### Democracy



#### Think and present

What do you understand by democracy?. Discuss in groups and present the ideas in the class.

Democracy is "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" (Abraham Lincoln).

The word 'democracy' is derived from two Greek terms, 'demos'

(people) and 'kratia' (power). They mean 'authority of the people'. More than a form of government democracy is also a way of life. It is an ideal social system aimed at general social welfare through the fullest development of human personality. The democratic form of government helps the individuals to create an atmosphere of complete and equal freedom of action and freedom from unnecessary constraints.



Let us know

Robert Dahl (1971) identifies seven key criteria that are essential for democracy.

1. Governmental decisions about policy made by elected representatives.
2. Periodic free and fair elections.
3. Universal adult rating ( all above a certain age granted right to vote).
4. The right to contest elections.
5. Freedom to express one's views through various media.
6. Access to alternative sources of information on governmental matters.
7. Right to form and join associations.

The above criteria are considered to represent a minimal democracy. Those who favour a more deep democracy want robust accountability mechanisms. (Robert A. Dahl (1971) Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press).

Democracy ensures free participation of the people in the process of controlling political power. In democracy people control the government. It is also associated with peaceful competition of ideas. A more peaceful world order can established with more democratic nations.

Democracy has two basic forms, direct and indirect. Direct rule by the people is the purest type of democracy. All eligible citizens have direct and active participation in the decision making process. In indirect democracy all eligible citizens have power but it is exercised indirectly through elected representatives. This is called representative democracy.

### **Mahatma Gandhi's views on democracy**

"Democracy must in essence mean the art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of people in the service of common good of all". Gandhi was a great believer in the theory and practice of democracy. His love for equality, individual freedom and his plea for a just social order through the brotherhood of man testify to his faith in democracy.

He was a true democrat in thought, speech and action. He was opposed to the present system of democracy which represented centralization of power. In his concept of democracy the government should be least governed by giving maximum independence to the people.

To Mahatma Gandhi, democracy is a government of the masses and not of the classes. It includes the rich and the poor, prince and pauper, the high and the low, the strong and the weak, the educated and the uneducated. Democracy represents all the interests of all the sections of the people.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, true democracy promotes the good of all including the weakest and the poorest section of the people. It is *Sarvodaya* (true democracy realised). The last is equal to the first. There are no conflicts between the good of the individual and the good of all. The good of the individual is contained in the good of all. Thus Gandhi's concept of democracy is both qualitative and quantitative.

### Non-violence and democracy

Mahatma Gandhi realised the connection between true democracy and non-violence. "Democracy and violence can never go together. The states that are today nominally democratic have either to become openly totalitarian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent. It is a blasphemy to say that non-violence can only be practised by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals",

A true democrat is the one who with purely non-violent means defends his and his country's liberty and ultimately that of the whole mankind. True democracy or the *swaraj* of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means. Such means will remove all opposition by suppression. Now there is an all-out effort to promote democracy everywhere as a means to create a more peaceful world order. Gandhi had the foresight to see this connection nearly a century ago.

### Parliamentary democracy and Mahatma Gandhi's Critique of British parliament

What do you know about parliamentary democracy?

In Parliamentary democracy people elect their representatives to the Parliament. The system evolved in England after centuries of experiments and modifications. Parliamentary democracy has some admirable features. It respects the will of the people. It calms down the urge for revolutions. It

compels the rulers to keep in touch with the people and earn their goodwill. It gives great scope for debates and discussions. It is ideal for large nations.

However, Mahatma Gandhi strongly criticised the British Parliament (mother of parliaments). It was not stable and there was change of ministry from time to time. Further, the Prime Minister was always concerned about his own interest and the interest of his party members and retaining his power.

Mahatma Gandhi criticised British Parliament because it had not done anything good to the public. It was generally acknowledged that the members were selfish. Each thought of his own little interest. Members voted for their party without a thought. Finally the parliament was simply a costly toy of the nation. The Prime Minister was more concerned about his power than about the welfare of Parliament. His energy was concentrated upon securing the success of his party.

Despite his criticism of parliamentary democracy Gandhi affirmed that, disciplined and enlightened democracy was the finest thing in the world. At the same time, he also warned against a wholesale copying of the Western Model of democracy. However, he had the highest regard for democracy. He called it as a great institution but at the same time he said that it was liable to be greatly abused. Even today, all over the world, democracy is the widely accepted system of governance and there is no better alternative to it.

### **Mahatma Gandhi's views on political Decentralisation**

What do you know about political decentralisation?

Political decentralisation aims to give citizens or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making. The selection of local representatives allows citizens to know their political representatives well. It also supports democratisation by giving citizens, or their representatives, more role in the formulation and implementation of policies.



In India political decentralisation was effective after the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments granting rural and urban local bodies to function as local governing institutions.

*Let us know*

According to Gandhi decentralisation of political power is the basic requirement for the success of true democracy. For him a decentralised democracy based on non-violence must consist of groups settled in small village republics. He was against the concentration of power. According to him centralisation is a danger to democracy. Concentration of power, in his view, badly affects all democratic values.

Decentralisation of political power was a significant step towards his ideal social order. *Panchayati Raj* was Gandhi's answer to parliamentary democracy. Besides having greater affinity between the representatives and the people, *Panchayati Raj* would create ideal condition for non-violence. He did not want political parties to enter the Panchayats. Those powers that the village panchayat was unable to exercise would be transferred to districts or state. The relation among these tiers will be non-hierarchical. All the functions including the dispensing of justice and settling disputes will be undertaken by Panchayats. Gandhi even assigned defence as a function of the Panchayat. He was however against assigning criminal jurisdiction to Panchayats. If an elected Panchayat fails to rise up to the expectation of the people even after six months in office, it can be replaced by another group of five persons.



### Let us do

*Panchayat Raj* is an expression of political decentralisation. Meet at least one representative of a Grama Panchayat/ Municipality/ Corporation and seek his/her views on the extent to which decentralisation of power has been carried out in effect. Share them in the class

## Mahatma Gandhi's views on political values

### Gandhian concept of freedom

*Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life.  
What would a man not pay for living? - Mahatma Gandhi*

Mahatma Gandhi links individual freedom with social duties. He establishes an intimate and interdependent non-violent relationship between the individual and the society. Gandhi rejects the principle of absolute individualism. He puts moral restriction on the individual to learn to fulfill social duties. They are important for the development of the society. At the

same time, the society has to provide freedom and opportunities for the individual's development.

Mahatma Gandhi says, "I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of jungle. We have to learn to strike the balance between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member".

### **Mahatma Gandhi's views on Equality and Justice**

*Justice that love gives is surrender; justice that law gives is a punishment.*  
- Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi's devotion to equality was the result of his deep and passionate belief in the spiritual essence of all human beings. He said, "Since He pervades every fibre of my being and of all you, I derive from it the doctrine of equality of all creatures on earth and it should satisfy the cravings of all philosophical communists".

Mahatma Gandhi had a moral reverence for life. He stood for the equality of man. He had great concern for the rights and dignity of human beings. Every man is equal before the eyes of God as the *Bhagavat Gita* points out. Hence, every man should also be legally and politically equal.

The acceptance of the equality of human beings implies their essential equality. It never means the absolute equality. There will be physical and intellectual inequalities. But there should be efforts to provide equal opportunities for the growth of the respective talents of all persons. To Gandhi racial and social equality was necessary for freedom. He felt that political freedom without social and racial equality was incomplete. The concept of equality has to be realised in practice at political and economic levels as well.

Mahatma Gandhi stood for justice in the commonwealth and stated: "The first condition of non-violence is justice all around in every department of life". Gandhi fought against racism, imperialism, communalism and untouchability. As a reformer he fought against social injustice and oppressions.



He wanted social, political and economic justice. He felt that justice had to manifest its active power in all the spheres of one's existence. He led the Indian freedom movement based on the ideals of social and political justice.

### **Gandhian concept of 'Rights and Duties'**

Gandhian concept of 'Rights and Duties' is based on his philosophy of simple living and high thinking. He supported voluntary suffering on the path of duty. Simplicity should be voluntarily adopted. Then, it will be helpful in the fulfillment of duties as against the rights. He insisted that one should always think about one's duties first.

According to Mahatma Gandhi duties do not depend upon right but rights depend upon duties. To him "The true source of right is duty. If we all discharge our duties, right will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed, we can run after rights they will escape like a will-o-the-wisp. The more pursue them the farther will they fly".

Rights and duties are interdependent. This is due to the interdependence of the individual and society. Lord Krishna gives the same teaching when he says "Action alone is thine- Leave then the fruits severely alone". Action is duty, fruit is the right.

If one becomes conscious of his duties, then rights will automatically be taken care of by the State. Rights are nothing but opportunities for self-realisation. It is the link of one's spiritual unity with others by serving them. A man can give up right, but he may not give up duty without being guilty of serious negligence. Every duty fulfills certain rights, while the exercise of every rights includes certain corresponding duties.

### **Gandhian concept of Politics**

For Mahatma Gandhi, engaging in politics is unavoidable in modern times. This is because the state has entered into the life of people more than ever. In the past, people led their simple life without any fear and unaware of who their ruler was.



*Think and share*

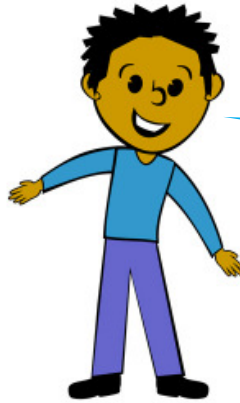
*Discuss Gandhi as a political thinker*

So, more than having an inclination to enter politics, one is compelled to do so. Engagement in politics is a religious duty, according to Gandhi. He compared politics to the 'coils of a snake' which one has to wrestle with. More than seizing power and using it, Gandhi sought to enter politics in

order to cleanse it. He saw his entry into politics as a religious duty, particularly at a time when the country was under foreign rule.

### Spiritualisation of Politics

For Mahatma Gandhi, the road to salvation lay in the service of his country and humanity. In the language of the Bhagavat Gita, Gandhi wanted to live at peace with both friend and foe. For him there was no politics without religion. It subserves religion. "Politics bereft of religion is death trap because it kills the soul". He stood for the spiritualisation of politics or the prioritisation of means rather than ends in politics.



Spiritualising  
politics- what is  
it?

The principle of Machiavelli that 'ends justify the means' was considered the norm in politics. Politics is then governed by its own rule. Ethical questions in interpersonal relations have no relevance in politics. Gandhi rejected this reasoning. He said that the same moral rules that guide interpersonal relations should be reflected in politics.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, an immoral man should have no place in politics. Selfless service to others i.e. "Nishkamakarma" was the Gandhian path to 'Moksha'. Thus Gandhi spiritualised politics. He became "a saint in politics" - a rare combination, said C.F. Andrews.

Gandhi saw power politics as only one of the means of serving people. He says "political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life" (*Young India*, July 2, 1931). He felt that real politics emerged from disinterested social service. Through disinterested social service a new form of parallel power will emerge. It will be capable of challenging and checking power politics.



How can we  
cleanse politics? How can  
politics be made a means to  
serve the public rather than a  
means to make money and  
seek power?



### Let us check

Write a brief note on spiritualising politics.

### ***Lok Sevak Sangh (An Association of Voluntary Servants of the People) – Mahatma Gandhi’s Last Will and Testament***

A draft of a new constitution for the Indian National Congress was prepared by Gandhi on 29th January, 1948, a day before his death. Being his last piece of writing it may be taken as his “**Last Will and Testament**”. India attained political independence through means devised by Gandhi. But the Indian villages still had to attain social, moral and economic independence. He felt that there will be a fight between the civil and military powers. It must be kept out of unhealthy competition with political parties and communal bodies. For this and other similar reasons Gandhi said that the then Congress Committee decide to disband the then existing congress organisation. It should become a *Lok Sevak Sangh* under the following rules with power to change them when required.

Every Panchayat of five adult men or women being villagers or village-minded shall form a unit. Two such Panchayats shall form a working party under a leader elected from among them. When there are one hundred such Panchayats, the fifty first grade leaders shall elect from among themselves a second leader. The first grade leaders working under hundred Panchayats shall continue to be formed till they cover the whole of India. Each succeeding group of Panchayats electing second grade leaders shall serve jointly for the whole of India and for their respective areas. The second grade leaders may elect a chief who will regulate and command all the groups.

He drew up some qualifications for those who would be the members. Mahatma Gandhi wanted the congress to convert itself into an association for the service of the people. It should work for the establishment of a non-violent society.

### **Qualifications for a *Lok Sevak Sangh* Member**

1. Every worker shall be habitual wearer of Khadi made from self-spun yarn or certified by the A.I.S.A. and must be a teetotaler. If a Hindu, he must be free from untouchability in any shape or form in his own person or in his family. He must be a believer in the ideal of inter-communal

unity, equal respect for all religions equality of opportunity and status for all irrespective of race, creed or sex.

2. He shall come in personal contact with every villager within his jurisdiction.
3. He shall enroll and train workers from amongst the villagers and shall keep a register of all these.
4. He shall keep a daily record of his work.
5. He shall organise the villages so as to make them self sufficient and self-supporting through their agriculture and handicrafts.
6. He shall educate the villages in sanitation and hygiene and take all measures for prevention of disease among them.
7. He shall organise the education of the village folk from birth to death along the lines of *Nai Talim*, in accordance with the policy laid down by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.
8. He shall enroll the names of those missing on the statutory voters' roll.
9. He shall encourage those who have not yet acquired the legal qualification, to acquire it for getting the right of voting.
10. For the above purposes and others to be added from time to time, he shall train and fit himself in accordance with the rule laid down by the *Sangh* for the due performance of duty.

The *Sangh* shall affiliate the following autonomous bodies:

1. A.I.S.A. (All India Spinners Association)
2. A.I.V.I.A. (All India Village Industries Association)
3. Hindustani Talim Sangh.
4. Harijan Sevak Sangh.
5. Goseva Sangh.

Finance: The *Sangh* shall raise finances for the fulfillment of its mission from among the villagers and others.

## Enlightened Anarchy

### Anarchism

Anarchism in the literal sense means disorder. But in the political sense it refers to a philosophy. It places confidence in the ability of people to govern themselves without the need for an external agency. The term anarchy comes

from Greek, and means 'no ruler.' Anarchists are people who reject all forms of government or authority, all forms of hierarchy and domination. Anarchists are thus opposed to both capitalism and the state, as well as to all forms of religious authority. But anarchists also seek to establish a decentralized society without coercive institutions, a society organized through a federation of voluntary associations. Anarchism is an extreme form of individualism.

Like many anarchists, Mahatma Gandhi visualised an enlightened anarchy " in which each person will become his own ruler. He will conduct himself in such a way that his behavior will not hamper the well-being of his neighbours".

Mahatma Gandhi's ideal 'state' was a non-violent state where social life would remain self-controlled. In that state there is no ruler, no subject, no government or no one will be governed. It is a perfect state consisting of enlightened and self-controlled persons following the principles of non-violence.

The purest anarchy or stateless society is not easy to achieve. So Gandhi's thought moved in the direction of the evolution of a non-violent state. This non-violent state will be an ordered anarchy.

To Mahatma Gandhi political power was just a means of social change - not as an end in itself. It was a tool for controlling national life through national representatives. Such a state is the state of enlightened anarchy where everyone will be his own ruler.

Mahatma Gandhi visualised the goal of enlightened anarchy in three stages. In the initial stage the goal was immediate *swaraj* based on political freedom i.e. liberate the country from the foreign rule. In the second stage the goal was to bring about a non-violent state through the evolution of village republic. In the third stage, the goal was to achieve *Ramarajya*. The predominant non-violent state would be transformed into a complete non-violent state - the *Ramarajya*.

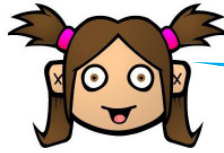


### Let us check

Make a comparison of Gandhian concept of state and general concept of state.

## Ramrajya

'Ramrajya', the ideal state of Mahatma Gandhi's dream will completely be organised on the basis of Truth and Non-violence.



Is it Lord Rama's rajya or a Hindu rajya?

His concept of *Ramrajya* ensures equal right to all. According to him the ideal society is a stateless democracy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. The individuals rule themselves without troubling neighbours. In the ideal state there is no political power because there is no state. Gandhi abolishes the state and government and establishes an ideal stateless society of the "sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority". This type of ideal society or the form of polity is termed by Gandhi as "*Ramrajya*".

*"By Ramrajya I do not mean Hinduraj, I mean by 'Ramrajya' 'Divine raj, the kingdom of God. For me Ram and Rahim are one and the same deity. I acknowledge no other God but one God of Truth and righteousness." -*

*Mahatma Gandhi*

He tried to bring heaven on earth where "there will be neither paupers nor high or low, neither millionaires, employers nor half-starved employees, nor intoxicating drinks or drugs. There will be same respect for men and women. There is no untouchability and there will be equal respect for all faiths. They will be proudly, joyously and voluntarily bread labourers".

He considered Rama as an ideal ruler. Rama gave an efficient administration to his people and everyone was happy and prosperous. Rama did justice even to a dog. So Gandhi considered him as an ideal ruler and accepted Rama's name for his concept of ideal society.

### Features of *Ramrajya*

1. It is based on truth and non-violence.
2. It aims at village autonomy.
3. Every individual is his own ruler.
4. It resists the centralisation of power and insists on decentralisation.
5. It aims at the welfare of all.
6. The civilization which emerges from it will be rural and agrarian.
7. Jails will be reformatory houses and will have desired freedom.

8. The police would be the servants of the people and function as reformers.
9. It will be completely free from compulsion-political, economic and moral.
10. The ideal village republic or village *swaraj* will be the primary unit of *Ramrajya*.
11. There will be no room for communal disturbances.
12. Law courts will be the custodians of people's liberty.
13. It aimed at the fulfillment of the primary needs of an individual.
14. There will be few quarrels and strikes.
15. It promotes trusteeship, bread labour, self-sufficiency, minimisation of wants, simple living, village and cottage industries and swadeshi.



### Let us check

Prepare and present a paper on good governance and its elements. Do you think Gandhi's *Ramarajya* or Mahabali's rule is useful in clarifying ideas related to good governance?

## Swaraj

Mahatma Gandhi for the first time put forward his idea of '*Swaraj*' in *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule*. To Gandhi *Swaraj* was an all inclusive concept-political, economic, social and moral. The word "*Swaraj*" is a sacred and Vedic word, it means self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraints. The *Swaraj* of his dream is the poor man's *swaraj*. Gandhi's *swaraj* was to protect the interests of the down-trodden and starving millions.

"By *swaraj* I mean the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the large number of the adult population, male and female, native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the state and who have taken the trouble of having registered their names as voters". Real *swaraj* will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words *Swaraj* is to be obtained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of *swaraj* explains the connection between the individual and society. *Swaraj* translates into "self-rule" or "autonomy". For Gandhi, every individual had to take steps towards self-rule in their

lives; then India would naturally move towards self-rule as a nation. Gandhi insisted, "Everyone will have to take *swaraj* for himself". He added, "If we become free, India becomes free and in this thought you have a definition of *swaraj*. It is *swaraj* when we learn to rule ourselves".

In Gandhi's own words, *real swaraj* will protect everyone's interest. *Swaraj* is to be obtained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

*Poornaswaraj* means an awakening among masses, knowledge among them of their true interests and ability to serve that interest against the whole world. It also means harmony, freedom from aggression from within or without, and a progressive improvement in the economic conditions of the masses. According to Gandhi, *swaraj* is complete independence of foreign control and complete economic independence. So at one end we have political independence and at the other the economic. It has two other aspects as well. One of them is moral and social and the other is *Dharma*. This is what Gandhi calls as the square of *swaraj*.

### Village *Swaraj*

Village *swaraj* is the Gandhian model of rural reconstruction. It is not the restructuring of old village panchayat. But formation of independent village units of *swaraj* in the context of the present world. Village *Swaraj* is the practical embodiment of non-violence in the fields of politics, economics and sociology. In village *swaraj*, the villages are the decentralized small political units with complete power. In village *swaraj* ultimate power will rest with the individual.

'Village *Swaraj*' is man-centred, non-exploiting, decentralised, simple village economy providing employment to each one of its citizens on the basis of voluntary co-operation. The citizens work for achieving self-sufficiency food, clothing and other necessities of life.

"Gandhi's idea of village *swaraj* is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is necessary. Every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its clothing. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adult and children. If there is more land available, it will grow useful cash crops except tobacco, opium, ganja and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own water supply system for clean drinking



water. This can be done through controlled wells and tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no caste with graded untouchability. Non-violence with the technique of satyagraha and co-operation will be the means to solve issues. Hence they will be practised by the village community. There will be compulsory service of village guard, who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. The panchayat will be the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive combined to operate for its year of office. Here the practice of perfect democracy based on individual freedom. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of the world.”



Ideal village

### Basic Principles of Village Swaraj

1. *Supremacy of man* : Full employment - Every human being has the right to live and therefore, to find the means of feeding, clothing and housing.
2. *Bread labour*: - If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry about over population, no disease and no such misery as we see around.

3. *Equality*: - Economic equality is the master key to non-violent independence. It stands for social justice, promotes the good of all including the weakest.
4. *Trusteeship*: - Here wealth is considered as a social asset. So the rich will be left in possession of his wealth, of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society.
5. *Decentralisation*: - Full development of human personality and individual freedom are possible only in decentralisation.
6. *Swadeshi*: - *Swadeshi* is the spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote.
7. *Self-sufficiency*: - Every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world.
8. *Co-operation*: - As far as possible every activity will be conducted on co-operative basis.
9. *Satyagraha*: - Non-violence with its technique of *satyagraha* and non-cooperation will be the sanction of village community.
10. *Equality of religions*: - Every religion has its full and equal place.
11. *Panchayati Raj*: - *Panchayati Raj* is the only way to end exploitation of weaker sections and to bring happiness to the millions in the Indian society.
12. *Nai Talim* (Basic Education): - Literacy is not the end of education nor the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby men and women can be educated.

### Political parties

Political parties are one of the earliest visible institutions in a democracy. A political party is an association of people who come together on a common platform with the objective of contesting elections and coming to power. The main functions of political parties are to contest elections, come to power, put forward policies and programmes, make laws, form a government, perform the role of an opposition, represent public opinion and carry out welfare activities. A political party has three components – leaders, members

and followers. Political parties are necessary because they lay down foundations for a strong representative democracy.

Political participation is any activity that shapes, affects, or involves the political sphere. Political participation ranges from voting to attending a rally, to sending a letter to a representative and other means that can fit in with a democratic framework.



### *Think and share*

*List the programmes, policies and activities of a political party which you are familiar with. Discuss whether political parties take their manifestos seriously when they come to power?*



*Let us know*

"By political participation we mean activity by private citizens designed to influence government decision-making." Huntington & Nelson (1976)

"By political participation we refer simply to activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action - either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies." (Verba, 1995)

Participation in electoral processes involves much more than just voting. Political participation includes the freedom to speak out, assemble and associate with public affairs. It also gives the individual opportunity to register as a candidate for an election, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government. Under international standards, men and women have the equal right to participate in all areas of the political process.

## **Mahatma Gandhi's views on Nationalism and Internationalism**

Nationalism is a modern phenomenon. It had its origin in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. "Nationalism" is defined as "a political creed that underlies the cohesion of modern societies and legitimizes their claim to authority. Nationalism centers around the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the nation-state, either existing or desired. The nation-state is regarded not only as the ideal, natural or normal form of political organisation but also as the indispensable framework for all social, cultural and economic

activities". Nationalism became a means to political and psychological integration. It was the face in many liberation struggles as well as in the formation of states.

Nationalism can be narrow and can help develop an excessive love for one's own group and hatred of those outside the group. When individuals reject narrow nationalism and are prepared to associate with other groups in a spirit of solidarity and common purpose, they develop internationalism.

In Mahatma Gandhi's words: "My love of nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free, that if need be the whole of the country may die, so that the human race may live. There is no room for racial hatred. Let that be our nationalism. Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations in as much we will exploit none, just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through *swaraj* we will serve the whole world. For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane".

Mahatma Gandhi's internationalism was only a sociological and political application of the great norm of '*ahimsa*'. Gandhi believed in the doctrine of absolute and universal compassion for all living beings. A believer in God naturally has the feeling to identify himself with all creatures because all are the creations of God. He said; "We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family". Hence love of human kind is only an aspect of his *ahimsa*. Internationalism is a concrete means to realize the universal love for humanity at the political level.

### **Mahatma Gandhi as the progenitor of civil society in India**

#### **Civil society**

The term 'civil society' has a range of meanings in contemporary usage. It sometimes includes family and private sphere and is referred to as the "third sector" of the society, different from government and business sector.

The space between the formal government institutions and the economic institutions such as corporations or landed estates is known as civil society. This space includes kinship groups, voluntary organisations, trade unions, religious and community groups, and similar associations.

Mahatma Gandhi was aware that if India won independence without reorganizing its civil society, there would be dangerous. Gandhi laid great emphasis on voluntary action. In the 1920s and 1930s, due to the influence of Gandhi, several voluntary civil society organisations began to flourish.



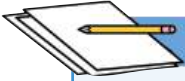
Let us know

Charles Taylor describes civil society as "a web of autonomous associations independent of the state, which binds citizens together in matters of common concern, and by their existence or actions, could have an effect on public policy". (Klingman 1990, p179)

He formed associations like the All India Spinners Associations, All India Village Industries Association, Hindustani Talimi Sangh and Harijan Sevak Sangh. The inmates in the ashram of Gandhi formed civil society. Unlike the Western notion of civil society, which consist of educated urban areas, Gandhi's civil society rural-centred. It was often Ashram-based. The people are less educated in formal terms. Gandhi's civil society is more different from the state. It acts as a control on state power. It is also seen as a more appropriate forum of social action than the state. The legacy of Gandhi has helped in sustaining democratic practice in India, free from large-scale violence. Therefore it is only right to say that Gandhi is the progenitor of civil society in India.

### **Significance of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian Politics**

Modern Indian political thought is predominantly anarchic. Mahatma Gandhi is a representative of that tradition. Gandhi emphasised the importance of ethics in politics. More than any other thinker, he said means are to be given greater importance in politics than ends. He saw the interconnection between progression in democracy and progression in non-violence. His defence of individual freedom and opposition to concentration of power in a central state led him to advocate political decentralization. In Gandhi's democracy there shall be no scope for exploitation by one class by another. India survives as a democracy in spite of all its troubles because of the Gandhian legacy. He was against copying of Western political institutions. He wanted the revival of useful Indian systems like Panchayats. Gandhi also laid the foundations of a vibrant civil society in the country.



## Summary

- Politics refers to the affairs of the state.
- Political Science refers to a systematic study of the institutions and processes associated with the state.
- State is a political organisation of society and acts through the institutions of government.
- State has four elements- 1) People, 2) Territory, 3) Government and 4) Sovereignty.
- The major political values are freedom, justice and equality.
- Mahatma Gandhi stood for a divine kingdom on earth and hence he was against the force used by political institutions.
- Democracy is "Government of the people, by the people, for the people".
- Mahatma Gandhi was an ardent believer in the theory and practice of democracy and was a strong supporter of it. He was a true democrat in thought, speech and action.
- To Mahatma Gandhi Democracy must in essence mean the art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of people in the service of common good of all.
- Political decentralisation aims to give citizens or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making.
- To Gandhi decentralisation of political power is the basic requirement for the success of true democracy.
- Panchayati Raj was Gandhi's response to parliamentary democracy.
- Mahatma Gandhi stood for a balance between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.
- Mahatma Gandhi had a moral reverence for life and stood for the equality of man.
- Mahatma Gandhi stood for the social and political justice.
- Gandhian concept of 'Rights and Duties' is based on his philosophy of simple living and high thinking.
- Mahatma Gandhi emphasised on duty rather than rights.

- According to Gandhi engagement in politics in modern times is a religious duty
- Gandhi stood for spiritualisation of politics or the prioritisation of means rather than ends in politics.
- Gandhi visualised an enlightened anarchy in which each person will become his own ruler. He will conduct himself in such a way that his behavior will not hamper the well-being of his neighbours.
- 'Ramrajya', the ideal state of Gandhi's dream will completely be organized on the basis of Truth and Non-violence.
- According to Gandhi, swaraj is complete independence of foreign control and complete economic independence.
- Village swaraj is the Gandhian model of rural reconstruction.
- A political party is an association of people who come together on a common platform with the objective of contesting elections and coming to power.
- Gandhi's internationalism was only a sociological and political application of the great norm of 'ahimsa' which means universal non-hatred and non-violence.
- Gandhi is the progenitor of civil society in India.



### I can

- identify the features of state.
- list out the political values essential for a state.
- recognise the elements of state.
- explain Mahatma Gandhi's views on state.
- evaluate Gandhian concept of politics.
- explain Mahatma Gandhi's views on democracy.
- analyse parliamentary democracy and Gandhi's views on it.
- evaluate decentralisation and Gandhi's views on it.
- explain Mahatma Gandhi's concept of rights and duties.
- evaluate Lok Sevak Sangh.
- analyse Gandhian concept of enlightened anarchy.
- evaluate Ramarajya.
- explain Swaraj.
- evaluate village swaraj.
- assess Gandhi as the progenitor of Indian civil society.



### Let us assess

1. Identify the key elements required for state and prepare a short note on each of them.
2. How far political values are relevant in the present day society?
3. Evaluate the origin and objectives of Lok Sevak Sangh.
4. What do you understand by spiritualising politics?
5. Write an essay on the concept of state and Mahatma Gandhi's views on it.
6. Mahatma Gandhi stood for an enlightened anarchy. Analyse the statement.
7. Prepare a report on 'Gandhi as the progenitor of civil society in India'
8. Make a detailed study report on Gandhi's ideal society.
9. Specify the advantages of political decentralisation based on Gandhian views.
10. Write an essay on the significance of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian politics.





## ECONOMIC IDEAS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

### Key Concepts

- **Basics of Economics**
- **Sources of Gandhian economics**
- **Major economic concepts of Mahatma Gandhi**
  - Economics and ethics
  - Plain living and high thinking
  - Bread labour
  - *Swadeshi*
  - Khadi and Village industries
  - Economic equality
  - Mechanisation and industrialisation
  - Decentralisation
  - Trusteeship
- **Contributions of Vinoba Bhave, J.C. Kumarappa and Dr. E. F. Schumacher**

This chapter deals with certain general concepts of economics. They are necessary to understand Mahatma Gandhi's economic ideas and those of his followers like Vinoba Bhave, J.C. Kumarappa and E. F. Schumacher.

### 1. Economics

You have already learnt about the concepts of economics in your school classes. Write your ideas/concepts about economics in the blank spaces given below and share them in groups.

- Money
- Price
- Banking
- .....
- .....
- .....

All these concepts are directly or indirectly related to our daily activities. Hence it is important to know a little more about economics as a science.



Write suitable contents in a word or two in each box supporting the title.

Wealth	Welfare	Scarcity	Growth and Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarships</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain medicines</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New bridges</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Economics can be understood in terms of the above titles i.e. wealth, welfare, scarcity and growth and development.

In terms of wealth, Adam Smith (1723–1790), the father of Economics defined the subject as ‘an *inquiry into the nature and causes of wealth of nations*’. This definition gave more importance to wealth. Adam Smith is the leader of classical school of economics which included David Ricardo, J. S. Mill, Thomas Robert Malthus and J. B. Say.

Is there anything more important than wealth in ensuring your well-being?

In terms of Welfare, Alfred Marshall (1842-1924) said that Economics is not the science of wealth, but it is concerned with human welfare.

In his book, *Principles of Economics*, published in 1890, Marshall defines economics as "the study of mankind in the ordinary business of life. It examines that part of individual and social action which is most closely connected with the attainment and with the use of material requisites of well-being. Thus it is on the one side a study of wealth; on the other and more important side a part of the study of man."

Can you have all your material wants? If not, why?



Let us know



Let us know

Prof. Lionel Robbins said economics is concerned with how you can meet your unlimited wants with limited resources. He saw it as a science of making choices in the context of scarce resources.

“Economics is the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses.”

– L. Robbins



Some economists felt that the scarce means could be further increased to satisfy more wants. They lay emphasis on growth and development.

### Definition focused on growth and development

According to Paul A. Samuelson (1915 - 2009) "Economics is the study of how men and society choose with or without the use of money to employ scarce productive resources which could have alternative uses to produce various commodities over time and distribute them for consumption now and in the future amongst various people and groups of society". According to J. M. Keynes (1883 - 1946), "Economics studies how the levels of national income and employment in the community are determined and how the national income grows over years".



Economics in terms of growth and development is widely accepted and its main features are:

- Problem of choice making arises due to unlimited wants and limited means. We have to decide which wants are to be satisfied and which of them are to be delayed.
- Wants have a tendency to increase over time; so the available resources should be wisely used. Efforts should be made to increase the resources so that increasing wants can be satisfied.
- Economics is not only concerned with identification of economic problems, but also suggests ways and means to solve problems of unemployment, production, inflation etc.
- Economics should also suggest how the resources should be distributed among various individuals and groups.



### Let us check

Compare and contrast economics based on the concepts of wealth, welfare, scarcity, growth and development. Prepare a brief write up.

### Central problems of an economy

#### Activity

You want to start a small manufacturing unit in your school. What are the decisions that you have to make in order to open the unit?

- .....
- .....
- .....

Was it easy to take decisions in the above activity?

Similarly, every nation has problems in taking decisions related to utilisation of resources. The central problems of an economy are problems in allocating the resources, fuller utilisation of resources and growth of resources. They are detailed below.

#### a. Allocation of resources

Decisions regarding the following should be made while allocating the resources.

##### 1. *What to produce and in what quantities?*

This question would not be there if resources were plenty. It is very essential to decide which needs are to be given priority.

- It has to decide whether to produce consumer goods such as wheat, cloth, rice etc. or capital goods like machines, tractors etc. During peace time the preference of the economy is to produce tractors, machines and high quality bread and butter. During war, the preference is to produce weapons.
- After deciding what goods are to be produced it is very important to decide the quantity.

##### 2. *How to produce?*

Before answering the question of how to produce we have to look at the technique of production. The proportion in which the factors of production (land, labour, capital and entrepreneur) are combined to produce a given quantity of an item is known as the technique of production. There are two techniques.

- Labour-intensive technique: This technique involves employing more people than capital.
- Capital-intensive technique: This technique involves more capital/ machines than labour power.

### 3. *For whom to produce?*

Goods and services produced in the economy are consumed by its people. This is in fact a problem of distribution. It has two aspects:

- The first is functional distribution. It refers to the ratio of the distribution of income generated through production among the factors of production.
- The second refers to the distribution of the same income among the members of society and different individual households.

### b. Fuller utilisation of resources

The economy must ensure the efficient use of available resources. There should maximum production with minimum effort and without any wastage.

### c. Growth of resources

The development of an economy requires growth of its available resources. The subjects of a country can enjoy a high standard of living only through the effective growth of its resources. In this connection, the economy has to decide upon the rate of capital formation, investment and savings.

#### Factors of Production

**Land** - In economics land refers to water, air, soil, minerals, flora and fauna (natural resources) that are used in production. The reward for the use of land is rent.

**Labour** - The term labour is defined as the effort of mind or body with a view to earn some goods and services directly from the work. The reward for labour is wage.

**Capital** - It includes machinery, money, tools, and buildings. The reward for capital is interest.

**Entrepreneur** - The entrepreneur is the individual who takes the idea and attempts to make profit from it by combining all other factors of production. The reward of the entrepreneur is profit.



Let us know

## Sources of Gandhian Economics



### Think and share

What could have influenced Mahatma Gandhi in forming his economic ideas?

- *Bhagavat Gita*
- *Great personalities*
- 
- 

Mahatma Gandhi was not an economist as such. Gandhi's economic thought did not develop suddenly. He wanted to elevate economic philosophy from its purely materialistic base to a spiritual level. Several sources inspired Mahatma Gandhi to shape his economic ideas. They are Hinduism, western critics of classical economics, and the impact of British imperialism on Indian economy. Now let us examine them one by one.

### 1. Hinduism

Hinduism is the primary source that helped Mahatma Gandhi to develop his ideas. Two concepts, namely *dharma* and *moksha* were the most important of all. *Dharma* is 'duty' towards maintaining the social order. According to *dharma*, everyone has a job to do. Every job is good because it is essential for the maintenance of the social order. In Hinduism, *dharma* means the moral law. Economic interests should match with this moral law. Therefore, they should focus more on collective welfare rather than individual profit. *Moksha* means salvation, liberation or release from the endless cycle of earthly life. It is the ultimate goal of Indian spirituality. This does not mean renunciation of the world. *Moksha* is a liberation from selfishness and desire. *Moksha* purifies *dharma*. This is the teaching of the *Bhagavat Gita*. It was the unification of *dharma* and *moksha* practised in his own life that became the basis of Mahatma Gandhi's economic ideas.

### 2. Great Thinkers

#### *John Ruskin*

John Ruskin (1819 – 1900) criticised economics as a science of wealth. Ruskin was the most powerful source of inspiration for Gandhi. He said it was Ruskin's book, *Unto This Last* (1860) "that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life".

Ruskin rebelled against the economists' conception of the common good at several levels. At the most fundamental level, he insisted that life, rather than income or wealth, is the appropriate value to be sought. Ruskin denied the concept of 'maximisation behaviour'. It was inconsistent with the moral well-being of man. He criticised industrialisation and its methods of production. The methods were harsh, unjust and demeaning to the labourers. According to him work should embody spiritual virtues that contributed to the full development of the individual.

### Economic man

The term 'Economic man' was first coined in the late 19th century. The term 'Economic Man' (*homo economicus*) refers to a hypothetical individual. He acts rationally and with complete knowledge. But he does not have self-interest. He wants to maximize personal utility. Economic man is an imaginary figure who is able to satisfy economic models that push for consumer balance. Economic man's every choice is based on the fulfilment of his or her "utility function" It means the meaning the ability to maximize any situation that involves choice.' (Investopedia)



Let us know

He believed that the concept about human nature focusing on materialistic and basic needs is false. The idea of 'economic man' was a fiction. Ruskin concluded that real wealth was not money or gold. Real wealth was life. He tried to establish a new political economy based on justice and social affection.

### Leo Tolstoy

Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910), was one of the greatest Russian writers. While in South Africa, Gandhi read more about Tolstoy's teachings and ideas including his book '*The Kingdom of God is within you*'. He got the idea of Bread Labour from Tolstoy. Gandhi explained two important economic concepts he got from Tolstoy in *the Indian Opinion* in 1905. They were

1. In this world men should not accumulate wealth.
2. Agriculture is the true occupation of man.

### Dadabhai Naoroji

Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) was one among the leading nationalist leaders. He spoke about economic nationalism through his book "*Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*," (1901). He put forward the drain theory. Poverty in India, according to him, was the result of a steady drain of Indian wealth into Britain - a result of British colonial policy. Naoroji listed the following ways of drain.

1. Interest on public borrowing in England at higher rates.
2. Expenditure of Secretary of State on behalf of India.
3. Annual amount for Railway and irrigation works.
4. Indian office expenses and pensions to retired staff in India and England.
5. Pension to army and naval staff.
6. Remittance to England by Europeans to support their families.
7. Remittances for purchase of British goods by British employees.

According to Naoroji the British rule created two Indias; one prosperous and the other poor. He said, "without self-government the Indians can never get rid of their present drain, and the consequent impoverishment, misery, and destruction." The writings and activities of Naoroji succeeded in exposing the true face of British colonialism before the world. The ideas of Naoroji had a unique influence on the Indian nationalism.

### **Romesh Chunder Dutt**

Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848 – 1909) was a retired Indian Civil Service officer. He became the President of the Indian National Congress in 1899. He expressed his strong criticism against the economic effect of British rule upon India in his famous books.

Mahatma Gandhi wrote in his book '*Hind Swaraj*' (1909), "when I read Mr. Dutt's *Economic History of India*, I wept; as I think of it again my heart sickens. It is the machinery that has impoverished India. It is difficult to measure the harm that Manchester has done to us. It is due to Manchester that

Indian handicraft has all but disappeared." Dutt described the growth of British imperialism, the tax systems and the subsequent famines.

After the industrial revolution the British machine made goods became cheaper. The British pumped them into the Indian markets. As a result, thousands of Indian handicraftsmen became jobless.

#### **Romesh Chunder Dutt's famous books**

1. 'The Economic History of India under Early British Rule' (1757-1837) (London, 1902)
2. 'The Economic History of India under the Victorian Age' (London, 1904)



Let us know



The studies of Dutt came out with actual findings about the Indian famines. Famines occurred in India at regular intervals throughout the British period. The scarcity of food was not the cause of several famines. It was the export that led to the scarcity of food product in the Indian market. Unemployment increased when the traditional industries declined. The studies of Dutt greatly influenced Gandhi. They helped him understand the nature of colonisation and its impact on Indian economy.

### *Think to act*

*Identify the great thinkers and their economic ideas that influenced Mahatma Gandhi. Make a poster and present it in the class.*

### **3. Influence of British imperialism**

The British colonisation of India is the best example of how colonialism and imperialism totally destroyed the occupied nations. Britain did not carry out only a political conquest of India. British rule also led to the economic, social, and cultural conquest of India. The British gradually destroyed India's self-sufficient rural economy. The important features of colonial exploitation are given below.

#### *Exactions by the Company*

The East India Company plundered the country's wealth through exactions from Indian princes, Zamindars, farmers and merchants. New land revenue systems such as the Permanent Settlement, Ryotwari Settlement and Mahalwari Settlement ensured a steady flow of income. Under these systems certain amount of income had to be paid by the Zamindars to the State as land revenue. But the Zamindars were at liberty to charge any rate of rent from the tenants or peasants.

#### *Commercialisation of agriculture*

Commercialisation of agriculture means production of crops for market rather than for personal consumption. It was started by the British planters. The commercialisation of Indian Agriculture took place not to feed the industries of India. It was done for the British industries.

#### *Decline of handicrafts and de-industrialisation*

The decline of traditional manufacturing sector was another consequence of British conquest in India. The British started setting up modern mechanised

industries in Britain. They resorted to mass production at lower costs. The Indian village industries could not compete with the machine-made products. The British also imposed unfair tariff on Indian textiles. So they could not compete with the imported products in the domestic market. At the end of the nineteenth century India produced almost nothing except agricultural products and raw materials. The decline in demand of handicrafts had a very damaging effect on the entire Indian economy. The villagers lost their off-season occupation. Unemployment rate increased. The strong and age-old link between agriculture and village industry that existed in India collapsed.

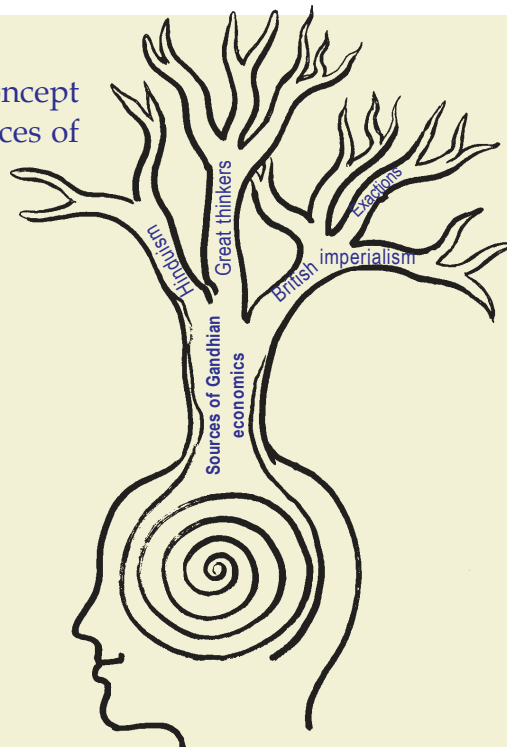
### *Investment of British capital in India*

British investment in India rapidly increased in the second half of the 19th century. It was more in textiles, railway, shipping, generation of electricity, mining, insurance and banking. The import of British capital in India was harmful to the Indian economy. The British Industrialists exploited the natural resources of the country. The major British investment in India was mainly done in labour-intensive areas like tea plantation of Assam and coal mining. The labourers were paid extremely low wages. Huge amounts were also paid to England as interest.



### Let us check

Complete the given concept map of the main sources of Gandhian economics.



## Major economic concepts of Mahatma Gandhi

In the light of the above sources, let's examine some of the basic economic ideas of Mahatma Gandhi.

### 1. Economics and Ethics

Look at the following news paper headlines.

**Officials recover unaccounted food grains**

**Adulterated food seized**

**Unorganised labourers demand better wages**

- What are the issues highlighted in the news paper headlines?
- Why people indulge in such things?
- Is it right to do so? Why?

In every walk of life we follow certain ethical values. Mahatma Gandhi formulated his economic ideas and principles in the context of an ideal society and social order. Mahatma Gandhi rejected economics that neglected ethics. He said, "True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard. An economics that inculcates Mammon worship, and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice; it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life." He was against drawing any separation between economics and ethics. "I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurts the moral well-being of an individual or a nation is immoral and therefore, sinful. Thus the economics that permits one country to prey upon another is immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour." Mahatma Gandhi was not opposed to material progress. But he rejected material progress which was inconsistent with similar progress in other spheres.

Mahatma Gandhi rejected the concept of 'economic man'. It enslaved man to materialism. It led him to become a greedy animal. Gandhi considered man as a 'spiritual entity' and not as an economic entity. Only a person with ethical values will be able to lead a life of plain living and high thinking.

## 2. Plain living and high thinking

### Activity

Make a list of your wants and needs in your notebook. Then discuss whether avoiding such wants will affect your living?

Mahatma Gandhi made a distinction between human needs and wants. Needs are genetically imprint. But wants are artificially created. Gandhi observes "We are not always aware of our real needs and

most of us improperly multiply our wants and thus unconsciously make thieves of ourselves. If we devote some thought to the subject, we shall find that we can get rid of quite a number of our wants. One who follows the observance of non-stealing will bring about a progressive reduction of his wants. Much of the distressing poverty in this world has arisen out of breaches of the principle of non-stealing." He further said that "God never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. Therefore, whoever appropriates more than the minimum that is really necessary for him is guilty of theft?"

Mahatma Gandhi wants a control in consumption. Consumption should be determined by needs. Gandhian society will be a "need satisfying society." He used to say that if our wants are restrained, the basic needs of the commonest people would be guaranteed. He observed: "according to me, the economic constitution of India and for that matter that of the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. This ideal can be universally realised only if the means of production of elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses."

## 3. Bread Labour

Mahatma Gandhi said, "If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease and no such misery as we see around. Such labour will be the highest form of sacrifice. Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love for the common good".

In order to consider bodily labour as bread labour, it should be performed in an atmosphere of freedom. Compulsory obedience to the law of bread labour breeds poverty, disease and unhappiness and it is a state of slavery. Willing obedience to bread labour brings contentment and health. Gandhi observed that bread labour is the highest form of social service.

Western philosophical tradition considered work as a necessary evil. In the language of economics, work is a “disutility” that all of us would prefer to do without. These views support the idea that work is to be seen and experienced as a purely instrumental activity devoid of intrinsic satisfaction. Gandhi did not regard all physical labour as the ‘curse for Adam’. He firmly believed that bread labour was the law of life. Eating one’s bread with the sweat of one’s brow was a necessary condition for health, happiness and inner peace of the individual and society. Gandhian concept of bread labour came from the Indian philosophy of “*dharma*”. According to it, the work is its own reward. J D Sethi identifies four components of Bread labour, namely (i) minimum physical labour (ii) instrument for self-actualisation (iii) method for service (iv) means to earn a living. The concept of bread labour fully incorporates all the first three components. In the fourth, the labour involved in earning a living does not violate the principle of morality and service.



### **Bread labour – An illustration given by Romesh Diwan**

Romesh Diwan explains the nature of production, nature of work and motivational theories to bring out the unique characteristics of bread labour.

He classifies total production in a society as:

1. Production that creates values in-use only i.e., production of material goods and services that helps the moral and physical growth of human beings. Example, essential food items.
2. Production that generates values-in-exchange and sometimes values-in-use. Here, the production is of material goods that may not help the advancement of human beings. Here, production is meant for the market to generate profit.
3. Production that promotes value-in-threat. This means goods and services that can harm people. Production of weapons is an example.

The above classifications of production are not mutually exclusive.

Diwan moved further to explain the meaning and nature of work. He defined work as exertion of strength or faculties to accomplish something.

Based on its nature, work is classified into two:

- Friend-defined work
- Stranger-defined work

Friend-defined work is performed for meeting one’s own goal or someone whom the worker respects or loves. It provides enjoyment and pleasure and is done willingly. This work produces ‘values-in-use.’

Let us know

In stranger-defined work, there is a master-servant relationship i.e. work is done under some compulsion for getting a reward-may be wage. This work produces values-in-exchange or values-in-threat.

The third aspect Diwan emphasises is the source of motivation of work that persuade people to produce values-in-exchange and values-in-threat and engage in stranger-defined work.

Diwan observes that one of the major sources of motivation for work lies in the ethical, moral and spiritual values. Gandhi's concept of 'Bread labour' is an expression of this motivation. A person expresses himself through work which has both subjective and objective dimensions. The subjective dimension is the spiritual growth of the person. The objective dimensions are the production of values-in- use. Bread labour which involves exertion of body strength in service of others satisfies both these conditions. Such work can only be a friend or self-defined work and is never a stranger-defined work.

Anyone who practices bread labour will voluntarily involve in *swadeshi* activities.



### Let us check

Critically evaluate the concept of Bread labour based on the hints given.

- Service to others
- Means to earn a living
- Values-in-return

## 4. *Swadeshi*

### Activity

You might have seen markets in your locality.

- Make a list of items available in such markets.
- Who are the producers and where do they come from?
- Who are the beneficiaries?

The activities that empowered the neighbourhood were denoted by the word *swadeshi*. *Swadeshi* has great importance in Gandhian thought and programme of action. The word *swadeshi* means one's own country. But Gandhi developed it as a complete philosophy of life. It is very identical to that of *swadharma* in the Gita. This

*swadharma* depends upon one's nature. Gandhi says "interpreted in terms of one's physical environment this gives us the law of *swadeshi*. What the *Gita* says with regard to *swadharma* applies equally to *swadeshi*, for *swadeshi* is *swadharma* applied to one's immediate environment." *Swadeshi* is the economics of neighbourhood, self-reliance, and mass employment. Gandhi defined *swadeshi* as "that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote".

The law of *swadeshi* was based on recognition of the scientific limitation of human capacity for service. It denotes service to one's neighbours with the idea that they are part of humanity. "To serve one's neighbour is to serve the world. Indeed it is the only way open to us of serving the world. One to whom the whole world is as his family should have the power of serving the universe without moving from his place. He can exercise this power only through service rendered to his neighbour."

### Main elements in *swadeshi* principle

- (1) The society must be capable of satisfying the basic minimum needs of its people without depending on external sources.
- (2) People will prefer the commodities produced by an immediate neighbour instead of the commodities produced by a distant neighbour.
- (3) It aims at a non-violent, non-exploitative society. That society will provide opportunity for all individuals to realise the best in them.
- (5) The individual, as a consumer, will reduce his wants.
- (6) *Swadeshi* ensures maximum use of local resources and technology.
- (7) The consumer will cooperate with the neighbour (the producer) in the process of improving the efficiency of production.

*Swadeshi* principle has relevance in the doctrine of international trade. Gandhi says "but even *swadeshi*, like any other good thing, can be ridden to death if it is made a fetish. That is a danger which must be guarded against. To reject foreign manufacturers merely because they are foreign, and to go on wasting national time and money to promote manufacturers in one's country for which it is not suited, would be criminal folly and a negation of the *swadeshi* spirit. A true votary of *swadeshi* will never harbour ill-will towards the foreigner; he will not be actuated by antagonism towards anybody on earth". His idea of self-sufficiency was that villages must be self-sufficient in food,

cloth and other basic necessities. Only in the following conditions a self reliant economy may buy goods from outside. (1) They should be essential for the growth of its people. (2) They cannot be produced locally. (3) It is not possible to produce them locally in the near future .

### Think to act

*Plan and carry out a swadeshi programme at school or community level.*

*Suggested activities*

- *Making of paper bag, file, paper, pen etc.*
- *Cloth bag*
- *Soap, lotion etc.*
- 

One of the practical applications of swadeshi is khadi.

### 5. Khadi

The Gandhian concept of *khadi* was more than simply a piece of cloth. It was the material embodiment of an ideal. It represented not only freedom from colonialism, but also economic self sufficiency, political independence, spiritual humility, moral purity, national integrity, communal unity, social equality, the end of untouchability and the embracing of non-violence. *Khadi* is the core of the constructive activities recommended by Gandhi. He started his Khadi Movement in 1918. His emphasis at first was on *khadi* as providing relief to the poverty-stricken masses. The spinning wheel was once the symbol of India's poverty and backwardness. Gandhi turned it into a symbol of self-reliance and non-violence. He explained, "*khadi* connotes the beginning of economic freedom and equality of all in the country... It must be taken with all its implications. It means wholesale *swadeshi* mentality, a determination to find all the necessities of life in India and that too through the labour and intellect of the villagers"...

Production for use and not for a market is the essence of *khadi* economics. What Gandhi wanted was production by the masses and not mass production. He placed the spinning wheel at the centre of his economics. It



### Think and share

*Have you seen khadi cloth?*

*What is the importance of khadi in our National Movement?*





Let us know

Gandhi gives the following reasons for taking up production of cloth as the most suitable cottage industry for Indian economy.

1. It gives the readiest occupation to those who have leisure and are in want of a few coppers.
2. It is known to the thousands.
3. It is easily learnt.
4. It requires practically no outlay of capital.
5. The wheel can be easily made. Most of us do not yet know that spinning can be done even with a piece of tile and splinter.
6. The people have no repugnance to it.
7. It affords immediate relief in times of famine and security.
8. It alone can stop the drain of wealth which goes outside India in the purchase of foreign cloth.
9. It automatically distributes the millions, thus saved, among the deserving poor.
10. Even the smallest success means so much immediate gain to the people.
11. It is the most potent instrument of securing co-operation among the people.

(Young India, 21-8-1924, p.277)

symbolises (i) self-help, dignity of labour and employment potential (ii) utilization of local raw material and human resources and (iii) an economy of permanence which is self-contained and self propelling.



### Let us do

Visit a *khadi* shop and discuss with the staff the problems of the *khadi* sector. Share your learning in the class.

## 6. Mechanisation and industrialisation

In order to strengthen production by masses under *khadi* and village industries Gandhi recommended appropriate use of machinery. Now let's look at Gandhi's perspective of machanisation and industrialisation.

After the industrial revolution in the west, the pattern of production and distribution system changed all over the world. Machines replaced manual labour. Centralisation came to be looked upon as the solution to all human

problems. In fact mechanisation, industrialisation and centralisation became the bases of modern economic system. It was believed that they will end poverty and unemployment and will raise the living standards of the poor people. But that was an illusion. Instead of solving problems they created unemployment.

After realising the evils of mechanisation Gandhi opposed it strongly. This does not mean that Gandhi was totally against mechanisation and industrialization. "My opposition to machinery is much misunderstood. I am not opposed to machinery as such. I am opposed to machinery which displaces labour and leaves it idle."

"Mechanisation is good when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as is the case in India. . . The problem with us is not how to find leisure for the teeming millions inhabiting our villages. The problem is how to utilise their idle hours, which are equal to the working days of six months in the year."

"I refuse to be dazzled by the seeming triumph of machinery. I am uncompromisingly against all destructive machinery. But simple tools and instruments and such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of the millions of cottages, I should welcome."

Gandhi explained the problems created by machines. They;

- Displaced human labour and increased the rate of unemployment
- Caused pollution of air, water and land
- Created unhygienic circumstances
- Enslaved man
- Led to mass production not production by masses
- Created wide disparity
- Destroyed the traditional village crafts and ruined the local knowledge

Man and his welfare were Gandhi's main considerations. He therefore, laid down certain conditions for the introduction of machinery in the production process.

- It should not displace human labour.
- It should not cause exploitation of villages.

- It should not compete against village crafts.
- It should help village craftsman to reduce the difficulty of labour and to improve his efficiency.
- It should not lead to monopoly and centralisation of wealth and power in a few hands.
- It should be funded by the state.
- It should be administered wholly by the state for the welfare of all.
- It should not prevent his basic necessities.

Thus we can see that Gandhi was supporter of machinery if it worked for the welfare of the people in India. He supported it if it removed poverty and unemployment and did not lead to exploitation of the poor people.

“Industrialisation on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others.”

His ideal village *swaraj* will have small village industrial units. They can be run by the farmer and illiterate poor and can earn their livelihood. So he gave importance to small scale decentralised village and cottage industries instead of big centralised urban centred factories.

## 7. Decentralisation



### Let us do

Look at the two products in an economic system. Discuss the answers. In your opinion which is the more people centered product? What are the advantages of such people centred processes?

#### Branded soap

- Who is the producer?
- Who are the end-users?
- Who gets the profit?

#### Kudumbashree Soap

- Who is the producer?
- Who are the end-users?
- Who gets the profit?

Decentralisation is a very dynamic concept in Gandhian economics. It is one of the major principles of Gandhian economic thought.

In all economic orders and societies wealth was a source of power. Those who had with wealth were always powerful masters. They governed the societies, framed the rules and led the politics. For instance, in the pre-industrial society feudal landlords were the masters. They controlled everything

Industrial revolution has made a radical change in the production and distribution system worldwide. It was a major cause of centralisation of power and authority. The major changes brought about through the industrial revolution were the following:

- Manual work was replaced by machines.
- Village centred/home centered local production systems were replaced by centralised factory system.
- Distribution pattern changed accordingly.

In tune with these changes in the production and distribution mode, the economic power became centralised. This led to the accumulation of wealth in a few hands. This has created a lot of imbalance in the society. Poverty increased. Unemployment rate multiplied. The gap between the rich and the poor widened.

Mahatma Gandhi was fully convinced of the evil of centralisation of economic power and the problems it had created in the Indian society. So he stood for a decentralised economic system in which production and distribution would be decentralised.

### **Evil effects of centralisation of economic power**

Gandhi listed the following.

- Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few.
- Violence and exploitation.
- The gap between the rich and the poor will be widened.
- It will produce inequalities and injustice.
- It will promote maximum production.
- Due to over exploitation of resources, availability of resources will be decreased.

### **Merits of decentralised economy**

Gandhi said that a decentralised economic set up would ensure fuller and proper utilisation of human and other material resources. There will be many centres instead of a single centre. Production system will be decentralised to villages, or even to homes. The villages will produce whatever it wants from the locally available resources using the local technology. This will not allow concentration of wealth in the hands of a few in the society. In such a decentralised society, every man and woman will know what he or she wants. People will have limited wants. Everyone will get enough opportunity to meet the basic necessities of life in a decentralised system.

According to Gandhi the following are the benefits of a decentralised economy.

- It is village or home centred.
- It is small scale in nature.
- It creates more employment opportunities.
- It ensures production by masses.
- It makes use of local skills and talents.
- It utilizes the resources of the village.
- It will enhance a better distribution of finished products.
- It avoids competition.
- It will promote equality and social justice.
- This will lead to self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

### **The distribution of wealth**

#### *Nature's Plan*

“I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use, and keep it, I thief it from somebody else. I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation in this world”.

## 8. Economic Equality

“My ideal is equal distribution, but so far as I can see, it is not to be realised. I therefore work for equitable distribution.” (*Young India*, 17-3-27)

Economic equality in Gandhi’s conception did not mean that everyone would literally have the same amount. It simply meant that everybody should have enough for his or her needs. For instance, Gandhi required two shawls in winter whereas his grand nephew Kanu Gandhi who stayed with him and was like his own son did not require any warm clothing whatsoever. The elephant needs a thousand times more food than the ant, but that is no indication of inequality. So the real meaning of economic equality was: “To each according to his need.” If a single man demanded as much as a man with wife and four children that would be a violation of economic equality. He also believed that only a decentralised economic system can achieve the goal of economic equality.

“Let no one try to justify the glaring difference between the classes and the masses, the prince and the pauper, by saying that the former needs more. That will be idle sophistry and a travesty of my argument”. He continued: “The contrast between the rich and the poor today is a painful sight. The poor villagers are exploited by the foreign government and also by their own countrymen-the city-dwellers. They produce the food and go hungry. They produce milk and their children have to go without it. It is disgraceful. Everyone must have a balanced diet, a decent house to live in, facilities for the education of one’s children and adequate medical relief.”



### Think and share

*How will you put into practice the concept of economic equality in your personal life? Present your ideas in the class.*

## 9. Trusteeship

Difference is nature’s law. Even two leaves of a twig though look same are different. This is the case with human beings as well. Though identical, human beings are different – in terms of attitude, likes and dislikes, ambitions, possessions, wealth, abilities, talents etc.

Almost all economies of the world have tried to reduce the gap between haves and have-nots. But as the years went by the gap between the rich and the poor widened.

The main objective behind the Gandhian principle of trusteeship was to solve the problem of economic inequality in society. Gandhi realised that 'ownership' was the cause of all economic inequalities in society. So he gave an alternative to solve these inequalities. This was the trusteeship principle. According to Mahatma Gandhi trusteeship considers wealth as a social asset and should be used for the welfare of all. It is based on the *Ishopanishad*, which says: "Enjoy thy wealth by renouncing it. Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for society." Trusteeship was also based on the concept that all land belonged to God. Man was not the owner, but trustee of that wealth. So, in a sense, trusteeship is the Gandhian method of wealth management.

Mahatma Gandhi was against all kinds of ownership whether private or public. To him change of ownership will not bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. According to Gandhi this was tried by many economies in the world through law and force. But all went in vain.

The Gandhian principle of trusteeship will enable the wealthy people to act as trustees. They will take only the minimum wealth for their basic necessities. They will use the rest for the welfare of the society.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, trusteeship was the only means of continuously redistributing wealth. It could also be the natural result of the principle of non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi contended that the idea of trusteeship could be put into practice non-violently. When asked if such "trustees" - individuals who possessed wealth and yet saw themselves as stewards for society - could be found in India during his time, he rejected the question as strictly irrelevant to the theory. Because, according to him it can only be evaluated by extensive testing over time.

"As a matter of fact, such a question should not arise at all. It is not directly related to our theory. There may be just one such trustee or there may be none at all. Why should we worry about it? We should have faith that we can, without violence or with so little violence that it can hardly be called violence, create such a feeling among the rich. We should act in that faith. That is sufficient for us".

Mahatma Gandhi not only had faith that it was possible for human beings to become trustees of their resources for the sake of all, but also that many, in

fact, were already and had always been trustees. They are the preservers of culture and tradition, who show their ethical value through countless daily acts of graciousness and concern for others.

Mahatma Gandhi said, it is perfectly possible for an individual to adopt this way of life without having to wait for others to do so. And if an individual can observe a certain rule of conduct, it follows that a group of individuals can do likewise. It is necessary for me to emphasise the fact that no one need wait for anyone else in order to adopt a right course.

With regard to his criticism about ownership, there is a strong feeling that Mahatma Gandhi was against wealth or production of wealth. This is not true. He gave permission to those who are talented in producing wealth. But there was a condition that they must utilise the wealth for the upliftment of the poor.

Again, Mahatma Gandhi did not consider physical wealth and intellectual wealth as two separate identities. The trusteeship theory is applicable to intellectual wealth as well. Mahatma Gandhi considered all types of wealth as social asset and should be shared with the needy people.

### **Trusteeship Formula**

Kishorlal Mashruwala, Narahari Parikh and Prof. Dantawala jointly prepared the draft of practical trusteeship formula. Gandhi but amended it as follows:

1. Trusteeship wants to transform the capitalist society into an egalitarian one by giving the present owning class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the belief that human beings can be changed through reason and persuasion.
2. It does not recognise any right of private ownership of property except so far as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.
3. It does not exclude legislative regulation of the ownership and use of wealth.
4. Just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, even so a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that would be allowed to any person in society.
5. Under the Gandhian economic order the character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed.





### Let us check

If you adopt trusteeship as a principle in your life what are the activities that you can do in your locality?

## Contribution of Vinoba Bhave, J C Kumarappa and E F Schumacher to Gandhian Economics

### Vinoba Bhave – *Bhoodan* and *Gramdan* Movement

Acharya Vinobaji Bhave (1895-1982) was the spiritual heir of Gandhi. Through *Bhoodan* movement, Vinoba developed and practised Mahatma Gandhi's trusteeship doctrine.

The *Bhoodan* Movement was a voluntary land reform movement in India started by Vinoba in 1951 at Pochampally village in Andhra Pradesh. Vedre Ramachandra Reddy was the first donor of *Bhoodan* movement. The mission of the movement was to persuade wealthy landowners to voluntarily give away a percentage of their land to the landless. It was a form of the application of Gandhian doctrine of trusteeship.

This movement later led to village gift or *Gramdan* movement. When all the land owners voluntarily donated their entire land to *Bhoodan*, it became *Gramdan*. It was indeed a revolutionary step towards voluntary abolition of private property on land. It was invested with the community as a whole in the village. The first village to come under *Gramdan* was Mangroth in Hamirpur District of Uttar Pradesh.

Vinoba asked rich people without landed property, to donate a definite fraction of their annual income. This was for rehabilitating the landless labourers and for maintaining a body of selfless *Bhoodan* workers. He called this as *Sampatti-dan*, gift of wealth. Similarly, the donation of intellectual capacities was known as *Buddi-dan*. It promoted the *Bhoodan* ideology through lectures and writings. The donation of labour was called *Shrama-dan* or free voluntary labour. It created public utilities in the villages. Devoting the entire life to the cause of *Bhoodan* Movement is called *Jeevandan*.

### J. C. Kumarappa - Economy of permanence

J. C. Kumarappa (1892 – 1960) was an Indian economist and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi. He independently developed Gandhian economic ideas. He was the author of "*Economy of Permanence*" (1946), a book that outlined his "quest for a social order based on non-violence." In this book

Kumarappa criticises economics that placed excessive importance on material growth and ever-increasing standards of living. He called nature as the Economy of Permanence.

This section discusses the major Gandhian economic ideas as developed by Kumarappa.

In nature, everything co-exists and each fulfills its necessary role. In this way, nature ensures the co-operation of all its units, each working for itself and in the process helping others to get along with their own. When this works out harmoniously and the chain is not disturbed by violence, we have an economy of permanence. In an economy of permanence, everybody helps each other. An economy of permanence does not destroy nature.

Kumarappa classifies five types of economies in nature. They are:

1) *Parasitic Economy*

Some plants live on others and become parasites. Often the host tree, or plant, dies due to their parasitic growth. Parasitic economy is self-centred and there is consumption without production in it.

2) *Predatory Economy*

When a unit in nature benefits itself without conferring a corresponding advantage to another unit it is said to be predatory. A monkey comes into a mango grove and enjoys the fruits on the trees without contributing to the tending of the trees. It acts in self-interest but without a contribution. This form of economy may be less violent than the previous one, but nevertheless, it is destructive.

3) *Economy of Enterprise*

Some creatures take what they need while performing some distinct service to the other from which they derive their benefits. Example, honey bees fertilise the flowers from which they gather the nectar and pollen. They are active constructive units.

4) *Economy of Gregation*

The honey bees do not work for their own respective individual gains but for the common benefit of the whole colony. Here is an extension from self-interest to the group-interest and from acting on the immediate urge of present needs to planning for future requirements.

5) *Economy of Service*

The highest form of economy in nature is the economy of service. This is best seen in the relation between the young one and the parent. Example, the mother bird flies all over the jungle to feed its young one. It risks its life in defending the young one from its enemies. It works neither for its present need nor for its personal future requirement. But it serves the next generation, or generations to come, without looking for any reward. This comes nearest to what may be called a non-violent economy of permanence.

**Dr. E.F. Schumacher - Appropriate Technology or Intermediate Technology**

The concept of 'appropriate technology' is originally called as "intermediate technology" by the economist Dr. E.F. Schumacher in his influential work, *Small is Beautiful* (1973). He argued that technology should be designed in ways that would promote health, beauty, and permanence. Technology should not be regarded only as a means to an immediate end. It must be evaluated in terms of its contribution to a process of production beneficial not only to its immediate users, but also to the society as a whole. The poor can be helped to help themselves, but only by making available to them a technology that recognises the constraints imposed by poverty. Such technology is intermediate technology.

Schumacher's intermediate technology had the following characteristics:

- Cost-effective methods and machines which are accessible to anyone.
- Conservation of nature for future generation.
- Room for human creativity.

**Let us check**

1. Identify the Gandhian economic concepts practised by Vinoba Bhave, J. C. Kumarappa and E. F. Schumacher.
2. Develop a paper on how the economic ideas of Gandhi were put into practice by them and conduct a seminar in the class.



## Summary

- The fundamental basis of Gandhian economic ideas is a commitment to universal well-being.
- Mahatma Gandhi viewed life as whole.
- Mahatma Gandhi's concerns were primarily ethical, political and religious.
- Mahatma Gandhi considered economics as a moral science.
- Mahatma Gandhi looked forward to building up a non-violent and non-exploitative economic system supported by truthful and non-violent people.



## I can

- identify general concepts of economics for understanding the concepts of Gandhian economics.
- identify the sources that influenced Gandhian economic ideas.
- list out the major economic concepts of Mahatma Gandhi.
- analyse the relation between economics and ethics in the views of Mahatma Gandhi.
- evaluate the Gandhian concept of plain living and high thinking.
- evaluate the concept of bread labour put forward by Mahatma Gandhi.
- analyse *swadeshi* as the best alternative for economic self reliance and recognise the need of practicing *swadeshi* as a way of life.
- draw out the importance of *khadi*, as practical application of *swadeshi*.
- explain the concept of machanisation and industrialisation in Gandhi's perspective.
- analyse the importance of decentralised system of economy according to Gandhi.
- explain the concept of economic equality put forward by Mahatma Gandhi.
- evaluate the concept of Trusteeship as one of the powerful ways of solving economic inequality.
- identify the contributions of Vinoba Bhave, J. C. Kumarappa and E. F. Schumacher to Gandhian economic ideas.



### Let us assess

1. Identify and explain the Gandhian economic principle which emphasises the necessity of physical labour.
2. 'Mahatma Gandhi was not against machinery as such, but he was against only to the craze for machinery'. Do you agree to this statement? Justify your opinion.
3. Analyse the merits of Gandhi's concept of plain living and high thinking.
4. One of the Gandhian economic principles encourages us to consume domestic goods against foreign goods. Identify the principle and evaluate its merits.
5. For the transformation of capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one, Mahatma Gandhi suggested a method. Identify the method and explain it.
6. Centralisation of production results in unemployment, poverty and exploitation. Gandhi suggested an alternative method to this. Find out the method and evaluate it.
7. Gandhian economic ideas provide solutions to the existing economic problems of our society. Analyse the statement.
8. Mahatma Gandhi proposed production by the masses instead of mass production. Mention the strategies?
9. Analyse the basic concept behind Trusteeship.
10. What solutions have been proposed by Mahatma Gandhi to reduce the disparity between the rich and the poor?

## SOCIAL IDEAS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

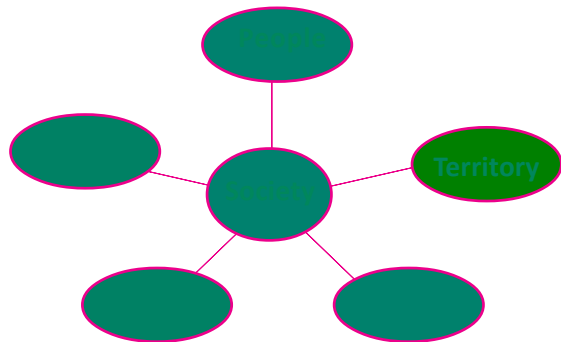
### Key Concepts

- Society
- Characteristics of Society
- Individual and Society
- Community
- Sarvodaya
- Social order of Sarvodaya
- Economic order of Sarvodaya
- Political order of Sarvodaya
- Strategies towards Sarvodaya
- Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Socialism
- Mahatma Gandhi's Talisman
- Sarvodaya after Mahatma Gandhi

This chapter discusses the social ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. He had a clear vision about an ideal society where everyone lived in peace and prosperity. Mahatma Gandhi visualised the well-being of all living beings. Gandhi wanted to establish a new social, economic, political and educational structure for the integrated development of human beings. In order to study the social ideas of Gandhi it is essential to understand certain basic sociological concepts.

### Society

Society is a common word used by all. What do you mean by society? Complete the diagram with the words related to society.



Society is a group of people living within a common territory with shared customs and laws. The term society is derived from the Latin

word 'societas'. It means society, companionship or friendship. It indicates that man lives in the company of other people. That is why Aristotle described man as a social animal.

A society is collection of individuals united by certain relations or mode of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour.

**Morris Ginsberg**



Which is the branch of social sciences that deals with the study of society?

Based on the above activity let us discuss the characteristics of society.

### Characteristics of society

A society is characterised by people who interact among themselves. They develop a way of life of their own. The people can be of the same kind or different. Normally there is co-operation, some kind of division of labour and mutual interdependence. Every society is dynamic. It has means to control the behaviour of its deviant members.

### Sociology

Sociology is the scientific study of human societies and human behaviour. It also deals with the origin, development, structure and functions of society. It is a branch of social science concerned with the life and activities of man in a society. August Comte, the French philosopher defines sociology as the "science of social phenomena subject to natural and invariable laws, the discovery of which is the object of investigation".



### Activity

Suppose you have to live alone in an island. You are provided with all basic requirements. Are you ready to live there without interacting with others? If yes, how long? If no, why? Share your response with your partner and with the whole class.

### Individual and society

Man is a social being. He lives in social groups, in communities and in societies. Without society man cannot live as man. Society is an essential condition for human life to grow and to continue. It is in society that an individual takes in a culture.

It is in society that one learns to conform to norms, occupy status and become member of groups. In groups we satisfy our desire to belong, receive support in times of difficulty and find likeminded companions.

### Community

It is the smallest territorial group with all aspects of social life. It is a social group with some degree of 'we-feeling'.

### Differences between society and community



#### Let us do

Are you a member of a society or a member of a community? Are there any differences between them? Discuss in group and prepare a chart and display it in the classroom.

### Sarvodaya

Society	Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society is a web of social relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is a group of individuals living in a particular area with some degree of we feeling.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There need not be a definite geographic area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a definite locality or geographic area</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society is abstract.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is concrete</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community sentiment or 'we-feeling' may or may not be present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community feeling is an essential element</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society is a broader idea. There can be more than one community in a society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is smaller than society</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society is more extensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is comparatively less extensive</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society involves both likeness and differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likeness is more than differences</li> </ul>

### Activity

Do you remember the story of Mahabali? What was the condition of Kerala during his reign? List out the features of an ideal society based on the story. Discuss in group and prepare a chart.

Mahatma Gandhi had a vision about an ideal social order. It is known as *Sarvodaya*. The concept of *Sarvodaya* came out of Gandhi's love for fellow beings. He rejected the social order based on violence and exploitation. Hence, throughout his life he thought of ways and means



to reform the social, political, economic and religious conditions of the world. Through *Sarvodaya* Gandhi wanted to build a new society on the foundation of the spiritual and moral values of India.

### Meaning of *Sarvodaya*

The word *Sarvodaya* is a Sanskrit word comprising *sarva*(all) and *udaya*(rising). So the term *Sarvodaya* means 'upliftment' or 'welfare' of all. 'All' means not only the human beings, but all the living organisms in this universe. Gandhi believed that complete development of man is possible only through a balanced interaction between man and nature.

Mahatma Gandhi rejected the utilitarian philosophy of greatest good of greatest number. According to him all individuals have equal opportunities for their development. Hence he aimed at the greatest good of all. Thus the concept of *Sarvodaya* aimed at the integrated and inclusive development and happiness of all.

### Origin of the concept *Sarvodaya*

The word *Sarvodaya* has its roots in the Vedas and the *Upanishads*. Mahatma Gandhi coined the word *Sarvodaya* at first for his Gujarati translation of '*Unto This Last*'. His friends Mr. Polak gave Gandhi a book named '*Unto This Last*' written by John Ruskin. During his twenty-four hour train journey from Johannesburg to Durban Gandhi read the book at a stretch. The magic spell of the book influenced him so much. He said "I determined to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book". In his autobiography Gandhi sums up the teachings of *Unto This Last* as follows:



1. The good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. The lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, as all have the same right to earn their livelihood from their work
3. The life of a labourer i.e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "the first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realised. The third had never occurred to me. *Unto This Last* made it as clear as daylight for me that the second and the third were contained in the first".

On the basis of these three teachings Gandhi developed the concept of *Sarvodaya*. Mahatma Gandhi was very much impressed by the second principle because he did not want “the working man to be considered as a commercial unit, but as a human person, whose physical and spiritual requirements are the same as those of the party leaders, bureaucrats, managers, scientists, artists, etc.”

The third principle was a novel idea to change the attitude of the society towards physical work. This principle influenced Gandhi in developing his idea of bread labour.

In order to practise the teachings of John Ruskin he started the Phoenix settlement in South Africa. In 1908 he paraphrased this book into Gujarati with the title *Sarvodaya*. Ruskin wrote *Unto This Last* based on a Biblical story about equality and justice for all.

### Philosophical Foundations of *Sarvodaya*

Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of *Sarvodaya* is based on the principle of oneness of all life. The elements of *Sarvodaya* philosophy are rooted in Indian philosophy. The Vedas, Upanishads and the religious scriptures stand for the well being of all. They emphasise the supremacy of the ultimate spirit and oneness of all life. The concepts of *advaita*, *anasakthi yoga*, *yajna*, renunciation, sacrifice, *vasudaiva kutumbakam* and *lokahsamastah sukhinobhavantu* form the philosophical basis of *Sarvodaya*.



Let us know

- *Advaita* is a school of Vedic philosophy and religious practice. It gives a unified interpretation of the *Upanishads*.
- *Anasakthiyoga* is an important concept in the Bhagavat Gita which influenced Gandhi very much. The word *anasakti* means non-attachment. Gandhi interpreted this concept in the Bhagavat Gita as “do your allotted work but renounce its fruits - be detached and work, have no desire for reward.”
- *Yajna* is a Vedic concept. It means sacrifice. *Yajna* symbolises the purpose of human life which is engaging in charity and service to fellow beings.
- Renunciation means formal rejection of something for the good of others.
- *Vasudaiva kutumbakam* is a concept in the *Upanishads*. According to this concept the whole world is a single family. Each one has his own world view which is quite different from person to person. Living in harmony by respecting this difference is the meaning of *Vasudaiva kutumbakam*.
- *Lokahsamastah sukhinobhavantu* means the well being of all living organisms in this universe.

Mahatma Gandhi believed in the fundamental unity of life. He also believed that all human beings possess a Divine spark in the form of soul or *atman*. Hence all have equal right to live in this world. The aim of our life is self-realisation or to be one with the Divine. This is possible only through selfless service to our fellow beings, which ultimately results in the welfare of all.

### Guiding Principles of *Sarvodaya*

Mahatma Gandhi considered truth and non-violence as the guiding principles of *Sarvodaya*. For Gandhi, truth is the end and non-violence is the only means for that. He interpreted non-violence as the positive form of love i.e. the unconditional love for our fellow beings. This positive form of love develops an attitude of service and renunciation for the good of others.



### Let us do

Suppose you have to deliver a speech on *Sarvodaya* on 2 October during your school assembly. Prepare a draft of the speech with special reference to the origin, meaning and the guiding principles of *Sarvodaya*.

### Social Order of *Sarvodaya*

Through *Sarvodaya* Mahatma Gandhi envisaged a classless and casteless society free from all social evils. There is no exploitation and violence. This society is based on equality, justice, freedom, co-operation and mutual respect. "*Sarvodaya* is a social order where all will work but there is no inequality, either in status or in opportunity for any individual and a political system where change is the result of persuasion..."

Through his all India tour Gandhi learned about the problems of poverty, unemployment, untouchability and alcoholism. This tour made Gandhi more convinced of the importance of '*Sarvodaya*' society.

#### a. Gandhian concept of Individual and Society

Gandhi gave prime importance to the individual in *Sarvodaya* society. At the same he believed that man cannot live in isolation. Support from the society was important for the complete development of an individual. However, Gandhi gave more importance to individual freedom and dignity. According to Gandhi no society can be built on the denial of individual freedom. But at the same time he considered too much individualism is the law of the beast in the jungle. So he suggested a balance between the individual freedom

and social restraint. That is why he said “The willing obedience to social restraints for the well-being of others enriches both the individual and the society.” It is clear that “for Gandhi the extended self becomes the principle of sociality and consequently there is a basic continuity of the individual and society.”



### Let us check

Which of the following are the duties and responsibilities of society for the growth of individual? Which of the following are the duties and responsibilities of individual for the growth of the society? Write them in the respective columns below and share the ideas in class.

Obeying rules and regulations

Provide opportunities for education

Love fellow being

Provide basic amenities

Providing safety and security

Prevent environmental pollution

Equal opportunities

Stand against corruption

Individual freedom

Duties and responsibilities of individuals	Duties and responsibilities of society	Duties and responsibilities of the individual and the society

### Individual change

According to Mahatma Gandhi individual is the basic unit of society. Therefore, individual change is the starting point of social change. He believed that a permanent change of society is possible only through the inner change of the individual.

Gandhi realised that a disciplined spiritual life is essential for the inner change of the individual. For that he gave the *Ashram Vows* or Basic Vows. Gandhi believed that the practice of Ashram vows in daily life provided an inner strength for the individual. The inmates at the Gandhi’s Ashrams followed these vows in their life.

**b. Village Community**

In his ideal social order Mahatma Gandhi gave great importance to the village community. According to him village was the basic unit of community life in India. He considered India as a land of villages and said that India lives in her villages. That is why he said, "I would say that if village perishes, India will perish too. India will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost." Gandhi believed that if India has to attain true freedom the people should live in villages not in cities, in huts not in palaces. We can realise truth and non violence only in the simplicity of our villages.

**c. Untouchability**

Untouchability refers to the social inhibition to touch. It was a feature of the Indian caste system. "It is a practice in which some lower caste people are kept at a distance and denied of social equality for their touch is considered to be polluting or contaminating the higher caste people."

Mahatma Gandhi considered untouchability as a blot on Hinduism. "In my opinion untouchability in the form in which we practise it today is not, and ought to be, an essential part of Hinduism. There is sheer ignorance and cruelty behind it. I look upon it with an excrescence on Hinduism. It does not protect religion, but suffocates it." To him all are born out of a single father. So he called them 'Harijans' which means men of God.

The sarvodaya society was free from the practice of untouchability. According to Gandhi "none can be born untouchable as all are sparks of one and the same fire. It is wrong to treat certain human beings as untouchables from birth".

Mahatma Gandhi put forward many steps for the removal of untouchability. In his *satyagraha ashrams* all people lived together without any caste discrimination. Gandhi included removal of untouchability as an important item in his constructive programme. On 8<sup>th</sup> May 1933, Gandhi began a 21 days fast of self purification. He also launched a one year campaign to help the Harijan movement. In order to gather public opinion against this inhuman practice he went on a country-wide tour.

**d. Social stratification and Varnashrama Dharma*****Social Stratification***

Differentiation is the law of nature. It is true of human society. The society is



not similar but different. People differ from one another, in many ways. All societies differentiate members in terms of roles. Every society evaluates roles differently. Some roles are regarded more important or socially more valuable than others. The persons who do the more important roles are rewarded more. Thus stratification is simply a process whereby some people ranked higher than others.

According to Ginsbert “Social stratification is the division of society into permanent groups of categories linked with each other by the relationship of superiority and subordination”.

### Varnasramadharma

Gandhi supported *varnasramadharma*. It is the Hindu concept of social division on the basis of the duties that the individuals were expected to do in the society. Gandhi accepted *varnasramadharma* as a useful method of social stratification. He wrote “*Varnashramadharma* defines man’s mission on this earth. He is not born day after day to explore avenues for amassing riches and to explore different means of livelihood; on the contrary man is born in order that he may utilise every atom of his energy for his purpose of knowing his Maker. It restricts him, therefore, for the purpose of holding body and soul together, to the occupation of his forefathers.” Gandhi considered *Varnasramadharma* as a method for healthy division of labour. According to Gandhi “it simply means the following on the part of us all the hereditary calling of our forefathers in so far as that traditional calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics and this only for the purpose of earning one’s livelihood. You will realise that if all of us follow this law of *Varna* we would limit our material ambition and our energy would be set free for exploring those vast fields whereby and where through we can know God.”

While accepting *Varna* in its proper sense Gandhi rejects the concept of superiority or inferiority of any social classes. He considered all *varnas* as equal. Gandhi likened the four *Varnas* to the four limbs of the human body. None is superior or inferior. As sound health of each part is essential for a perfect body, balanced development of all the four classes of a society is equally important for a perfect society. Gandhi even regarded the Hindu social structure based on *varna* to be true socialism.

Mahatma Gandhi drew a clear distinction between *Varna* and the caste. He wrote “I regard *Varnasramadharma* as a healthy division of work based on

birth. The present ideas of caste are a perversion of the original." Although he used the terms *varna* and caste almost synonymously until 1925, he drew a clear distinction between the two. That is why he said "*varna* has nothing to do with caste. Down with the monster of caste that masquerades in the guise of *varna*. It is a travesty of *varna* that has degraded Hinduism and India." He was of the opinion that it was not birth alone that decided the *varna* of a person. Though birth plays an incidental role, it is the qualities, attributes and conduct of the person that decide his *varna*.

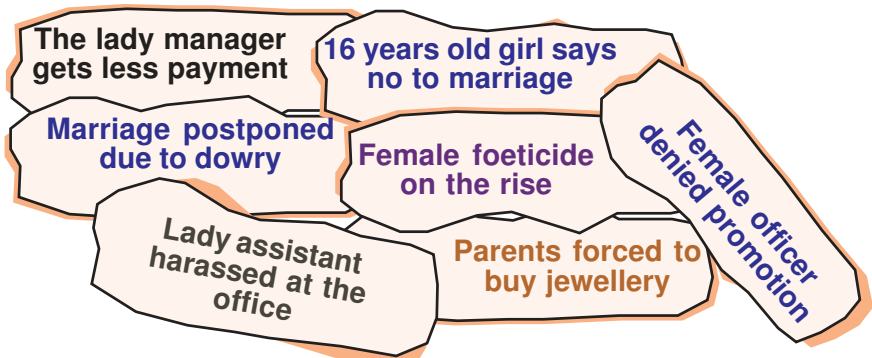
### e. Caste System

Caste system was the basis of social stratification in India. Caste is strictly hereditary. Gandhi was against the practice of caste system. In *Young India* he wrote "I have frequently said that I do not believe in caste in the modern sense. It is an excrescence and a handicap on progress. Nor, do I believe in inequalities between human being. We are all absolutely equal. But equality is of souls and not bodies".

### f. Gandhian views on Women

#### The place of women

Look at the given collage.



#### Let us do

Analysing the above collage prepare a brief report on the problems of women in the present society. Provide your suggestions to tackle the problem.

According to Mahatma Gandhi men and women have equal place in the society. Both of them lead the same life, and have the same feeling. One cannot live without the support of other. He believed that "woman has been suppressed under custom and law for which man was responsible and the

shaping of which she had no hand. In a plan of life based on non-violence, woman has as much right to shape her own destiny as man has to shape his”.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man’s injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then indeed, is woman less brute than man. If strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man’s superior”.

Mahatma Gandhi stated “woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in very minutest detail in the activities of man and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him.”

### **Women’s Education**

Mahatma Gandhi realised that empowerment of women is possible only through proper education. He said, “I have pointed out from time to time that there is no justification for men to deprive women or to deny them equal rights on the ground of their illiteracy; but education is essential for enabling women to uphold their natural rights to improve them”.

### **Marriage**

Mahatma Gandhi stood for the right and freedom of girls for selecting their husbands. Gandhi believed that “a large part of our miseries today can be avoided if we look at the relations between the sexes in a healthy and pure light and regard ourselves as the trustees for the moral welfare of the future generations”.

### **Dowry System**

Mahatma Gandhi strongly opposed the practice of dowry system. He said that “the system has to go. Marriage must cease to be a matter of arrangement made by the parents for money”. He further says “any man who makes dowry a condition of marriage discredits his education and his country and dishonours womanhood. A strong public opinion should be created in condemnation of the degrading practice of dowry and young men who soil their fingers with such ill-gotten gold should be excommunicated from society”.

### **Domestic role of women**

Mahatma Gandhi respected the special qualities of women. Nature had intended them to undertake certain special functions. For example, the duty



of motherhood requires special qualities which man need not possess. "She is passive, he is active. She is essentially mistress of the house. He is the bread winner, she is the keeper and distributor of the bread. She is the caretaker in every sense of the term. The art of bringing up the infants of the race is her special prerogative. Without her care the race must become extinct".

### g. Social evils

#### Activity

List out various social evils existing in the society and compare your list with others. Find out the similarities.



#### Think and present

Form seven groups and discuss one evil in each group with examples and present the summary in the classroom.

The Sarvodaya society is free from the following seven social evils. They are:

1. Education without character
2. Politics without principle
3. Science without humanity
4. Worship without sacrifice
5. Pleasure without conscience
6. Commerce without morality
7. Wealth without work

These were identified by one of Gandhi's friends. Gandhi endorsed them.

Mahatma Gandhi realised that the awareness about these seven social evils are necessary to understand the social, economic, political and communal problems existing in the society. Many programmes proposed by Gandhi for social transformation were aimed at the eradication of these social evils.



#### Let us do

Prepare a collage by collecting relevant news related to seven social evils from news papers and exhibit in the classroom.

### h. Gandhi's views on alcoholism

Gandhi believed that liquor killed not only the body but also the soul within us. He considered it as a sin against God and humanity. The use of intoxicating substances affects the moral growth of individual. If people are

addicted to intoxicating substance, socio-economic development and political freedom is impossible. Hence Gandhi introduced prohibition as an important item in Constructive programme.

Mahatma Gandhi suggested the following programmes to tackle the problem of alcoholism.

1. Prohibition of alcoholic drinks and drugs.
2. Creating awareness among the drunkards to give up drinking.
3. Changing of liquor shops upon the expiry of licences.
4. Conversion of liquor shops into recreation and refreshment centres.
5. Seek the assistance of medical practitioners.
6. Women and students, through their loving service should compel the addicts to give up their evil habit.
7. Use the skill of toddy tappers for drawing out sweet toddy, or to convert it into *gur*



### *Let us do*

Prepare and submit a project report on 'Problems of Alcoholism' in your locality. In your report you should include

- An appropriate interview schedule to study the social, economic, health and family problems arising from alcoholism
- Major findings
- Remedies to tackle the problem

### **Economic order of *Sarvodaya***

Let us recall the learning outcome of chapter 8 'Economic ideas of Mahatma Gandhi'.

The economic order of *sarvodaya* suggests a balance between material and moral progress. Gandhi believed that economics that hurts the well-being of an individual is sinful. Instead of amassing wealth with selfish motive the economics of *Sarvodaya* proposes renunciation for the good of others.

Gandhi realised that the majority of Indian population lives in villages.

Agriculture and allied activities constitute the backbone of Indian economy. So the economy of *Sarvodaya* is based on villagism. The features of *Sarvodaya* economy are simple living, swadesi, and decentralisation; need based production, equitable distribution bread labour, trusteeship, self-sufficiency. It rejects all labour saving machinery.

### Political order of Sarvodaya

Let us recall the learning outcomes of Chapter 7 'Political ideas of Mahatma Gandhi'.

Political order of *Sarvodaya* aimed at an enlightened anarchy or a stateless society. However, a fully stateless society is beyond the reach of man. Therefore the power of the state should be minimised as far as possible. The political structure of *Sarvodaya* is based on decentralisation. The power will be exercised by the village panchayat with the participation of people.

### Strategies towards Sarvodaya

In order to realise the *Sarvodaya* social order Gandhi proposed two strategies. They were Constructive Programme and Satyagraha.



#### Let us do

Share your ideas about 'your dream village' in group and prepare a posture showing its features and present it in the classroom.

### Constructive programme

Mahatma Gandhi defined Constructive Programme as a 'truthful and non-violent way of winning *poorna swaraj*'. Constructive Programme aimed at the multi-sided growth of the whole nation. Through the Constructive Programme Gandhi wanted to revive the self-sufficient, self-reliant and autonomous Indian village system. With this intention, he introduced the programme during the freedom struggle. Let us discuss the areas of constructive programme.

#### 1. Communal unity

All religions preach the gospel of love and universal brotherhood. Different religions are different paths leading to the same goal i.e. God. People usually forget this and use religion as a tool for division. Conflicts on the basis of religion always caused bloodshed and distress in society. Gandhi realised that peace could not be maintained without communal unity. Therefore he worked for it.

## 2. Removal of Untouchability

Segregation of people as untouchables was an inhuman practice. It was the violation of human rights. Therefore, Gandhi gave prime importance for the removal of untouchability.

## 3. Prohibition

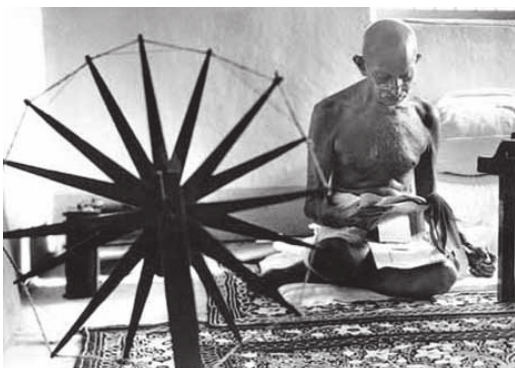
Prohibition means enforcement of law to prohibit intoxicating drinks and drugs. Gandhi realised that the intoxicating substances will spoil the body as well as the mind. He considered the alcoholism as a sin. He treated it as a social problem. He was aware of the miseries in the life of a drunkard, his family and the society. Hence Gandhi included prohibition as an item in the Constructive Programme.

### *Think to act*

*Prepare and conduct an action programme against the availability and use of alcohol and tobacco products.*

## 4. Khadi

Mahatma Gandhi considered Khadi as the symbol of political and economic independence of the country. He said "It connotes the beginning of economic freedom and equality of all in the country... It means a wholesale *Swadeshi* mentality, a determination to find all the necessities of life in India and that through the labour and intellect of the villagers". For him Khadi mentality means decentralisation of production and distribution. He said "Khadi to me is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality".



### *Think and present*

*How Khadi cloths are made?*

*What is the difference between Khadi and handloom cloth? Prepare a chart and display it.*

## 5. Other Village Industries

Mahatma Gandhi realised the fact that village economy will be incomplete without the essential village industries. They are hand-grinding, hand-pounding, soap-making, paper-making, match-making, tanning, oil-pressing, etc., In India, where man power is plenty, what we require is not labour saving devices but a production system which will use maximum manpower. Village industries served this purpose and helped millions to earn a decent minimum to support their life.



### *Let us do*

Visit a village /cottage industry unit in your locality and find out how the unit support the people in the locality?

Present a report in the classroom.

## 6. Village Sanitation

Mahatma Gandhi gave great importance to village sanitation. Lack of latrines and proper drainage facilities made villages unclean and caused epidemics. He tried to prevent this by creating awareness among the village people about cleanliness.

### *Think to act*

1. *Is there any drainage facility in your home? How do you dispose the waste?*
2. *Put forward some creative suggestions to solve the problems of waste management in your locality*

## 7. Basic Education

Basic education linked the child with his village and with his surroundings. It was a craft-centered education, which emphasised the training of three Hs- Head, Heart and Hand. The training of these faculties helped to bring out the best in the child and developed both the body and the mind.

## 8. Adult Education

Mahatma Gandhi considered Adult Education as a social responsibility. He did not want the state to undertake the adult education programme. He said every educated member of the society should undertake the responsibility of adult education.

## 9. Women

With a view to improve the status of women in society, Gandhi included emancipation of women in the constructive programme. He said that men have not realised that women must be the true helpmate of man in the mission of service. During the freedom struggle Indian women actively participated in public activities. Satyagraha brought them out of kitchen.

## 10. Education in Health and Hygiene

Mahatma Gandhi said, 'in a well-ordered society citizens know and observe the laws of health and hygiene. It is established beyond doubt that ignorance and neglect of the law of health and hygiene are responsible for the majority of diseases to which mankind is heir'. Hence Gandhi gave importance to health and hygiene in the education of villagers.

## 11. Provincial Languages

Mahatma Gandhi realised that 'the languages of India have suffered impoverishment'. As the provincial languages represent great wisdom Gandhi suggested the promotion of provincial languages.

## 12. National Language

According to Gandhi, an independent nation should have a national language. In the Indian context he preferred Hindustani or Hindi, spoken by the majority as the national language.

## 13. Economic Equality

For Mahatma Gandhi working for economic equality meant abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. He said "it means the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and the levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other". Gandhi proposed Trusteeship as a means to achieve economic equality.

## 14. Kisans

India is predominantly an agrarian country. Farmers constitute the majority of its population. They produce the food grains for the country. So they should be treated well. Through proper motivation and awareness programmes their conditions should be improved.



### Let us do

Identify the best farmers in your locality and arrange an interaction programme with them.. In this programme you may include a discussion on

- His/her approach to farming
- Farming methods
- Products
- Marketing
- Contribution to the locality

### 15. Labour

Mahatma Gandhi considered exploitation of labour as a sin. This can be avoided only through organising the labourers on a non-violent basis.

### 16. Adivasis

Mahatma Gandhi included service of Adivasis as an important item in the constructive programme. He said “Adivasis are the original inhabitants whose material position is perhaps not better than of Harijans and who have long been victims of neglect on the part of the so called high classes.” He believed that India could not achieve *poorna swaraj* on non-violent basis by neglecting the Adivasis. So he said the problem of Adivasis should be studied carefully and immediate measures should be taken to preserve their cultural identity.

### 17. Lepers

In the past there were a lot of persons afflicted with leprosy. Though it was a curable disease, society ill-treated them. Gandhi was totally against the discrimination. He believed that efforts should be taken to convince the people that leprosy, like any other disease was curable.

### 18. Students

Mahatma Gandhi considered students as the barometers of social change. He used the student force in the freedom struggle. However, he did not encourage the involvement of students in party politics.

Apart from these 18 items Gandhi added three more items in the Constructive programme such as improvement of cattle, nature cure and refugees and their problems. Later, his follower Vinoba Bhave added two more items viz: *Bhoodan* and *Santhi Sena*.

## 19. Nature Cure

By Nature Cure Gandhi implied an ideal way of life. It also implied that “the treatment should be the cheapest and the simplest possible. Such treatment should be carried out in villages. The villagers should be able to provide necessary means and equipment. What cannot be had in the villages should be procured.” According to Gandhi, Nature Cure means the regulation of life in accordance with the laws of health. He said “the essence of nature cure is that we learn the principles of hygiene and sanitation and abide by those laws as well as the laws relating to proper nutrition”.

## 20. Improvement of cattle

Mahatma Gandhi included improvement of cattle as an important item in the constructive programme, because he believed that cattle represented the entire subhuman species in the world. He believed that it was impossible for an individual farmer in a village to look after the welfare of his cow in his own home in a proper way. So he suggested the promotion of co-operative cattle farming.

## 21. Refugees and their problems

Mahatma Gandhi was very much concerned with the problems of refugees. He visited refugee camps and hospitals giving consolation to them. He asked them to live in cooperation to maintain peace and to improve their living condition.

## 22. Bhoodan

For the establishment of an egalitarian society Vinoba introduced *Bhoodan* movement in 1951. According to him the whole wealth belonged to God. Hence we had no right to amass it with selfish intention. Through this movement he tried to reduce the disparity between the rich and the poor.

## 23. Shanti Sena

To establish a society dominated by peace and non-violence, Gandhi desired to organise a nonviolent force called *Shanti Sena*. Gandhi considered it as a means to build up a *Sarvodaya* society. It would act as an intermediary force to bring about peace during conflicts and communal strife. “On 18 March 1938, Gandhi enunciated the concept of *Shanti Sena* through Harijan. As a follower of Gandhian ideology, Vinoba



realised the importance of it. During his southern tour, he established the first unit on 27 August, 1957. Gradually the concept and message of *Santhi Sena* spread to various parts of the country”.

Through these programmes Gandhi wanted to reconstruct the nation from the bottom. He introduced it as a programme for the social and economic upliftment of the country. Various organisations were formed for the implementation of the Constructive Programme. All India Spinners’ Association, All India Village Industries Association, Hindustani Naitalim Sangh, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust etc. were some of them. J.C. Kumarappa, a follower of Gandhi, contributed a lot in the promotion of Constructive Programme. Gandhi considered Constructive Programme as the positive aspect of *Satyagraha*.



### Let us check

Prepare a concept map of Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programme.

## Satyagraha

Mahatma Gandhi proposed *Satyagraha* as a strategy for the establishment of *sarvodaya*. Gandhi considered *Satyagraha* as the inherent birth right and sacred duty of a person. ‘*Satyagraha* implies the exercise of the purest soul-force against all injustice, oppression and exploitation’. The technique of *Satyagraha* is to destroy the evil without destroying the evil doer through the self-suffering of the *Satyagrahi*. The self-suffering of the *Satyagrahi* changes the heart of the evildoer which guides him to the path of *sarvodaya*.

## Gandhian concept of Socialism

The Oxford Dictionary defines socialism as “a political and economic theory of social organisation which advocates that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole.” (It has come to mean a number of positions ranging from anarchism (an extreme form of individualism) to Marxism and its different types.

Mahatma Gandhi said “real socialism has been handed down to us by our ancestors, who taught that all land belongs to Gopal, Where is the boundary line? Man is the maker of that line and he can therefore undo it. Gopal literally means shepherd; it also means God”. Gandhian socialism aimed at an egalitarian society. The essence of Gandhian socialism is to bring all to a

level of equality. This leads to the establishment of social justice. It also promotes humanitarian values like fraternity and fellowship.

The unity and equality of life is the essential feature of Gandhian socialism. Mahatma Gandhi said “my socialism means even unto this last”. He wrote in *Harijan* “socialism is a beautiful word so far as I am aware, in socialism all the members of the society are equal, none low none high in it. In the individual body the head is not higher, because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as the members of the individual body are equal so are the members of the society. This is socialism.” In his socialism prince and peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employee and the employer are all on the same level. Thus the Gandhian vision of socialism aimed at an ideal social order ensuring equality, fraternity and justice for all.

Mahatma Gandhi’s socialism can be attained only through the purest and truthful means. Gandhi believed that we cannot achieve real socialism without changing our life. That is why he said “My socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeros to the one”.

### **Mahatma Gandhi’s Talisman**

“I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to *swaraj* [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and yourself melt away”.

This was one of the last notes left behind by Mahatma Gandhi in 1948, expressing his deepest social concern. It is also a piece of advice for future policy makers of India. It urges them to prioritise the concerns of the poorest of the poor in governance.

### **Sarvodaya after Mahatma Gandhi**

After the death of Mahatma Gandhi his followers launched various programmes for the establishment of *Sarvodaya*. Under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave a *Sarvodaya Samaj* was formed. The Gandhian Constructive workers continued their programmes. Vinoba spent a period of ten months among the refugees. He, as a Satyagrahi, tried to clear their mind from

bitterness and distrust. Vinoba formed a peace brigade or *shanti sena* for the revival of peace in various parts of the country. Let us analyse a few movements organised after Gandhi for the establishment of *Sarvodaya*.

### Bhoodan Movement

This movement was launched by Vinoba Bhave in 1951 as a step towards Gandhi's concept of *Sarvodaya*. According to him "all land belongs to Gopal." Hence none had the right to hold more than what he required. Through *Bhoodan* movement he collected acres of land from the land lords and distributed them among the landless people.

### Total Revolution

Total Revolution was a concept developed by Jayaprakash Narayan(JP) in 1974. Following Gandhi he recognised the prime necessity of change in the individual who must take upon himself the task of changing the society. In this lies the whole philosophy of Total Revolution. Total revolution aims at bringing about revolutionary change in all aspects social and individual life. "The objective of this movement is not merely to change the Government, but to change the society and individual. That is why I called it as Total Revolution". Through this movement J.P also aimed to reduce corruption in all spheres of life. Attracted by Vinobaji's *Bhoodan* movement, he became a full-time *Sarvodaya* worker.

### Vinoba Bhave



Vinoba was born on September 11th 1895 in the village of Gagoda in Raigad district of Maharashtra. Attracted by Gandhian ideas he dedicated himself as a follower of Gandhi. He breathed his last on 15 November, 1982.



Let us know

### Jayaprakash Narayan



Jayaprakash Narayan was born on 11th October 1902 at Sitabdiara in Bengal. He is popularly known as J.P, Jayaprakash or Lok Nayak (people's hero). He was a political leader and activist. He died on 8 October 1979.



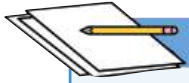
Let us know

### **The Community of Ark**

It is a great experiment on Gandhian lines in France by Lanza del Vasto. He was the first disciple of Gandhi in the west. The Ark community practised bread labour and also tried to achieve self sufficiency by producing most of the goods necessary for life. It is the finest example of community living. They followed non-violence practising the value of truth, love and mutual tolerance. The members live together with complete devotion. Simple living is the speciality of this community. The ark has centres in Spain, Italy and Quebec.

### **The Amish Community**

The Amish community migrated to the US around half a century ago from German speaking nations in Europe. They live in the country side, practising agriculture. They are pacifists and practise an ancient form of Christianity based on sharing and brotherhood. They do not use modern means of communication and technology. They have a highly developed sense of forgiveness. They practise bread labour and need-based production. They adopt appropriate technology for the purposes of production. They have high regard for nature. These people lead a very simple life. They never depend on state and its institutions for any assistance.



## Summary

- The ideal social order proposed by Mahatma Gandhi is known as Sarvodaya.
- The word Sarvodaya means welfare of all.
- Mahatma Gandhi translated John Ruskin's Unto this last in to Gujarati and named it as Sarvodaya.
- Sarvodaya is based on the oneness of all life.
- Truth and nonviolence are the guiding principles of Sarvodaya.
- Sarvodaya society is characterised by equality, justice, freedom, co-operation and mutual respect.
- Prime importance is given to individual.
- Society is essential for the growth of the individual.
- Sarvodaya society is free from the practice of untouchability.
- Sarvodaya society stood for gender equality.
- Sarvodaya society is free from the seven social evils.
- Constructive programme and Satyagraha are the strategies for the attainment of Sarvodaya.



## I can

- identify the basic concepts of Society and Community.
- identify the meaning, origin and philosophical foundations of Sarvodaya.
- analyse the social order of Sarvodaya.
- evaluate the present social order in the light of the seven social evils and find out practical solutions to current issues.
- identify Constructive programme and Satyagraha as the strategies for social transformation.
- evaluate the Gandhian concept of socialism.



### Let us assess

1. Differentiation is the law of nature. All societies differentiate members in terms of roles and all societies evaluate roles differently. Analyse this statement with reference to Gandhi's concept of social stratification.
2. Explain the steps put forward by Mahatma Gandhi for the removal of untouchability.
3. Mahatma Gandhi suggested two methods for the establishment of Sarvodaya. Find out the methods and analyse their significance
4. Sarvodaya society is free from the seven evils. Identify the evils and write a brief note on them.
5. Analyse Mahatma Gandhi's concept of individual and society.
6. Mahatma Gandhi considered alcoholism as a sin and treated it as a social problem. Find out the reason and list out the suggestions put forward by Gandhi to tackle the problem.
7. In Constructive Programme Mahatma Gandhi suggested a method to help the million to earn a decent minimum to maintain their life. Identify the method and evaluate its significance.
8. "My socialism begins with the first convert". Analyse this statement with respect to Mahatma Gandhi's views on socialism.

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