

Recontextualizing Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha and Swaraj in Contemporary Cultural Studies

Nishtha Saxena

The present paper intends to evaluate and interrogate the theory and practice of Gandhi's spiritually-oriented concepts of Satyagraha (truth-force) and Swaraj (self-rule) in cultural studies. It also seeks to decolonize the existing frontiers of cultural studies which have hitherto avoided any systematic analysis of culture from the perspective of Indian thinkers and culture-critics like M. K. Gandhi. In the contemporary discourses of cultural studies, truth is regarded as a powerful political tool which resists as well as supports power-structures. Truth is generally suspected to be negationist and grounded in the dynamics of power and violence. On the one hand, the Foucauldian notion of truth which regards truth as manufactured by power-structures is well-known to the readers and practitioners of cultural studies. Whereas on the other hand, Gandhi's concept of Satyagraha (truth-force or soul-force) which is a curious amalgamation of the spiritual and the political finds no discursive imprint in contemporary cultural studies. Further, this structural gap becomes all the more prominent when cultural studies as an anti-foundationalist/anti-representationalist/anti-disciplinary field tends to ignore a term like Satyagraha while dealing with acts of resistance from the margins. In this way, an attempt has been made to highlight how Gandhi used Satyagraha as a means to resist colonial as well as native power-structures during India's struggle for freedom from the British. It will also be highlighted how relevant Gandhi's discourse of Satyagraha is and how it decolonizes the field of contemporary cultural studies for radical social transformation.

As the goals of attainment of freedom and establishment of a just social order lie at the centre of contemporary cultural studies, this paper focuses on the analysis of Gandhi's polysemic concept of *Swaraj* or self-rule that redefines the democratic ideal of freedom that stands for the realisation of freedom in all interrelated aspects – political, economic, social and ethical/spiritual. Gandhi does not consider anti-colonial nationalism and its resultant political decolonization as true freedom. Without the observance of *neeti* or *dharma* (moral duty) and purity of one's self through the purity of one's conduct, *Swaraj* remains an illusion. Through his concept of *Swaraj*, Gandhi addresses the notion of freedom at the individual as well as collective level. He believes

that *Swaraj* can be brought about in a society where the masses observe self-purification through moral conduct and protest non-violently against the structures of oppression and injustice – foreign or native. In addition, *Swaraj*, as a co-ordinate of culture, subsumes within it partial as well as holistic, individual as well as collective, internal as well as external, secular as well as spiritual freedom(s).

Culture, as Raymond Williams affirms, is a “whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual” (*Culture* xiv). Freedom to perform one's action results naturally when these three dimensions are in harmony with each other. On the other hand, culture or *sanskriti* in the Indian context is subsumed within the realm of *dharma*. This is because *dharma* “includes all the duties and obligations that we must perform if we are to be good human beings” (Paranjape *Altered* 6). Freedom to perform one's action (*svadharma*) is contingent on the collective *dharma* (*yugadharma*) that functions at the centre of our society. *Swaraj* (self-rule) results when *svadharma* and *yugadharma* are interdependent and enrich each other simultaneously.

It is worthwhile to note that it would be erroneous to uncritically equate terms like freedom/liberty/independence with *Swaraj*. If “independence” denotes “freedom from subjection, or from the influence of others; exemption from external control or support” (*Oxford English Dictionary* Vol 7) then “freedom” primarily refers to “exemption or release from slavery or imprisonment” or “personal liberty” (*OED* Vol 6). Interestingly, some of the many significations of “liberty” are: “the condition of being able to act in any desired way without hindrance or restraint; faculty or power to do as one likes”; “licence” (*OED* Vol 6). What is common to all these concepts is the external aspect of freedom which gets manifest in social and political action by ignoring one's inner freedom from anger, hatred, jealousy, pride, greed etc. The concept of liberty, in particular, carries within a clear implication of licence and self-indulgence. In fact, there is an obvious emphasis on liberty in J. S. Mill's *On Liberty* (1859) where he makes a case for qualified individualism, or the liberty to exercise one's opinion so long as others are not harmed, as a desideratum in one's growth as an independent being (Mill 69). The individual, in Mill's worldview, should have sovereignty over her/his actions even if the state prefers to curb the originality of its members (Mill 92). Subsequently, Matthew Arnold in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) interrogates the concept of “doing as one likes” which may, in his opinion, ultimately lead to anarchy or disorderliness in a society. Understood this way, contemporary society with its variety of choices in every field of activity, offers unrestricted freedom/liberty to the individuals thereby enlarging their scope of happiness and contentment. The postmodernist emphasis on the fragmentation of individualism is the culmination of classical liberalism because in a postmodernist condition, a person's authority collapses over herself/himself. That is why contemporary critics in the field of cultural studies like Chris Barker and Thomas Docherty point out that even though most of the people in western societies are materially endowed with every object that they desire, they do not lead an essentially happy existence. Chris Barker refers to Tomlinson's influential book *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (1991) wherein he believes that “the western concept of development

stresses 'more of everything', particularly more material goods, without offering significant cultural values which might suggest where more is undesirable or where growth might mean personal and meaningful experience" (Barker *Cultural Studies* 120). To reiterate what has been said in the earlier chapters, Barker concedes that freedom in western societies in the form of "rampant consumer culture... is producing more discontent than happiness because of the black hole of meaninglessness that remains after the consumption is over" (*Making Sense* 20). This is because the institutions – educational/social/political – through which culture is being disseminated among the masses have ceased to make "culture happen" (Docherty 231). Freedom, a value which should be practised along with responsibilities, is giving way to liberty: an uninterrupted desire to lead materialistically-rich free lives. As a response to this value-free liberty of modern life, Docherty believes that the true "conception of freedom is one that is based less on our power to bring things about and more on our capacity to acknowledge our limitations. For it is only by acknowledging that there are such limitations that we might have the humility required to respond to the event that is culture. Such a response is our responsibility" (232).

It is, however, important to underscore that the *dharma*-centric meanings of *Swaraj* are largely ignored in the discursive trajectories of contemporary cultural studies. Critics like Simon During, Chris Barker, Thomas Docherty and Terry Eagleton stress the inability of cultural studies/critical theory to provide a solution to the problems people face in their ordinary life.

It is here that Gandhi's concept of *Swaraj* comes into play. Gandhi's famous talisman enables an individual with such a decision-making capability that her/his actions are directly or indirectly connected with the *Swaraj* of millions of "hungry" and "spiritually starving" masses. Composed of two important Sanskrit components, "swa" and "raj", the very etymological significations of *Swaraj* point to its practical and conceptual meanings. For instance, "Swa" in Sanskrit means "one's own; one's self; the ego; the human soul" (*Sanskrit English Dictionary* Vol 2); whereas "raj" denotes "to reign; to rule over; to be illustrious or resplendent; to shine; to illuminate" (*ASED* Vol 2). Understood this way, *Swaraj* connotes the condition of one's rule over one's self that subsumes one's ego. The ego or a person's individuality (*OED* Vol. 5), which is but a part of her/his self, is what makes him/her different from her/his surroundings. If one's ego or one's perception of oneself based on external senses is under one's control, one is inevitably free from certain binding emotions which hamper one's pursuit of freedom.

It is worthwhile to mention here that self or "swa" in Indian cultural tradition connotes "atman" (soul) or the inner self whereas "swa" as ego connotes the external/outer cover of self. Thus, true "swa" has both – the internal and external dimensions. The knowledge of "swa/atman" or the inner self (*atma-bodh* or self-knowledge), once attained by a person through constant self-purification and practice of ethical conduct (*dharma*), also makes a person's ego or individuality radiant (the meaning of the root word "raj") and shining. For instance, the pursuit of *Swaraj* entails a

mastery over one's self/ego in order to be free from those impulses which imprison an individual in mundane worldly matters. It should not be forgotten that Gandhi aspired to achieve inner as well as outer *Swaraj* throughout his life because he aimed at pursuing “self-realization” in order “to see God face to face, to attain *Moksha*” (Gandhi *Autobiography* xii). *Swaraj*, for Gandhi, is thus, a means of achieving *moksha* or deliverance from the *leela* or cosmic play of the world. *Moksha* cannot be an equivalent for liberty or liberation (in the western sense of the term) because it necessarily presupposes a weaning of the self from the selfish pursuit of life. It rather suggests an emptying of the self in order to benefit the others through detachment.

In a very significant way, the term “Swaraj” or “Swarajya” occurs in the *Rigveda* many times suggesting the polysemic nature of the term. The political, social, economic and spiritual aspects of freedom have been connoted by the recurrent usage of “*Swarajya*” in the “*Swarajya Sukta*” of the *Rigveda* (Ch 1.1-16). At another place in the *Rigveda* (5.66.6), there is a pledge for self-rule that explicitly states – “Let all of us perform *purushartha* (the four cardinal principles of life) or make sincerest ethical efforts to maintain, preserve, protect and develop *Swaraj* or self-rule”. The term “*Swaraj*” has also been used in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* which suggests that the person who attains *Swaraj* (*apnoti swarajyam*) is the master of her/his outward senses like sight, hearing, speech, mind. She/he experiences *ananda* (bliss or supreme happiness) and *shanti* (peace, tranquillity)² only if she/he is able to conquer her/his senses. To elaborate the concept of *Swaraj* further, one may say that :

There is a difference between 'freedom to' and 'freedom from'. In the West, freedom is conceived as freedom to own a car, to go wherever one wants, to buy what one wants, to say whatever one wants. All of that is 'freedom to' – freedom to do this and that. It is extroverted. But such a 'free' person might not be able to say that he is free from anger, or from desire, jealousy, habits and compulsions. That kind of freedom refers to an internal state. It actually means freedom from one's conditioned self or ego. Gandhi always worked toward achieving and embodying this state of being free from internal as well as external dependencies. (Malhotra 351)

That is why Gandhi and several political figures preceding him like Dadabhai Naoroji, Lokmanya Tilak and Sri Aurobindo emphasised the urgency of *Swaraj* not only to liberate India from the British but also from its inner servitude. Unlike the words liberty, freedom and independence, *Swaraj* does not limit itself to the outer experience of freedom. That is why, according to Anthony Parel, Gandhi's seminal work *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* (1909) “underlines the importance of the need to have an inner experience of what *swaraj* means; only then would one be able to communicate to others one's concern for them with credibility and authenticity” (*Hind Swaraj* xxxviii). In other words, Gandhi in his vision and practice of *Swaraj* unified the political and the spiritual.

For instance, Gandhi believes that, “The *Swaraj* of my dream recognizes no race or religious distinctions. Nor is it to be the monopoly of the lettered persons, nor yet of moneyed men. *Swaraj* is to be for all, including the farmer, but emphatically including

the maimed, the blind, the starving toiling millions” (*Young India*: Mar 26, 1931). This illustrates that for Gandhi, the concept of freedom denotes a holistic development in which even the marginalised members of society lead ethically free lives. As cultural studies regards theoretical practice to be “in the service of the concrete” in order to address the complexities modernity (Grossberg 2-3) has imposed upon individuals, one cannot ignore how Gandhi offered his interrelated concepts of *Satyagraha*, *Swaraj*, *Swadeshi* and *Sarvodaya* as a practical means of developing an alternative modernity.

The Genesis of *Satyagraha* (truth-force/soul-force)

It is worthwhile to remember that Gandhi's practice of the principle of *Satyagraha* started later in his life when he was a thirty-seven-year old (1906) lawyer in South Africa. But it must not be misconstrued that the realisation of the effectiveness of the principle of *Satyagraha* dawned on him all of a sudden in South Africa. Ever since his childhood, he had been sensitive towards the idea and practice of truth. Be it the influence of the pious nature of his mother, Putlibai, or the deep impact of the legends of Shrivana and Harishchandra on his imagination, Gandhi had been deeply influenced by the idea of truth. He was practical enough to realise that people like Harishchandra and Shrivana could not have been historical characters (Gandhi *Autobiography* 8). Yet what moved him was their immeasurable spirit of self-sacrifice and suffering in the pursuit of truth. Certain instances of untruth and cheating in his early life notwithstanding, he had never learnt how to stifle his conscience. He confesses the mistakes that he committed during his childhood with stark honesty. For instance, not only did he resort to meat-eating with his friend but he also went to a brothel under his influence. That he could not stick to either is because “God in His infinite mercy protected” him against himself (Gandhi *Autobiography* 26). Furthermore, he once developed the habit of smoking and stole money in order to gratify this desire. However, his guilt-ridden conscience pricked him and he wrote a confessional letter to his father expecting that he would be angry. His father, who was sick and bedridden, wept and tore that letter. The point to be noted from this incident is that it was Gandhi's first “lesson in *Ahimsa*” (Gandhi *Autobiography* 31).

It made him realise how powerful the emotion of love is. And love, when coupled with truth, becomes the foundation of *ahimsa*.

Furthermore, while he was in England to pursue law during 1888-1891, he could have conveniently broken the vows that he gave to his mother. He did not eat meat, nor did he take to wine in order to be like a native Englishman. He was on the verge of breaking the third vow of celibacy when he escaped from indulging in an adulterous affair with a young British lady. This is because Gandhi, out of his own reticence and cowardice, had hidden the truth from her that he was already married. Not being able to eschew this “canker of untruth”, he “purged” himself of it by writing a confessional letter to her (Gandhi *Autobiography* 76).

It is important to remember that Gandhi entitled his autobiography as *The Story of my experiments with truth*. The title indicates how Gandhi derived his own truth from his *anubhava* or experience and practised it in real-life events. Rather than accepting

traditional or given truths unquestioningly, Gandhi interrogated its validity at every stage of his life. Gandhi's idea and practice of truth underscores his faith in the dynamicity of truth. For Gandhi, truth was never absolute, unchangeable or intransigent. His truth was derived from his personal experiences which were based on the process of relentless self-purification and self-realization. In his autobiography, he maintains that in following the path of truth he aimed at achieving “self-realization” and wanted “to see God face to face, to attain Moksha” (xii). It is worthwhile to note that *moksha* is a Sanskrit word which means “liberation”, “emancipation”, and “release from worldly existence” (*ASED* Vol 2). However, in Gandhi's case, *moksha* is not other-worldly; rather it involves “the complementary processes of dissolving the self by eliminating desires and dissolving the Other by attaining total identification with all creation” (Parekh 95). And in order to attain the maturity resulting into one's “identification with everything”, one needs to go through the process of perpetual self-exploration and self-purification (Gandhi *Autobiography* 566).

His philosophy of bringing about a change in the world was based on a few apparently simple principles – (a) before changing the world, one has to purify oneself (b) one's inner purification is contingent on the values of *satya* (truth) and *ahimsa* (non-violence) – values which form the bedrock of Gandhian thought (c) his idea of self-culture does not entail a forceful negation of one's worldly desires; it rather entails cultivating a sense of systematic self-control through which one detaches oneself from the fruits of action while being firmly attached to the work itself (d) one's *svadharma* is directly related to one's *yugadharma* and *sanatan dharma* (e) in order to develop the idea of a good society, one has to identify completely with the other by becoming the other (*tat tvam asi* – That thou art) (f) freedom or *Swaraj* connotes the widest freedom possible – moral, political, economic and social.

It is in this context that studying Gandhi within the discourses of cultural studies seems pertinent. His conception of *Satyagraha* or truth-force as a form of non-violent political action is rooted in an updated sense of spiritual action wherein even an ordinary individual is empowered to protest against the injustice being meted out to her/him in all walks of life. He democratized the Indian freedom movement by involving the masses to become the agents of change. Thus, the distance between the masses and the revolutionary leaders which had hitherto repulsed the people from joining the freedom movement, disappears when Gandhi appears on the social scene. Like a master strategist, he critiqued the elitist and imitative ways of the Indian National Congress for gaining freedom from the British rule. It is important to note that the values underlying *Satyagraha* are *ahimsa* and *satya* which go together to make it a viable instrument of political, social and cultural movements to be waged for an effective social transformation. To Gandhi, *Satyagraha* is based on the principle of self-purification, willingness to undertake suffering for the good of all and indomitable courage. Gandhi continued to write on and practice *Satyagraha* against the forces of injustice and exploitation masquerading as western modernity, apartheid, colonialism

– both foreign and indigenous. Gandhi, through the practice of *Satyagraha* subverts the subject-object hierarchy by enabling the object, that is, the ordinary masses, to become the subject, that is, the agents of change themselves. This is how he invented and put to use the term '*Satyagraha*' during his non-violent struggle against racism and apartheid in South Africa. And one of the most successful demonstrations of Gandhi's *Satyagraha* was evident in “Salt Satyagraha” or Dandi March in March 1930. This act of non-violent civil disobedience was the result of British government's “nefarious monopoly” (Gandhi *Collected Works* Vol. 4, 350) over the production of salt and the tax that was levied on it. It is quite obvious that Gandhi's decision of using salt as a central issue of a mass movement was scoffed at by many “sensible” Indians and Britons. But Gandhi was resolute in his protest because he believed that salt was “the greatest necessity of life” (*Collected* Vol. 4, 349) and that it was “the only condiment of the poor” (*Collected* Vol. 4, 350).

What is significant about Gandhi's choice of as *ordinary* a thing as salt as a means of political protest was his identification with the poorest of the poor while contemplating any action. That *Satyagraha* requires an enormous amount of courage is evident from the fact that Gandhi and some of his followers were immediately arrested after manufacturing salt straight from the seabed. As Bhikhu Parekh, a well-known political theorist writes:

With the consummate showmanship of a great political artist, he picked up a palmful of salt in open defiance of the government's ban. Along India's sea-coast and in its numerous inlets, thousands of people, mainly the peasants, followed his example and made salt illegally. They were beaten, sometimes brutally, and 60, 000 of them including Gandhi was arrested and incarcerated for various lengths of time. (*Gandhi: A Very Short Introduction* 21).

Therefore, using *ahimsa* as a means of protest does not account for any weakness of will. Rather, the invisible force that catalyses the process of *Satyagraha* is the power of the soul (*atma-bal*). That is why Gandhi also referred to *Satyagraha* as “soul-force”. Even a cursory understanding of *Satyagraha* could display Gandhi's ingenuous tactics which subverted the implications of a hitherto unchallenged violent way of protesting. With its foundation in *satya* and *ahimsa*, *Satyagraha* becomes a means to strike at the soul consciousness of the tyrant. This is because Gandhi believed that the soul of a resolute *Satyagrahi* cannot be conquered by any form of force. Thus, the spiritual force within a person could become powerful enough to resist tyranny of all forms. It is in this sense that Gandhi's appeal of soul-force galvanised millions to resist both British and native forms of injustices.

Needless to say, it was this form of practical spirituality that enabled Gandhi to realise that without practice, mere theorization of *Satyagraha*, *Swaraj*, *Swadeshi* and *Sarvodaya* is of academic interest only. The clue to Gandhi's emphasis on spirituality lies in his philosophy of interdependence between ends and means. In Gandhi's vision, the means adopted to bring about a change in the social order should always function in

harmony with the ends. Therefore, he says in *Hind Swaraj* that “the means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree” (62). Moreover, *Swaraj* or self-rule also necessitates self-purification and practice of truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed.

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F-27, Sector 25, P.U. Residential Complex,
Chandigarh – 160014.

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1. Translation mine. See *Rigveda Samhita* (2 vols), pp. 110-113 (vol. 1) and pp. 84 (vol. 2) respectively.
2. “*Suvar ity aditye, maha iti brahmani, apnoti swarajyam apnoti manasas-patim, vak-patis caksus-patih srotra-patih vijnana-patih, etat tato bhavati, akasa sariram brahma, satyama pranaramam mana anandam santi samrddham amrtam iti pracinayogyopasva*” (*In the sun as Suvah, in Brahman as Maha. He attains self-rule. He attains to the lord of manas, the lord of speech, the lord of sight, the lord of hearing, the lord of intelligence – this and more he becomes, even Brahman whose body is space,*

whose self is the real, whose delight is life, whose mind is bliss, who abounds in tranquility, who is immortal. Thus do thou contemplate, O Pracinayogya” (Taittiriya Upanishad 1.6.2; 534).

Radhakrishnan interprets this verse as as “He who contemplates in this matter becomes the lord of all organs, the soul of all things and filled with peace and perfection. This passage brings out that the end is greater existence, not death; we should not sterilize our roots and dry up the wells of life. We have to seize and transmute the gifts we possess” (534).

3. *Bhikhu Parekh aptly elaborates Gandhi's idea of this-worldly moksha: “Sitting in a forest or a monastery carefully insulated from all possible temptations and provocations, a man could easily convince himself that he had overcome anger, sexuality, selfishness or jealousy. If he dared enter the real world and put himself in trying situations, he might have painful surprises waiting for him. The self discovered itself in all its complexity and grew only in the course of trying to meet the powerful challenges of the world. For Gandhi self-realisation was impossible without worldly involvement.” (103)*

Swadeshi : The Sure Means of Eradication of Corruption

Ashok Vohra

The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general.

– *Karl Marx, Preface to the Critique of Political Economy (1859)*

"Our earth is degenerate in these latter days; bribery and corruption are common; children no longer obey their parents; and the end of the world is evidently approaching."

– *Assyrian clay tablet, 2800 B.C.*

Gandhiji believed that Swadeshi is the cardinal principle to empower the masses. Swadeshi helps the nation to attain Swaraj at the political level and helps the individual to accomplish Swaraj in ideas. It helps each individual to become financially strong which ultimately leads to making the system free from corruption. He believed that "Much of the deep poverty of the masses is due to ruinous departure from swadeshi in the economic and industrial life" (*Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Publication Division, hereafter CWMG, Vol. 15, p. 151); and "Had we not abandoned swadeshi we need not have been in the present fallen state" (CWMG, Vol. II, p. 21). According to him we are in our present miserable economic, political, social, and cultural, religious state because of "almost fatal departure from Swadeshi spirit"¹. He upholds that "Swadeshi is an eternal principle whose neglect has brought untold grief to mankind"². To get out of our present predicament, we have to adopt the spirit of 'true swadeshi'. In what follows, I shall present his gospel of Swadeshi. At the outset let me emphasise that what Gandhiji says about India is equally applicable to the rest of the world in general and the so-called 'Third World Countries' in particular. Swadeshi, therefore, is not a regional principle to alleviate poverty and hunger but an universalisable global strategy to get rid of them. He upheld that "Swaraj and Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption swadeshi must go together" (CWMG, Vol 15, p. 193); without swadeshi there is no meaningful and effective swaraj.

Gandhiji made a distinction between 'swadeshi' and other means like boycott, hunger strike, non-cooperation *et al* for attaining 'swaraj'. According to him, "There was a world of difference between boycott and swadeshi, for boycott was a sort of

punishment, while the swadeshi *vrata* was a religious duty. If they wanted to take the swadeshi vow they should do so with due and deliberate consideration (CWMG, Vol. 17, p. 382). Elaborating the distinction between swadeshi and boycott Gandhiji says, it is necessary to understand the distinction between swadeshi and boycott. Swadeshi is a religious conception. It is the natural duty imposed upon every man. The well-being of people depends upon it and the swadeshi vow cannot be taken in a punitive or revengeful spirit. The swadeshi vow is not derived from any extraneous happening, whereas boycott is a purely worldly and political weapon. It is rooted in ill will and a desire for punishment, and I can see nothing but harm in the end for a nation that resorts to boycott. One who wishes to be a satyagrahi forever cannot participate in any boycott movement and a perpetual satyagraha is impossible without swadeshi" (CWMG, Vol 17, p. 396).

Let us begin with the conceptual clarification of the term 'Swadeshi'. It is comprised of two words *swa* – one's own and *deshi* – country. Literally, it means 'of one's own country' and is the antonym of 'Paradesi' which literally means 'of the others' country'. However, Gandhiji does not use the term 'swadeshi' in the literal sense alone. He goes on to say, "It does not mean merely the use of what is produced in one's own country. That meaning is certainly there in *swadeshi*. But there is another meaning implied in it which is far greater and much more important. *Swadeshi* means reliance on our own strength. We should also know what we mean by 'reliance on our own strength'. 'Our strength' means the strength of our body, our mind and our soul (CWMG, Vol. VII, p. 223).

The term is difficult to define. Gandhiji himself admitted his failure in framing "a definition that would suit all cases and found that it was impossible to frame an exhaustive definition"³. He also felt that "the true meaning of swadeshi is missed in the forest of words that surround that simple but life-giving word"⁴. As a result, sometimes a very broad definition is given such that it includes everything under its ambit; and at other times, it is Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption defined in a very narrow sense such that it becomes exclusive. Gandhiji was aware of this problem and he warned that in defining 'Swadeshi' "care has to be taken not to make the definition so narrow as to make manufacture all but impossible, or so wide as to become farcical and Swadeshi only in name"⁵. Swadeshi does not mean exclusion of everything foreign under every conceivable circumstance. According to him, "The broad definition of Swadeshi is the use of all home-made things to the exclusion of foreign things, in so far as such use is necessary for protection of home-industry, more especially those industries without which India will become pauperized. In my opinion, therefore, Swadeshi which excludes the use of everything foreign, because it is foreign, no matter how beneficial it may be, and irrespective of the fact that it impoverishes nobody, is a narrow interpretation of Swadeshi"⁶. He goes on to emphasise that "To reject foreign manufacturers, merely because they are foreign and to go on wasting national time and money in the promotion in one's country of manufactures for which it is not suited would be criminal folly and a negation of the Swadeshi spirit."⁷ From this it follows that the criteria of calling anything

Swadeshi is not merely its origin but its usefulness and the fact that it does not adversely affect the home-industry. If something is good for the inhabitants of a nation and if for some reason it cannot be produced in the country then its import and use does in no way violate the true spirit of Swadeshi. In short, principle of swadeshi means that we have to firstly use the "things produced in our vicinity and then mill-made products"⁸. While negatively swadeshi means that the foreign goods should not be purchased at the peril of goods produced indigenously, positively it means that we should collectively apply 'our brains to the production of things as a substitute for foreign materials'.

The principle of swadeshi operates both at spiritual and physical planes of human existence. It is akin to the golden rule of the biblical teaching 'Treat thy neighbour as thyself'; and the Kantian maxim of treating humanity whether in thy own self or in the person of the other always as an end and never as a means to an end. "Swadeshi" according to Gandhiji is "that spirit which dictates man to serve the next door neighbour to the exclusion of any other"⁹. This is supported by all religions and "is ingrained in the basic nature of man"¹⁰. It is "that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote"¹¹. This definition implies that one should have a direct concern for his immediate neighbourhood. He must strive to Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption improve religious, social, political, economic, environmental conditions of his own life, home, immediate family, neighbours, village, district, state, country and the world in that order.

The principle of swadeshi implies that one has to first discharge his obligations towards oneself, one's family and others who are under his direct care, and then to think of others. However, this does not mean that it can be any kind of obligation irrespective of whether it is right or wrong, legitimate or illegitimate. It also does not mean that one can adopt all kinds of means to discharge one's obligations. The obligations have to be legitimate and the means of discharging these obligations also have to be right. Gandhiji insists on this when he says, "The law of Swadeshi requires me no more than to discharge my legitimate obligations towards my family by just means and the attempt to do so will reveal to me the universal code of conduct"¹². If one satisfies the unlawful demands of his family by illegal means and dishonest practices then he neither serves the family nor the State. An honest discharge of one's just obligations to one's immediate neighbour by the right means also reveals to him the universal nature of the law of Swadeshi. He becomes aware that his first duty is to his neighbour.

This law operates at religious, political and economic levels of human existence. At the religious plane, it exhorts one to restrict himself to his ancestral religion. That is he must use his immediate religious surroundings. In addition, if he finds his own religion defective or wanting in some way he "should serve it by purging it of its defects"¹³. In the domain of politics, he "should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects"¹⁴. In the field of economic activity one "should use only things that are produced by his immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting"¹⁵. Therefore,

for Gandhiji swadeshi had "a deeper meaning" than is commonly imagined. He used it comprehensively and applied it to all aspects of life - religious, political, cultural and economic. Swadeshi means not just discarding foreign clothes and goods but also avoiding the 'foreign cut'. This implies that even an idea which has originated in a distant foreign land is also to be avoided. Because due to our obsession with the west "we forget that what may be perfectly good for certain conditions in the West is not necessarily good for certain other, and often diametrically opposite, conditions of the East"¹⁶.

Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption Swadeshi "means production and distribution of articles manufactured in one's own country"¹⁷. It is "that spirit in us which requires us to use things produced in our neighbourhood in preference to those more remote"¹⁸. Buying goods from our immediate neighbourhood and supplying goods to satisfy their needs first cannot be termed either as an exclusive principle based on narrow patriotism or as a disservice to those who are at a distance from us. Swadeshi is not an exclusive, selfish, or exploitative principle because it "has no sympathy with the formula that East and West can never intermingle. (It) does not banish all foreign or European goods, or all machine made goods, nor for that matter does Swadeshi tolerate all homemade goods. Swadeshi admits of, and welcomes the introduction of foreign goods that cannot or need not be manufactured in India and on the whole benefit her peoples"¹⁹. Moreover, swadeshi cannot be exclusive because one of its conditions is that the neighbours whom we serve soon understand "the spirit in which such service is given. They will also know that they will be expected to give their services to their neighbours"²⁰. The neighbour thus served in his turn serves his own neighbour. Therefore, soon the spirit of swadeshi which dictates man to serve his next door neighbour to the exclusion of any other" would "spread like the proverbial snowball gathering strength in geometrical progression encircling the whole earth"²¹.

Though Gandhiji hated to use "the distinction between foreign and indigenous"²² he advocated that the follower of the principle of swadeshi – a Swadeshist if at all he is exclusivist, is exclusivist in the sense that he takes pride in the indigenous products and is being self-dependent. In meeting his needs he takes help only from his neighbours, and also helps his immediate neighbours first and then to others or the foreigners. He feels that he is departing from one of the sacred laws of our being when he leaves his neighbour and goes out somewhere else in satisfying his needs. According to Gandhiji, one who has taken the vow of Swadeshi will never use articles which conceivably involve violation of truth in their manufacture or on the part of their manufacturers. It follows, for instance, that a votary of truth will not use articles manufactured in the mills of Manchester, Germany or India, for he cannot be sure that they involve no such violation of truth. Moreover, labourers suffer much in the mills"(CWMG, Vol. 14, p. 443).

Gandhiji illustrates his view of Swadeshi by taking the example of a village barber. He says: "In your village barber, you are bound to support him to the exclusion of the Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption finished barber who may come to you from

Madras. If you find it necessary that your village barber should reach the attainments of the barber from Madras, you may train him to do that. Send him to Madras by all means, if you wish in order that he may learn his calling. Until you do that, you are not justified in going to another barber. That is Swadeshi"²³. Moreover, whereas Gandhiji "without the slightest hesitation" agrees to the import and use of foreign drugs which are "highly efficacious and not otherwise objectionable" he exhorts "those who have received a training in Western medicine to explore the possibilities of Ayurvedic and Unani systems"²⁴. Gandhiji is also not against the multinational operations provided their operation is beneficial to the growth of the indigenous industry and does not have a negative effect on the value system of the people. He says: "I should have no objection to the use of foreign capital or to the employment of foreign talent when such are not available in India, or when we need them, but only on condition that such capital and such talent are exclusively under the control, direction and management of Indians and are used in the interests of India"²⁵. Nevertheless, he strictly forbids the import of goods and services that are available indigenously even if they are relatively inferior to the ones available abroad. Though he is ready to buy surgical instruments from England, pins and pencils from Austria, and watches from Switzerland, he categorically says, "I will not buy an inch of the finest cotton fabric from England or Japan or any other part of the world because it has injured and increasingly injures the millions of the inhabitants of India"²⁶. He considers it 'sinful' to buy the fine and quality cloth from the manufacturers abroad as it harms the interest of the indigenous producers. In his reply to Tagore about importing cloth he said, "Just as, if we are to live, we must breathe not air imported from England nor eat food so imported, so may we not import cloth made in England. I do not hesitate to carry the doctrine to logical limit and say that Bengal dare not import her cloth even from Bombay or from Banga Lakshmi. If Bengal will live her natural and free life without exploiting the rest of India or the world outside, she must manufacture her cloth in her own villages as she grows corn there"²⁷.

The Principle of swadeshi is not based on narrow patriotism. Swadeshi like Gandhiji's inclusive patriotism "is calculated not to hurt any other nation, but to benefit all in the true sense of the word"²⁸. Because for Gandhiji "Patriotism is the same as humanity"²⁹. He says, "I am patriotic because I am human and humane"³⁰. Swadeshi is a Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption humanitarian principle because it strives for the welfare of whole humanity. It exhorts one to serve his immediate neighbours because immediate neighbour is a concrete reality whereas the remote world, or world in general is an abstraction. "In trying to serve the world, one does not serve the world and fails to serve even the neighbour. In serving the neighbour one, in effect, serves the world. Only he who has performed his duty to his neighbour has the right to say: 'All are a kin to me.' But if a person says 'All are a kin to me' and neglecting his neighbour gives himself up to self-indulgence, he lives to himself alone"³¹. Hence, a person who ignores the service of his immediate neighbours but hopes to serve the distant foreigners is neither a nationalist nor an internationalist.

However, from the above discussion one should not conclude that Swadeshi forbids one to serve the distant neighbour. It only says that "I must not serve my distant neighbour at the expense of the nearest"³². It is neither a vindictive nor a punitive principle. Nor is it a narrow principle for it allows one to buy from every part of the world what is needed for one's growth. It only prevents one from buying from, anybody, whether distant or near neighbour, anything, no matter how beautiful or nice it may be, if it interferes with the buyer's growth or injures those whom 'nature has made his first care'. Infact, "Pure service of our neighbours can never from its very nature, result in disservice to those who are far away, but rather the contrary. 'As with the individual, so with the universe' is an unfailing principle which we would do well to lay to heart. On the other hand a man who allows himself to be lured by 'the distant scene' and runs to the ends of the earth for service, is not only foiled in his ambition but also fails in his duty towards his neighbours"³³. One who wishes to serve the whole of humanity to the best of his capacity cannot do so by neglecting his neighbours. One who claims to serve the 'whole of humanity' does not end up even in serving an individual person. This is so because 'whole of humanity' is a chimera whereas an individual is a concrete reality. A "true and humane economics" according to Gandhiji cannot advocate straying one's neighbour and "claim to serve one's distant cousin in North Pole"³⁴.

Swadeshi, in its true spirit, therefore, "does not involve any disservice to the foreigners"³⁵. It does not "harbour ill-will towards the foreigner; he will not be actuated by antagonism towards anybody on earth. Swadeshim is not a cult of hatred. It is a doctrine of selfless service that has its roots in the purest ahimsa i.e. love"³⁶. It is both inclusive and Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption exclusive. "It is exclusive in the sense that, in all humility, I confine my attention to the land of my birth, but is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature"³⁷. Even if the doctrine of swadeshi covertly implied hatred for the foreign goods and foreigners, even if it was narrow and exclusivist, Gandhiji advocated its fullest development and application. For he felt that if we did not do so our individuality and identity would vanish. Both of them are the expression of our sovereignty and therefore of our swaraj. That is why he argued, "We must protect our own bodies from disruption through indulgence, before we would protect the sanctity of others"³⁸. "Swadeshi" Gandhiji said "is not a temporary programme. It is coeval with Swaraj"³⁹. It is a constructive programme, and is of a permanent nature. It has to be carried out at all costs, if we wish to protect our freedom. It is according to him "an evolutionary process, gaining strength as it goes forward. Any organization can serve it. It is its own reward"⁴⁰. Tagore too agreed with Gandhiji on the relationship between swadeshi and swaraj when he said, "The village of which the people come together to earn for themselves their food, their health, their education, to gain for themselves the joy of so doing, shall have lighted a lamp on the way to swaraj. It will not be difficult there from to light others, one after another, and thus illuminate more and more of the path along which swaraj will advance... by the organic process of its own living growth"⁴¹.

The principle of swadeshi for Gandhiji was an end in itself. He compared swadeshi to the mythical Kamadhenu which will "supply all our wants and solve many of our difficult problems"⁴². It shall eventually lead to an even distribution of wealth. If equitable distribution is our ideal then "we should have not only love but passion for swadeshi. Every one of our act should bear the swadeshi stamp"⁴³. Gandhiji regarded swadeshi to be 'the most potent' tool for achieving swaraj as it is swadharma of everyone and therefore 'applicable to all'⁴⁴. The principle of swadeshi is based on the axioms, "Every man and woman can deny himself or herself all luxury, all ornamentation, all intoxicants" and that "our culture, our swaraj depend not upon multiplying our wants – self – indulgence, but upon restricting our wants – self-denial"⁴⁵.

However, taking the vow to practise swadeshi and sticking to it is not an easy task. It does "not simply minister to our convenience, but is also a rule of life"⁴⁶. It is a way of life "which dictates man to serve his next-door neighbour to the exclusion of any other"⁴⁷. Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption This vow is broken when one "professes to serve those who are more remote in preference to those who are near"⁴⁸. The duty of those who take the vow of swadeshi is "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"⁴⁹. Swadeshi as a law recognizes that "our capacity for service has obvious limits. We can serve even our neighbour with some difficulty. If every one of us duly performed his duty to his neighbour, no one in the world who needed assistance would be left unattended to"⁵⁰. It is the duty of the votary of Swadeshi not to wish or do ill to others in thought, word and deed. Swadeshimism does not make a distinction between one's own and other people. Therefore Swadeshi "does not imply hatred for the foreigner or partiality for the fellow-countryman"⁵¹. Infact such a practice as serving one's immediate neighbour "can never do harm to anyone and, if it does, it is not Swadharma but egotism"⁵² of the person who is practising Swadeshi.

Swadeshi is a difficult path. Weak willed persons cannot take to it. It requires strong determination. In it "there is no room for selfishness, or if there is selfishness in it, it is of the highest altruism"⁵³. According to Gandhiji "There is no place for self interest in Swadeshi which enjoins the sacrifice of oneself for the family, of the family for the village, of the village for the country and the country for humanity"⁵⁴. A Swadeshist is a paradigm of service and sacrifice. For "pure Swadeshi means sacrifice of our liking for fineries"⁵⁵ and developing a liking for the coarse and inferior quality goods. The economist's rule of the best and the cheapest does not appeal to him as just and valid. Gandhiji regards it as "the most inhuman among the maxims laid down by modern economists," because it "disregards moral and sentimental considerations" and is therefore "like wax works, that being life like still lack the life of the living flesh"⁵⁶. Such laws according to Gandhiji "have broken down in practice. And nations or individuals who accept them as guiding maxims must perish"⁵⁷.

The guiding maxim of a Swadeshist is to buy indigenous goods though they may not be the best or the cheapest. Even if they are not up to the mark he uses them, as a matter of principle, and requires as well as helps the members to improve them

wherever improvement is possible. According to Gandhiji, "To use foreign articles, rejecting those that are manufactured in India, is to be untrue to India. It is an unwarranted indulgence. To Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption use foreign articles because we do not like indigenous ones is to be a foreigner. It is obvious that we cannot reject indigenous articles, even as we cannot reject the native air and the native soil because they are inferior to foreign air or soil"⁵⁸. He chides the economic rule of 'best and cheapest' thus : "Just as we do not give up our country for one with a better climate but endeavour to improve our own, so also we do not discard Swadeshi for better or cheaper foreign things.

Even as a husband who being dissatisfied with his simple looking wife goes in search of better looking woman is disloyal to his partner, so is a man disloyal to his country who prefers foreign made things, though better, to country made things. The law of each country's progress demands on the part of its inhabitants' preference for their own products and manufactures"⁵⁹. The adoption of such a law "offers every man, woman and child an occasion to make a beginning in self-sacrifice of a pure type. It therefore, presents an opportunity for testing our capacity for sacrifice. It is a measure for gauging the depth of national feeling"⁶⁰.

The spirit of Swadeshi does not say, "that we should treasure our faults" but emphasises "that what is national even though comparatively less agreeable should be adhered to; and that what is foreign should be avoided though it may be more agreeable than our own. That which is wanting in our civilization can be supplied by proper effort on our part"⁶¹. That is why Swadeshi is a "very active force to be ceaselessly employed with an ever increasing vigilance, searching self-examination. It is not meant for the lazy, but it is essentially meant for them who would gladly lay down their lives for the sake of truth"⁶². A Swadeshist not only has to make conscientious and consistent effort to improve the quality of goods produced in his country, but has also to voluntarily adhere to the principle of self-denial. He shall have to "learn to do without hundreds of things which today he considers necessary"⁶³. He has to make a steady effort to reach his goal at the cost of personal inconvenience. For the sake of the nation the doctrine of swadeshi has to be pursued even at the cost of great inconvenience that it may cause to the individual.

We have to recognize today more than ever that "A country remains poor in wealth both material and intellectual, if it does not develop its handicrafts and its industries and lives a lazy parasitic life by importing all the manufactured articles from outside"⁶⁴. In order to make our country, our region and thereby the whole world prosperous both materially and intellectually, at least those of us who have regard for our respective Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption vernaculars, like our clothes and manner of dress, find our food tasteful, our people civilized and fit for our company and who take pride in our history and civilization, in short all those who find everything native pleasing and good; and those who identify themselves with the starving millions, and who wish to emancipate themselves from the oppressive economic and intellectual

'first World' should take the vow of swadeshi. We shall succeed if the Swadeshi spirit possesses every one of us and if we are able to "carry out the Swadeshi vow spirit inspite of great difficulties and inconvenience"⁶⁵.

The elite of the country should take lead in this direction for as *Gita* 3.21 says:

"Whatever a superior person does, another person does that very thing! Whatever he upholds as authority, an ordinary person follows that." Let us take a lead in taking the vow of Swadeshi for we have nothing to lose but our poverty – economic as well as intellectual. Moreover, for Gandhiji morality and the relationship between the producer and the consumer were essentially nodal. The moral implication of the doctrine of Swadeshi is: if each one of us living in the vicinity of one another is a producer as well as consumer of the goods produced and services generated then there is no place for alienation either from each other or from the product.

Alienation from each other is the basis of corruption in the modern society. Let me illustrate it with a few examples. Life whether in villages, districts or small towns or municipalities today is largely anonymous. We do not know even who our next-door neighbour is and what he does for a living or otherwise. Therefore, we are not bothered about the other. We treat even the next door neighbour as the other, as an alien with whom we have no or minimal concern. The other is an 'it' who can be exploited without end, and towards whom we have no accountability and moral responsibility. For example, the police officer to whom I pay a bribe for jumping a red light has no concern with me apart from taking the bribe. Similar is the case with the persons on the counters of offices where I go to receive certain services. The ministers and senior officials are just known to me by designation. The person with whom I deal is a SI or DG, D.R. or Director or Joint Secretary or PS or the MOS or the Minister or PM. I do not even have to know their names. They are anonymous faces who are designators or referents of certain abbreviations to me; for them I am only a file to be dealt with. They do not see my problem as a human problem just as I do not see them even as human beings. I am just a file or a case for them and they are Ashok Vohra Swadeshi and Corruption only anonymous figures with whom I have to deal as long as my work is not completed. They, as well as I, know that in all likelihood I am not going to see them again. As a result they have no sense of guilt in accepting bribe, and I have no shame in bribing them to get a favourable recommendation. Taking a bribe from a known person and offering a bribe to him would naturally arouse a sense of shame in both. To a known person whom I meet occasionally but not so often or regularly, I would hesitate to offer a bribe and he would also think twice before accepting it.

Just like Swadeshi, 'corruption' is also an abstract term. It is difficult to define. According to World Bank report 1997, 'abuse of public power for private gains is described as corruption. Nevertheless, this appears to be too simplistic explanation of corruption. In fact it is a multi-faceted evil, which gradually kills a system. In the case of India a basic conflict between the ethos and system has weakened the Indian polity. The feudal outlook of the ruling class polluted the people's mindset, which judge the status of an individual on his capability to flout the law to favour them. This is the reason why

corruption is no more viewed by people with abhorrence in Indian society'. Gandhiji seems to have predicted when he said, "Our dishonesty is there for all to see. We believe that business can never be carried on honestly. Those who have the chance never refuse a bribe. We have the worst experience of corruption in the railways. We can get our work done only if we bribe the railway police, the ticket master and the guard. Even for securing a railway ticket, we have to use dishonest means or shut one's eyes to them" (CWMG, Vol. 20, P. 429). This observation of Gandhiji was based on his personal experience of travelling by train in India. He saw that "Benares is probably the worst station for the poor passengers. Corruption is rampant. Unless you are prepared to bribe the police, it is very difficult to get your ticket. They approached me as they approached others several times and offered to buy our tickets if we would pay them a gratuity (or bribe?). Many availed themselves of the offer. Those of us who would not, had to wait nearly one hour after the window was opened, before we could get our tickets and we would be fortunate at that if we did so without being presented with a kick or two from the guardians of law" (CWMG, Vol. 2, p. 447).

By the year 1938 Mahatma Gandhi was aware of the corruption that was creeping into the Indian polity subsequent to the formation of Congress ministries under 1935 Act. He was very upset by the reported corrupt practices by the Congressmen and expressed his anguish in the *Harijan* dated September 3, 1938 thus: "It looks as if congressmen are not able to digest the power that has come to the Congress. Everyone wants to have a share in the spoils of office. And so there is an unhealthy competition to capture committees, the holding of any office in congress Government must be in the spirit of service without the slightest expectation of personal gain". He observed, "corruption is rampant among the civil servants. If Rajendra Babu and Rajaji are surrounded by wicked persons whom they are not able to control, then they too should be considered responsible for the rot" (CWMG, 95: 198). Likewise, he held the lower officials responsible for corruption if they continued to be silent spectators of the acts of corruption and bribery of their superiors. He categorically upheld that "If the chairman of a corporation is corrupt, the members thereof must wash their hands clean of his corruption by withdrawing from it; even so, if a government does a grave injustice, the subject must withdraw cooperation wholly or partially, sufficiently to wean the ruler from his wickedness. In each case conceived by me there is an element of suffering whether mental or physical. Without such suffering it is not possible to attain freedom" (CWMG, Vol. 20, p. 399). Note that he did not mince words to hold the topmost leadership of the country responsible for the prevalent corruption. It is because he firmly believed that "The progress of the nation will be hindered to the extent to which corruption creeps in (CWMG, 51: 286-87). His immediate reaction to curb corruption was, "I would go to the length of giving the whole congress a decent burial, rather than put up with the corruption that is rampant" (1938).

He upheld that "The corruption that is evident today in all religious orders and the mental, physical and moral deterioration of our society are all traceable to the fact that we have looked down upon physical labour" (CWMG, Vol. 95, p. 257) and neglected the

need of our immediate neighbour. As in other cases he held individuals to be responsible for corruption and said "Let us bear in mind the fact that a corrupt government and a corrupt police presuppose the existence of corruption among the people who submit to government and police corruption. After all, there is considerable truth in the statement that a people deserve the Government that they have" (CWMG, Vol. 31, p. 207). Therefore, in order to alleviate corruption from the system he advocated mapping out a "programme which will enable you to serve society by performing bread labour and getting the masses to do the same" (CWMG, Vol. 95, p. 257). He affirmed repeatedly that for the disappearance of corruption "the only real remedy was self-help and co-operation among all" (CWMG, Vol. 91, p. 79). To the issue that one could spend his money in any way he liked Gandhiji argued, "You cannot spend your money in such a way that it corrupts others" (CWMG, Vol. 91, p. 128).

If people followed the way of God, Gandhiji, believed there would not be the corruption and profiteering that were seen in the world today (CWMG Vol. 91, p. 159). We have to remind the people indulging in unfair practices, what *Manusmriti* IV.170 says, "a person who (lives) unrighteously, (or) who acquires wealth (by telling) falsehoods ever attains happiness in this world". One should not be disappointed by the fact that in this world the corrupt seem to prosper and the honest seem to suffer. While the fruits of corruption are immediate but they are ephemeral. Though righteousness takes long to yield fruits, they are lasting. The fact is as *Manusmriti*, IV, 172 says, "Unrighteousness, practised in this world, does not at once produce its fruit, like a cow; but, advancing slowly, it cuts off the roots of him who committed it". The law of God or the law governing the universe is that the corrupt, the unrighteous cannot go unpunished. *Manusmriti* IV, 173 and 174 asserts this. It says, "If (the punishment falls) not on (the offender), (it falls) on his sons, if not on the sons, (at least) on his grandsons; but an inquiry (once) committed, never fails to produce fruit to him who wrought it. He prospers for a while through unrighteousness, then he gains great good fortune, next he conquers his enemies, but (at last) he perishes (branch and) root".

In order to establish a world order devoid of corruption we have to take steps out of the ordinary. Nothing permanent can be achieved if we devise a system in which one corrupt system is replaced by another. Such a routine replacement is not going to establish a sustainable corruption free social order. The only system where the remedies for the elimination of corruption suggested by Gandhiji could be effectively applied is the organisation/nation which follows swadeshi as its cardinal principle. It is the system which eliminates anonymity, creates a social climate against corruption, which means creation of an atmosphere in which the corrupt cannot thrive, and positively provides conditions for transparency, responsiveness, accountability and probity in public life and good governance. Let me conclude with Gandhiji's words "if we fail to preach swadeshi at this supreme moment we shall have to wring our hearts in despair. I hope every man and woman will give serious thought to my humble suggestion. Imitation of English economics will spell our ruin"⁶⁶. How true it is in the era when corrupt practices are on the rise! How true it is in the era of globalisation!

The cause of prevalent corruption is that even after six decades of independent functioning, India has not developed any institutions based on the indigenous principles of swadeshi in any walk of public life. All that we have done is expand the structures and institutions which are based primarily on the principles laid down by the British. Gandhiji repeatedly said that if the British left but their civilization stayed, that would be no Swaraj, it would be no independence. Time has come to bid adieu to the British ways and be innovative in developing our own institutions based on the principle of swadeshi. Many of the ills – poverty, despotism, nepotism, and ultimately corruption will vanish the moment the innovative institutions become operative. Gandhiji, therefore upheld that "Swadeshi applies to every man, woman and child in India. It is of a permanent nature. Swadeshi is not to be suspended on the attainment of Swaraj, which is impossible without Swadeshi"⁶⁷. Infact in Gandhiji's opinion "no country can live honourably without swadeshi" (CWMG, Vol. 17, p. 446).

It is not that Gandhiji was unaware of the practical difficulties in implementing the spirit of swadeshi. He argued that the habit of swadeshi, which necessarily involves the use of indigenous articles alone, is to be consciously cultivated. With the passage of time, "A swadeshi will learn to do without hundreds of things which today he considers necessary" (CWMG, Vol 15, 163). Arguing against those "who dismiss swadeshi from their minds" Gandhiji says that these sceptics and opponents "forget that swadeshi, after all, is a goal to be reached by steady effort. And we would be making for the goal even if we confined swadeshi to a given set of articles, allowing ourselves as a temporary measure to use such things as might not be procurable in the country (CWMG, Vol 15, 163). Gandhiji was convinced that, "The country will prosper only when the people cultivate the spirit of swadeshi with religious devotion" (CWMG, Vol. 17, 243). 'The country' here does not mean India alone but any country. Rabindranath Tagore too upholds "only those will be able to get and keep swaraj in the material world who have realised the dignity of self-reliance and self mastery in the spiritual world, those whom no temptation, no delusion, can induce to surrender the dignity of intellect into the keeping of others"⁶⁸. In a prosperous country, a just and equitable society there is, as has been argued above, no place for corruption, neither is there any justification for its existence. More so in Gandhiji's conception of Swaraj and trusteeship corruption has no place; the two cannot co-exist. To conclude, though Gandhiji believed that "generally rich men and for that matter most men are not particular as to the way they make money", in the India of his dreams there is no place for corrupt practices for making money because Swadeshi "is the surest method to evolve a new order of life of universal benefit in the place of the present one where each one lives for himself without regard to what happens to his neighbour"⁶⁹.

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Gandhian Thoughts on Subaltern Discourse

R.C. Sinha

In this present paper entitled “Gandhian Thoughts on Subaltern Discourse”. I have attempted to streamline the concept of morality in the framework of hierarchical caste system of Indian society. In ancient period, subaltern in Varnavyastha was considered as 'shudras'. Gandhi termed subaltern people as 'Harizan'. Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar called them as a Dalits. I have used the term “Seemant” for subaltern people who are down-trodden and marginalized. The word “Seemant” fully expresses the meaning of those who stand on margins. By “Seemant” I mean those who are marginalized and excluded from the main stream of society irrespective of caste, class, gender and ethnicity. Sublatern group of studies in Oxford University has made a significant contribution in the realm of Indian historiography. But nevertheless it is not totally free from shortcomings. There is no denying the fact that subaltern school has contributed a lot in the study of history, economics and social sciences in Third World countries in the end of 20th century. But it has not touched the school of Philosophy. Philosophers in the end of 20th century were complacent in hair splitting debate of language Philosophy. Philosophizing is conceptualizing. But linguistic analysis is not the be all and end all of Philosophizing. I have tried to understand this problem from logical point of view as stipulated in classical Aristotelian Logic. The word first appears in the Text of Logic of Aristotle where he discussed the concept of subaltern in order to explain the relation of opposition of proposition. Subaltern is the relation of two propositions in which universal implies particular but not vice-versa. Universal can be represented by A and Particular by 'I'. A implies I but I does not. It means if A is true I is true and not vice-versa. This simple logic has been applied by me in social relation and moral field and developed the concept of subaltern morality. The subaltern includes caste, class, gender and ethnicity. In one sense the criteria for determining subalternity is economic-cum-cultural. The category of subaltern is different from the category of proletariat. Proleteriate denotes class but subaltern incues caste, class, gender and ethnic groups. As a matter of fact, marginalized women are also under the category of subaltern. The category of subaltern is not confined to caste or class. It is a cultural category.

Ordinarily scholars are prone to consider the question of subalternity with reference to Marxism. But I have streamlined in the context of Indian culture. Gandhi did not talk in term of subalternity but he has profusely used the expression 'Harizan' which comes under subaltern. The expression 'harizan' is neither economic nor caste. It is a cultural expression specially of Indian Society in which varnavyastha is prevalent. Broadly speaking those who fall behind the circle of power structure are known as subaltern. Marxist thinks that dalits fall within the category of proletariat and they have natural ties with dalits. My contention is that the category of subaltern is different from the category of 'Proletariate' of Karl Marx. 'Proletariate' denotes class based an economic structure but subaltern includes caste, class, gender and ethnics group. As a matter of fact marginalized women and black are also under subaltern.

Let us examine the question of inevitability of Marxism for Subaltern Morality. Subaltern Morality anticipates that there are two types of moral values. One is adhered by elite group who creates value and others obey and observe. The another is subaltern which follows the value system created by elites of the society. But I do not equate subaltern with Proletariate. This will be wrong to conclude that subaltern morality is near to Marxist morality of class-bound. Of course, the one view is that the problems of dalit can be fully tackled under the framework of Marxism. The second perspective is that the problem of dalits or subaltern can be solved in the wake of globalization in natural course. Gandhi opposed to Marxist view of Morality. Gandhi does not agree that subaltern morality will fall under the category of Marxist morality. On the other hand, Gandhi and Ambedkar both decry the notion of globalization. The supporters of globalization may argue that Globalization will eradicate poverty and eliminate hierarchical caste system which is vice of Indian society. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar solve the problems of untouchability and subalternity in the framework of Indian culture and civilization. The question of proximity with Marxism is out of question since Gandhi emphasized on the purity of means. More over class concept of Marixsm is not comprehensive because it does not take into consideration the gender and ethnicity. Gandhi was conscious of racial discrimination. Moreover Marx consider only economic problem of exclusion but as a matter of fact social exclusion is a great problem which still persists in India villages. It is true that Gandhi distanced from Marxism. It is clear that morality according to Marx is class-bound. It does not take into consideration the gender and its value system. As a matter fact, Ambedkar who is the representative thinker of subaltern which preferred Buddhism instead of Marxism and Christianity. In this respect it will be quite in fitness of things that we should refer to a book entitled "Annihilation of caste" by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar which is a reply to Mahatma Gandhi published in 1937. B.R. Ambedkar observes, "The Speech prepared by me for the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal of Lahore has had an ashtonishingly warm reception from the Hindu public for whom it was primarily intended"¹. The reply of Mahatma is a kind of vindication of caste which Ambedkar has reproduced in his book. It is just a Reprint of Gandhis Article in the Harizan which is a trenched reply to Ambedkar. Gandhi tried to meet the Amebdkars indictment. Dr. Ambedkar was supposed to preside over the conference of Jat-Pat Todak

Mandal of Lahore. But the conference itself was cancelled because Dr. Ambedkar's address was found by Reception Committee to be unacceptable. The address of Ambedkar might be very explosive and objectionable. Gandhi observes, "The Committee knew the Dr. Ambedkar's views on caste and Hindu scriptures. They knew that also that he had in unequivocal terms decided to give up Hinduism."²

Gandhi further observes, "It has to be read of only because it is open to serious objections, 'Dr. Ambedkar is challenge to Hindusim.'" ³ "Ambedkar makes a distinction between caste and varna." And there is nothing in the law of Varna to warrant a belief in untouchability". The essence of Hinduism is contained in its enunciation of none and only one God as Truth and its bold acceptance of Ahimsa as the law of the human family. Gandhi observes, "I am aware that my interpretation of Hindusim will be disputed by many besides Dr. Ambedkar that does not affect my position."⁴ Gandhi criticises Ambedkar "In my opinion the profound mistake that Dr. Ambedkar has made in his address is to pick out the texts of doubtful authenticity and value and the state of degraded Hindus who are no fit specimen of the faith they so woefully misrepresent. Judged by the standard applied by Dr. Ambedkar, every known living faith will probably fail." Gandhi in reply to Dr. Ambedkar says very aptly". Can a religion that was professed by Chaityna, Jnayadeva, Tukarana, Tiruvallavar, Ramkrishna Paramhans, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Devendra Nath Tagore, and host of others who might be easily mentioned, so utterly devoid of merit as is much out in Dr. Ambedkar address.

The Philosophical notion of caste and varna is too subtle to be grasped by people in general, because for all practical purposes in the Hindu society caste and varna are one and the same thing for both of them. The theory of Varnavyavastha is impossible in this age and there is no hope of its revival in the near future. But Hindu are slaves of caste and do not want to destroy it. And in the heart of their hearts they do not want to give social equality to the so called touchable and untouchables. Shudras, so they refuse to break caste, and give liberely donation the removal of untouchability, simply to evade the issue to seek the help of the shastras for the removal of untouchability and caste is simply to wash mud with mud. Dr. Ambedkar while giving reply to Mahatma says that 'I appreciate greatly the honour done to me by the Mahatma in taking notions in his Harijan of the caste which I had prepared for the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal. It is true that Mahatma dissent to the view of Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar met to opponent of Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. Ambedkar considers it's a matter of honour when Mahatma has replied. We have discussed in detail the problem of dalits (subaltern) in Indian context. It is true that dalits may be vehement critics of caste system of Hindu social structure but they have not totally discarded at any moment. Dalits (subaltern) could not abnegate their caste identity and merge with Marxist concept of class. In ancient India, Dalit or subaltern started movements as "shudra movements Marxism divided the society under two classes. Bourgeoise and proletariat. The basis of the division was economic. This acknowledges only two classes i.e. 'have' and 'haventots'. The society progresses through the clash of 'haves' and 'haventots'. Ordinarily dalits fell in the category of have-nots. They fell in the class of proletariat. But when dalit started their movements they discarded the Marxist

categories of Bourgeois and Proletariate. They became conscious of their own identity as Dalits or subaltern. When dalits became conscious of their identity they discarded themselves from the category of proletariat and abnegated Marxism.

The main question of Dalit discourse or subaltern discourse is whether their problem can be viewed from the economic point of view or sense of dignity point of view. J.S. Mill while doing utilitarianism did not subscribe to Bentham's external standard and hedonistic calculus of headonism as the parameter of morality. Mill stipulated a sense of diginity is the watchword of dignity in addition to external measure prescribed by Bentham. It may be said that the question of dignity is deeply related to economic structure of society. Then How dalit problem who sometimes link their problem to economic hardship and sometimes to dignity of being a human person. Jyotiba Phule emphasized and drew attention towards poverty of dalits. It is true that proverty is not social evil but moral evil too. The moral obligation of subaltern lies in getting rid of poverty. Jyotiba Phule was conscious of the fact that education alone can empower dalits. Illiteracy is the one of the major cause of the problem of shudras. As a matter of fact, the hierarchical caste system has put dalits to the lower or subordinate ranks. They were treated as 'untouchable'. According to Gandhi "untouchability means pollutions by the touch of certain persons by reasons of their birth in a particular state or family. In the word of Akha, it is an exccessence. In the guise of religion, it corrupts religion"⁵

None can be born untouchable, as all are sparks of one and the same divine fire. Gandhi very clearly says that, "It is also wrong to entertain false scruples about touching a dead body, whether should be an object of pity and respect."⁶

"But Bhangis, Dhudhs, Chemars and like are contemptuously looked down upon as untouchables from birth. They may bath for years with any amount of soap, dress, well and wear the marks of Vaishnavas, read the Gita every day and follow a learned profession, and yet they remain untouchables. This is 'rank irreligion fits only to be destroyed.'⁷ Gandhi is always against untouchability and upliftment of subaltern whether it may be the case of black in South Africa, Dalit in India and Negroes in Europe. He observes, "By treating removal of untouchability as an Ashram observations, we assert our belief that untouchability is not only not a part and parcel of Hindusim, but a plague, which it is the bounded duty of every Hindu to combat. Every Hindu, therefore, who 'considers it a sin, should alone for it by fraternizing with untouchables, associating with them in a spirit of come and service, deeming himself purified by such acts, redressing their grievances, helping them patiently to overcome ignorance and other evils clue to the slavery of age, and inspiring other Hindus to do likewise. Further Gandhi holds that "Removable of untouchability love for, and service of the whole world, and thus merger into ahimsa. Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barriers between man and man, and between the various orders of being the field such barriers created everywhere in the world, but here we have been mainly concerned with the untouchability which has received religious sanctions in India, and reduced lakhs and crorers of human beings to a state bordering on slavery. But Gandhi appreciated Ambedkar on the score that he was nationalist. He preferred Buddha in place of Marx.

Buddha is embodiment of 'Dhamma' which comprises moral values. Ambedkar did not subscribe to Marxist view. Marxist Ideology and class bound morality was not acceptable to Mahatma as well as Ambedkar. Gandhi was influenced by "dhamma" concept of Buddha. Gandhi preferred 'truth' is place of God because Atheists may question the sagacity of God but they will not question 'Truth'. So Gandhi conveniently said that 'Truth is God' and established morality over so called religion.

In addition to all these, Ambedkar has incorporated Gandhi's views under Appendix I. A vindication of caste by Mahatma Gandhi (A Reprint of his Article in the Harijan). In Annihilation of caste Ambedkar does not subscribe to Marxism and asserted the identity of dalit. Though we find a great proximity between Dalit and proletariat of Marx. Dalit could not merge with Marxist concept of class. In ancient India, dalits started movements as known as 'Shudras movements'. But 'shudras' did not identify themselves with 'proletariate' of Marx. Marx classified society under two heads " Bourgeoisie and Proletariate or haves and have nots. The basis of the division was economic. This acknowledges, only two classes i.e. 'haves' and 'havenots'. Ordinarily, dalits fell in the category of proletariat. But when dalits became conscious of their identity then they distanced themselves from the category of proletariat and abnegated Marxism.

The question of subaltern discourse' is whether their problem can be viewed from huge economic point of view, whether the question of dignity of their existence has also come into consideration. Due to development and industrialisation the problem of marginalization has been tackled in urban area. But the question of social exclusion still persists in spite of economic empowerment and political equality in Indian village life. The question of dignity is linked with the question of social exclusion. Jyotiba Phule drew attention towards poverty of dalits. Jyotiba Phule was conscious of the fact that education alone can empower dalits to stand on their feet. Illiteracy is one of the major causes of the problems of dalit. As a matter of fact, this hierarchical caste system has put dalits to the lower or subordinate ranks. I consider poverty as a moral evil. The moral obligation of subaltern lies in getting rid of poverty. As a matter of fact, the hierarchical caste system has put dalits or subalterns to the lower rank or subordinate rank. They were treated as 'untouchable'. In civilized society 'untouchability', is a curse and morality undesirable. So Gandhian urges to free society from 'untouchability'. The crux of the subaltern philosophy lies in empowering those who are worse off and behind the circle of power structure. Social justice lies in the well off of the worst off. 'Untouchability' is a sort of moral evil. It becomes moral obligation and bounded duty of civilized citizens to undo the practice of untouchability prevailing in our society. Gandhi was dead against untouchability. He considered 'untouchability' as moral evil. In order to get rid of this social evil of untouchability, Gandhi changed the nomenclature of "Shudras" to 'Harizans' (sons of God).

The problem of 'untouchability' was taken by Gandhi and he termed shudras as 'Harijans' in order to change the perception of general mass. Gandhi aspired to free and raise the status of 'shudras'. He wanted to remove the prevalent practice of 'untouchability'. In 1972, few young dalits formed a group known as 'Dalit Panthers' in

Maharashtra in order to liberate the 'shudras' from the oppression. Dalit panthers fought the battle to restore the dignity of dalits but in short period the 'Dalit Panthers Group' dwindled. Dalit Panthers faced a division. The two views emerged within 'Dalit Panthers'. Some of the members adhered to Ambedkarvada and few others lapsed into Marxism. The ideological conflicts created division among them. There were some thinkers who adhered to Marxism along with Ambedkarvada. In 1960, the discourse of Dalit problem started afresh in cowbelt and Marxism reappeared. Dalit associated themselves with the category of proletariat. But Dalit problem is different from the problem of proletariat. Dalit problem is not only economic but cultural also. Dalits face economic inequality as well as social inequality. They are being exploited due to economic backwardness and hierarchical caste system. Some of the thinkers tried to reconcile Ambedkar with Marxism. Some of the thinkers tried to find similarities and differences between Gandhi and Ambedkar. Economic backwardness of Dalit is directly linked with hierarchical caste system of Indian society. They think that Marxism must be combined with Ambedkarvada in order to get rid of dalit problem. They were dreaming that class system will replace the caste system of Indian society. Subaltern morality holds that we have to deconstruct the age-old value system conceived by Brahminism or Marxism. On the one hand, subaltern morality deconstructs old age traditional values of Hinduism and on the other hand it makes departures from Marxists views on moral value.

But dalit thinkers could not agree on the proposition that Marxism is the answer to their backwardness and exploitation. Philosophers did not agree to reconcile Ambedkar with Marxism. Indian Marxist wanted to establish communism in India without disturbing the hierarchical caste system. As a matter of fact, Marxism failed to ameliorate their pathetic conditions. In the meantime, Marxism collapsed. Marx considered the representative thinkers of modernism. Francis Fukuyama propounded the thesis of "The end of history". The end of history means the end of Ideology. Dalits kept patient for long years but now they are restless to deconstruct the centre of power and trying to enter into the circle of power structure. The power decides the role of a person or community in social development, Dalit women have not been included in the framework of Marxism. They have to search a way out. The promise and movements of Marxists could not solve the problems of dalit women. Dalit women assumed aggressive postures. Marxism was in defensive box relating to 'dalit vimarsha'. Some of the thinkers of Marxist brand may say that Marxism includes gender problems. But this is far from truth. Feminism is against the problem of gender inequality. Karl Marx could not conceive the aspect of inequality based on gender discrimination and confined the entire discourse on economic basis. In Hindi belt, the exploitation of dalit women is a common feature. In the beginning, Bihar did not witness any dalit movement. Earlier Philosophers did not take the social problems and its applied aspects. They were self contented with hair-splitting philosophical analysis. The non-dalits have tried to work out the sketch of sufferings and exploitations of dalit in the similar vein as dalit thinkers have done. 'Dalit Vimarsha' should not be closed to dalits only but should be opened. It should not be confined to caste and encourage closed attitude towards the problems of dalit. Indian

philosophers have taken a sympathetic view towards subaltern problems. Gandhi have also dwelt on the problems. He realized the passage of sufferings and exploitations and tried to liberate 'shudras' and called them Harijans. Gandhi was dead against 'untouchability'. Untouchability is an evil. We have to take into account Gandhian perspective towards subaltern. Gandhian view is to improve the social condition of Harijans and gave them due importance. Gandhi was having an open attitude and tried to fight the problem of untouchability alongwith dalits. Dalit movements could not align with Marx rather they always followed Gandhi. Gandhian perspective did not perceive that society will be class-less. Marxist are outdated since they did not imagine the emergence of middle class in their class-structure Marxist were stuck to 'Das Capital'. It seems that they are unaware of the rapid growth of middle class. They are quite in dark that class-division has taken a different shape and turn in the wake of globalization. Marxist are not concerned with hierarchical caste-structure of Indian society. In fact, they did not properly understand the problem in its entirety. They did not conceive that the end of Bourgeoise or capitalism or class-division is not the end of sufferings of dalits of India. They will have to face the problem of hierarchical caste system and its social implications. Dalits have to fight against the exploitation on the basis of caste system within the Indian frame work of social structure. Marxist failed to understand the problems of Indian Subalterns. Baba Saheb considered that without eradication of caste, we can't establish classless society as conceived by Karl Marx. It is sheer bookish to contend that we can achieve class-less and exploitation free society. The caste system in India is first and then the question of class comes. Marxist philosophy was rejected by Baba Saheb Ambedkar The caste system is not only the division of labour according to Bhim Rao Ambedkar rather it is division of labourers. Baba Saheb in his famous book 'Annihilation of Caste' conceived that any reform on the basis of economics in Indian context will be secondar and imcomplete. The development has been contemplated by Marxist as the change in the basic structure. But in social development, we have to take into consideration both economic and social factors. Development is inclusive process. In India society, caste is a fact; caste system is a problem. Gandhi also contemplated that the prevailing social problem is primarily linked with both economics and social structure. Any reform or revolution can't be effective unless it struggles with the prevailing social discrimination and exploitations. Gandhi paid due attention to problem of subaltern and down-trodden. Unless we solve the caste problem, we can't proceed towards establishment of society free from inequality and exploitation. In Indian context Gandhian perspective alone is relevant in India to solve the social problems of life. Marxism does not understand the problem of subaltern. In Indian contejxt, we can say that Marxist philosophy is incomplete. Dalit discourse can achieve its goal not in the Marxist framework of philosophy but in Gandhian philosophy of Village Reconstruction. Dalit problem in India is the problem of villages. In cities, we have liberated to a great extend due to economic upliftment and development in education. Unless we tackle the devil of untouchability in Indian Village, we can not contemplate the reform. Buddha does not subscribe to caste system.

When we observe the poverty in the dalit locality of villages, we are simply astonished. Sometime it seems that the main problem of subaltern is economic. Mahatma Gandhi realized that the problem of subaltern is not only economic but social in India. He advocated education as a means to improve the conditions of subaltern. Education is a great liberating force and can reform the pitiable conditions of subaltern. I contend that the solution to the dalit problem is neither in Marxism nor in Ambedkar's philosophy of caste annihilation. It is in Gandhian philosophy of removal of untouchability and reconstruction of village economy. Here Ambedkar conceived and gave the call to dalits to migrate to cities and get rid of the problem. But Gandhi contemplates reconstruction of village and abnegate the system of 'untouchability'. Jyotiba Phule as well as Ambedkar consider the dalit problem as social and not only economic. Sudras are deprived of education since the time immemorial. Subaltern were deprived of fundamental rights from the early stage of civilizations. As a matter of fact, Ambedkar talks in fact about economic problem but is against Marxism. Ambedkar realized that Dalits have to fight against identity crisis. The Identity discourse is unique in itself. It can't be mixed up with other problems. Even if economic problem is dominant in dalit discourse, we can't identify economic identity with that of caste identity of Indian society.

The question of Reservation is not only economic but linked with the caste system. 'Dalit vimarsh' streamlines the discrimination done to them in the historical process of social development. Indian constitution clearly envisages the provisions of reservation to schedule caste and schedule tribe. The identity of schedule caste and schedule tribe is not only linked to poverty but they are marginalized even if they are economically well off. They are under the category of subaltern which stands for marginalized people. Dalit discourse cannot be confined to economic discourse. The demand for reservation is linked with social exclusion. Dalit discourse puts their problem in a full-blooded way. Dalit discourse is concerned with social exclusion and economic backwardness. The schedule caste and schedule tribe are suffering from the problem of social exclusion. They have been granted reservation not only due to economic backwardness but due to social exclusion. There is a distinction between the concept of poor and proletariat. Proletariat is the byproduct of industrialization which emerged during the 19th century in England.

This is obvious that Marxism and Gandhian have different perspectives towards the problem of subaltern. Though dalits' demands are economic in nature, we can't equate it with Marxism. The demands of subaltern are related to their identity; subaltern discourse is cultural one. In the cowbelt the Marxist movement and dalits' movement are quite different. If dalits are on the margins not only on the grounds of economics but they are being dubbed as 'untouchables'. If dalit movements coupled with Marxism then it will lose its peculiar identity.

Now I will come to the philosophical implication of globalization and dalit movement. The cult of Bazarvada in the postmodern age will certainly affect the problem of dalit movement. The one perspective is that subaltern will have a comfortable position in the age of globalization. They will get opportunity to earn money and live a decent life.

The other perspective is that subalterns will be thoroughly marginalized in the Post-modern age. The one perspective holds that globalization is favourable for subalterns. The other perspective is that it is against the prospect of subaltern.

Some of the dalit thinkers consider globalization as a boon. The competition of open market will give them job opportunity and chance to develop the skill. Ambedkar's clarion call to dalits to migrate in cities. Gandhian thoughts suggest us that Indians should reconstruct village. Some of the philosophers find the end of caste system in the wake of globalization. In future the concept of globalization will come with flying colours and hierarchical caste system will meet its natural death. The inequality on caste ground has been perpetrated since three thousand years back. Globalization will end the story of inequality and exploitation. The problem of inequality and social exclusion can be best tackled in the cult of open Marketism. In one sense Bazarvada determines the norms of life and society. If the society is quite open and liberal democracy is playing its role then market will control the behaviours in society. There are supporters of globalization who advocate the learning of good English by dalits and subalterns. Subalterns will search out their liberation through open Marketism.

Those dalit thinkers who approve globalization as a panacea for inequality and caste discrimination are in the dark. Gandhi was in favour of swadeshi culture. Foreign investors are not interested in social problems of marginalization. Liberal democracy has become victorious. But globalization transcends the concept of national identity. National identity is an important factor. Globalization blurs national identity. The character of capitalism affects the national identity. I think subalterns will be most affected in the wake of Marketism. Those who are on the margins will be pushed further on the marginal point. The welfare work of the nation will be affected by globalization. The swadeshi culture propounded by Gandhi will be beneficial for subalterns. Gandhi has criticized technological growth undermining human values and man's dignity.

*Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research Darshan Bhavan,
36 Tuglakabad Institutional Area, M.B. Road, New Delhi - 110062*

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An Analysis of the Impact of Mahadev Desai on Mahatma Gandhi

Snehal Shrivastava

Chester Bowles has written “Everybody on Earth has been affected by Gandhi”. Thus, even though Mahatma Gandhi no more exists in flesh and blood yet 'the world continues to be influenced , inspired, drawn towards and find solace in him. So while Mahatma Gandhi remains to be a formidable source of inspiration to humanity yet, we tend to over look the fact that there were certain people and events that inspired and influenced Mahatma Gandhi. It is said that a man is known by the company he keeps and similarly Gandhiji's salvation came through his interaction with people of varied backgrounds and mindsets. Among these group of individuals was Mahadev Desai, whom most of the reading public in India know as Mahatma Gandhiji's Private Secretary. However 'the very relationship that Mahadev Desai and Mahatma Gandhi had cultivated erased the traditional idea of a secretary. Mahadev Desai was his constant companion, confidant and' aide. They both thus inspired and influenced each other in their own ways and in turn shaped the course of Indian Freedom Movement. Their relationship was that of a devotee which had at the end resulted in similarity and unison. The aim of this paper is to analyze the impact of Mahadev Desai on Mahatma Gandhi and the way it shaped the lives of both the individuals.

Mahatma Gandhi's martyrdom on 30th January 1948 put an end to his earthly sojourn, yet he continues to inspire and influence humanity in his formidable ways. The light has gone out of the world is what Jawaharlal Nehru remarked however falsifying himself he said that the light which illumine this country for so many years will continue to illumine the country for thousands of years to come. Martin Luther King Jr. remarked, “If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable... we may ignore him at our own risk.” Such is the impact of the life, thoughts and actions of Mahatma Gandhi had on the global platform. However, the abundant historiography on Gandhiji is centered around the western influence or the predominant events that influenced his thoughts on many political figures who were chiefly involved in working with him towards freedom of the country. It reveals very little of the lives of many who did not bask in the political limelight of the Freedom Movement and instead chose to closely identify themselves

with Gandhiji's larger agenda and quest for personal and social transformation.¹ Those were the stellar individuals, who had thrown in their lot with Gandhiji and in turn helped craft his great mission. Gandhiji believed that salvation can be achieved by working amongst people and not in seclusion. His Salvation came through his interaction with people of diverse background and mindsets. The contribution and influence of these people on Gandhiji is seldom considered. Mahadev Desai belonged to this close circle of people from which Gandhiji drew material, psychological and moral sustenance. While many know him as Gandhiji's secretary and recall his name as the translator of Gandhiji's autobiography from the original Gujarati, few today have a real sense of the invaluable role that Mahadev Desai played in the life of Gandhiji. A successful man is often said to be as successful as his secretary's efficiencies are. Going by this, one can imagine what a vital role Mahadev Desai played in the life of Gandhiji. However, the relationship that they shared broke the traditional concept of a secretary and elevated it to a higher pedestal. Mahadevbhai was his scribe, disciple, companion in jail, fellow traveler, seeker, confidant and aide.

Relationship between Mahatma Gandhi and Mahadev Desai

The meeting of Gandhiji and Mahadevbhai was designed in a manner as if the Providence wanted the two to be together. After meeting Gandhiji for the first time Mahadevbhai had told his friend Narhari Parekh that he has half a mind to sit at the feet of Gandhiji. In a letter written to Narhari in September 1919, Mahadevbhai mentioned that Gandhiji had requisitioned for his services. That Gandhiji had found in him three outstanding qualities – regularity, fidelity and intelligence. In the post script of this letter Mahadevbhai writes that he always wanted to do something in life that could make it worth while. This clarion call of Gandhiji provided him with an instrument to achieve something for which the world will praise him.² Within six months of joining Gandhiji as his private secretary in November 1917, he had won over Gandhiji so completely that in May 1918, Gandhiji wrote to him saying that he has established a position which has made him irreplaceable. Gandhiji once wrote to H.S.L Polak about Mahadevbhai stating him to be the right man for his political work and praised his efficiency and character.³ While Mahadevbhai's transition into Gandhiji's world was gradual, however once there his identification with Gandhiji was complete. Mahadevbhai was a man who was willing to temper and discipline his minds and subjugate its desires and aspirations to a larger cause. The life he chose surpassed the ordinary boundaries of a professional or personal relationship, and in him, Gandhiji found his true companion who would accompany him in his journey towards freedom of the country and a larger cause of salvation. Gandhiji was a hard taskmaster who expected very high standards from the people working with him. In such a situation, writes Pyarelal, “His ideal secretary must have no interest other than to serve the master.” He should be a living embodiment for all the values that Gandhiji stood for. Such a secretary needs to be far away from publicity. Remaining independent and aloof he must merge his personality with the personality of his Guru. In short, he must become his alter ego – autonomous but in perfect unison with him.⁴

Mahadev bhai had passed this test. The relationship that Mahadev bhai shared with Gandhiji was one such example of endless devotion, where the devotee elevated his master to the highest degree and then his only aim in life was to perform his duty with purity and benevolence. Mahadev bhai's son, Shri Narayan Desai remarked, as Mahadev bhai related everything about himself to Gandhiji, once you catch hold of Gandhiji you will meet Mahadev bhai at every step. Mahadev bhai's love for Gandhiji was like a beloved. He was attracted to Gandhiji's virtues than his fame. Their desires were complimentary. He was as much as Gandhiji's colleague in his unsuccessful campaigns as he was in the successful ones. The greatness of Gandhiji had designated him to being the universal father (Bapu), Mahadev had also found in Gandhiji a father in every sense of term. Gandhiji had taken almost complete control of Mahadev bhai's mind just as Mahadev had done with Gandhiji's work. This affectionate relationship became very close in very short time. So much so that it was difficult for both of them to stay away from each other even for a few days. The pangs of separation which Mahadev had to undergo sometimes became unbearable for him. They would often write letters to each other. They lived as if they were one soul in two bodies. The essence of this concord was love – which started from attraction and gradually increasingly resulted in oneness. Mahadev bhai would often tell people that living with Gandhiji was not an easy task. It was like living on the edge of a volcano which can burst any moment and blow you off. However his only prayer in life was to die in the service of Gandhiji.⁵ He adjusted his bearing so well that he became indispensable to Gandhiji. It was impossible to imagine Gandhiji without Mahadev bhai. In spite of being a learned philosopher he sought delight in taking orders from his master rather than issuing them. He once remarked, “I am more accustomed to standing behind a chair than in front of one.”⁶ Similarly Gandhiji had assigned a special place to Mahadev bhai in his life to Mahadev bhai. He once described him as son, secretary and lover rolled into one. Gandhiji described Mahadev bhai's life as an endless poem of devotion. He had immense love and respect towards Mahadev bhai which can be seen in the following incidents. In 1919, when Mahadev bhai fell ill for the first time, Gandhiji wrote in a letter to Narhari, “But for Punjab, I would come there and embrace Mahadev.”⁷ On another occasion Gandhiji broke his customary weekly silence in order to enquire about Mahadevbhai's health. He once said to C.F. Andrews about Mahadev bhai, “There are some men who have come to bless the Ashram and not be blessed by it. He is one of the few pearls I have got here.”⁸ From a personal letter written by Mahadev bhai it seems that Gandhiji had told him before his arrest in 1919 that he was being named his heir. Mahadev bhai wrote about this, “I have never considered myself fit enough for that status... My desire is to think of Hanuman as my ideal and swim through life by devotion and surrender...”⁹ Mahadev bhai's death in 1942 was the climax of this saga of endless devotion. While cremating him Gandhiji had remarked in sorrow, “I had thought that you would perform this task for me someday, but now I am doing it for you.... It is cruel for children to wish for death before their parents. It is selfish.” Soon after Mahadev bhai's death, Sushila Nayar asked Gandhiji one day if it was Mahadev

bhai's death that had affected him the most out of all the deaths that he had faced. On this Gandhiji replied that he feels equally for the death of Jamanalal Bajaj, Maganlal Gandhi and Mahadev bhai. But out of the three, Mahadev bhai had chosen to lose himself completely to him. He never ceased to have individuality apart from Gandhiji.¹⁰ In the foreword for D.G.Tendulkars 'Mahatma', Jawaharlal Nehru writes, "No man can write a real life of Gandhiji unless he is as big as Gandhiji." But Mahadevbhai had constituted himself into a living encyclopedia of Gandhiji's thoughts and ideas. He was the final court of appeal where everything related to Gandhiji can be verified and checked. His diary published under the title of 'Day to Day' is the a perfect example of this. He started writing it on 13th November 1917, a week after joining Gandhiji and the last notation is of 14th August 1942, a day prior to his death. He had presented the minutest details without the least of ego. No one could dare to misquote or misinterpret Gandhiji during Mahadev bhai's lifetime. Verrier Elwin writes, "Today Gandhiji has the personal love and affection of more than any other man living : in the creation of that affection Mahadev had his important part. For without knowledge there can be no love...He made Gandhiji real to millions made him the best known and best loved man. Without him, a thousand jewels more precious than diamonds would have been lost to the world."¹¹ Mahadevbhai was with ease with Gandhiji and his surroundings. Enriched and refined through reading, he could even infuse the same in the style of Gandhiji's writings. Just as Mahadev sent all his articles for newspaper to the press only after showing them to Gandhiji, in the same way Gandhiji also used to sent his articles to press only after Mahadev had seen them. Both discussed not only about the language but also style, thought and matter and made the necessary alterations. Having a privilege of being a constant companion of Gandhiji and there by being a first-hand witness to his activities as and when they were unfolded , Mahadev bhai could interpret Gandhiji's mind like no other man of that time. Rajmohan Gandhi has observed, "Mahadev lived Gandhiji's life thrice. Firstly, by anticipating his moves, secondly by actually being a part of their execution and thirdly by writing them down in his diary, analyzing and interpreting them."

Although, Mahadev bhai's development and Gandhiji's progress were simultaneous, yet conflicts did arise due to differences in their nature. But, these were more of diversities than conflicts. However, while most of the people were interested in Gandhiji's political struggle alone , Mahadevbhai was very clear about his loyalty to Gandhiji and his reasons for casting his lot with Gandhiji. While he was willing to argue with his mentor, he would only push his ideas so far and no further. Often they would quarrel over various issues. But Mahadev bhai's complete devotion to Gandhiji did not make him his blind follower. He did not romanticize or sentimentalize Gandhiji. Gandhiji himself demanded Mahadev bhai to be critical of his views. He wanted a worthy opponent to keep his thinking clear and agile. Over the years, Mahadev bhai proved himself to be a debater which is evident from the correspondence between the two. They talked about many things; political choices, the qualities in others, running of their daily lives and their personal and spiritual quests. Mahadev bhai was not merely a

faithful echo of his master but when occasion demanded he could also speak up to him. A short note in his diary only two months after joining Gandhiji shows. Mahadev bhai was that while writing a commentary on Gandhiji's book Sarvodaya, he criticized Gandhiji's writing by saying, that some chapters are really excellent in style and of substance, but there are some others that appear slipshod. Gandhiji readily accepted this criticism. In the second instance, a lot of criticism assailed him for translating the Autobiography of Pt Jawaharlal Nehru. Those who believed that Jawaharlal Nehru had written a lot against Gandhiji in the book questioned Mahadev bhai's translating it. Those who knew that the book expressed socialist viewpoint thought that Mahadev bhai might color it with his own Gandhian thoughts. Considering all the criticism he received, Mahadev bhai wrote in the preface, "It is neither any dissemination against Gandhiji, nor a challenge to Gandhism. It is a salutation to Gandhiji."¹² Mahadev bhai has defined Nehruji's 'stiff' criticism of Gandhiji as being an invaluable contribution in understanding the Gandhian philosophy. Gandhiji and Mahadevbhai were totally different but both had the power of attract others. While Gandhiji's power of attraction came from the nectar of his soul and the skills acquired through his vast experiences. Mahadev bhai's power of attraction was from his God-given elegance and his charm from his love drenched speech. While Gandhiji's personality was severe like the afternoon sun of summer month, Mahadev bhai's personality was gentle like the moon. His contribution in making Gandhiji what he was, was quite substantial. There was a definite effectiveness in Gandhiji's writings after meeting Mahadev bhai. The language of "Hind Swaraj" and "Experiments with Truth" is the language Gandhiji used for his two basic books. The change is evident when we compare these two. Narayan Desai mentions that "Christian Bartlof from Gandhi Centram , Berlin in an interview said that on studying Gandhiji's writings, it has been clearly evident that after being in Mahadev bhai's contact his language had become softer and more precise." The people in the west find it easier to understand Gandhian thought because of Mahadevbhai's writings. Mahadev bhai seemed to have more liberal and original attitude towards women than Gandhiji. The attitude that Gandhiji had towards women in 1930-32 was not the same that he had during 1917-21. Gandhiji presented the key to the freedom of India to the women during the Salt Satyagraha (1930-32) and Civil Disobedience Movement (1932). Mahadev bhai attitude must have been one of the factors that worked towards this progress in the thoughts.¹³ Mahadev bhai also had an effect on Gandhiji's emotional life, and that is why he said, when Mahadevbhai was there, "Mahadev enhanced the prestige of the Ashram," and after his demise, "All of six people cannot fill the lacuna created by him."¹⁴ As Pyarelal points out, "Mahadev Desai was not a mere occupant of an office, he was an institution. His office began and ended with himself. He left behind him no successor."

Conclusion

On Mahadev bhai's death Gandhiji received a condolence letter a line of which beautifully summed up the relationship between him and Mahadevbhai. It reads, "Lord Buddha had only one disciple and that was Anand; so is the case of Mahadev with regard

to you.”¹⁵ Lord Buddha had thousands of disciples but Anand towered head over shoulders above the rest. Similarly Mahadev bhai's aura had given him a unique position among all those who had endeavored to serve Gandhiji from close quarters. His life was characterized by a rare single minded devotion to Gandhiji and his ideals. Gandhiji lived for the world but Mahadevbhai lived for Gandhiji. They were both two individuals having distinct intellect and yet existed as one soul in two bodies, who had similarity of language that could be exchanged, who had individual genius and yet their individuality of one had been immersed in the other, and though fused, the exclusive genius of each was no less brilliant. Gandhiji once remarked about Mahadev bhai in an article published in Harijan on 12th October, 1946, “If I am asked what was Mahadev's greatest quality, I would say his ability to reduce himself to zero whenever occasion demanded it.”¹⁶ Secretaries of great men feel arrogant for at times the sand heated by the sun scorches more than the sun itself. But the word secretary doesn't suit Gandhiji's ascetic culture as he valued humility more than arrogance. The word devotee suits best to Mahadev bhai. He did not need to read Tolstoy or Ruskin on physical labor nor did he need to attend work camps, as his devotion to Gandhiji was enough to teach him new lessons daily and shape up his life. His work for years might not have made headlines in the newspaper, but it can certainly be described as a result of his devotional valor. Mahadevbhai was willing to apply himself to the task on hand as he saw it. Had he not joined Gandhiji he might have become a fine man of letters or an excellent translator or could even have earned money by practicing law, but he would have lost the opportunity to become fit to be compared to the best among all human beings. C. Rajgopalachari described Mahadev bhai as 'Gandhiji's spare organ. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel described his death as an 'enviable to Gods.' Ghanshyamdas Birla called him an 'invaluable gem.' It is thus likely that Gandhiji's value became tenfold due to Mahadev bhai.

To conclude in the words of Gandhiji “Remaining the disciple, Mahadev became my Guru. I visit his Samadhi to remember and emulate his worthy example. Pray God; Let us walk in his footsteps.”¹⁷

*Research Scholar
Department of History
Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur*

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पुनर्पाठ

गाँधी बनाम् गोडसे

रघु ठाकुर

बाराबंकी के साथी श्री राजनार्थ शर्मा ने मुझे डॉ. शंकर शरण के लेख “थैंक यू मि. गोडसे” की प्रति ई-मेल पर भेजी है। इस लेख का संदर्भ लेख के अनुसार” हुतात्मा श्री नाथूराम गोडसे के 19 मई जन्म दिवस की पूर्व संध्या “पर उन्हें समर्पित लेख” लिखा है। डॉ. शंकर शरण के बारे में यह किसी से छिपा नहीं है कि वे राष्ट्रीय स्वयं सेवक संघ और कट्टरपंथी हिन्दू पद पाद शाही की विचारधारा के पोषक और प्रवर्तक हैं। इसलिए नाथूराम गोडसे के बारे में उनकी राय वैसी ही होनी चाहिए। फिलहाल मेरा उद्देश्य उनकी राय को बदलना नहीं है बल्कि उनकी उन तथ्यात्मक त्रुटियों से उन्हें और समाज को अवगत कराना है जिनके आधार पर उन्होंने गलत निष्कर्ष निकाले हैं।

पहली बात तो यही है कि, उन्होंने लिखा है कि रहस्य का आरम्भ 08 नवम्बर 1948 को ही हो गया था। जब गाँधीजी की हत्या के लिए चले मुकदमे में श्री गोडसे द्वारा दिए गए बयान को प्रकाशित करने पर प्रतिबंध लगा दिया गया। मुझे ऐसे किसी सरकारी आदेश की प्रति देखने को नहीं मिली है जिसमें श्री गोडसे के बयान को प्रकाशित करने पर रोक लगाई गई हो। हाँ यह हो सकता है कि गोडसे के प्रति नफरत व महात्मा गाँधी के प्रति श्रद्धा के भाव से स्वतः मीडिया ने यह संयम बरता हो, कि ऐसे झूठ फैलाने वाले दस्तावेज़ न छापे जाएँ। वैसे भी श्री गोडसे का वह बयान बाकायदा लोगों ने प्रकाशित भी किया था, और उसे बंटवाया भी था। मेरी जानकारी में किसी व्यक्ति को इस आरोप में गिरफ्तार नहीं किया गया कि उसने श्री गोडसे के प्रतिबंधित बयान को छपा है। राष्ट्रीय स्वयं सेवक संघ के लोगों की गिरफ्तारी का आधार सरकार ने प्रतिबंधित संगठन के साथ होने के आधार पर की थी।

डॉ. शंकर शरण ने जस्टिस जी.डी. खोसला जो कि गाँधी की हत्या की सुनवाई करने वाले पैनल में से एक जज थे, की टिप्पणी को उद्धृत किया है और यह कहा है कि यह टिप्पणी स्व. जी.डी. खोसला ने तब की थी जब श्री गोडसे ने गाँधी की हत्या के सम्बन्ध में अपना 5 घंटे का 90 पेज का पक्ष बयान प्रस्तुत किया था। पहले तो मुझे इसी पर आश्चर्य है कि क्या किसी हत्या के अपराधी का बयान रूपी भाषण लगातार 5 घंटे तक रिकॉर्ड किया जाना चाहिये या हत्यारे को ऐसा अवसर दिया जाना चाहिये? या ऐसा अवसर देने की कोई विधि या परंपरा या नियम हो। वैचारिक फर्क न तो सेल्फ डिफेंस होता है न हत्या के आधार में। वैधानिक प्रक्रिया को थोड़ा बहुत मैं भी जानता हूँ और एक वकील के नाते उसके विधिक पक्ष को लेकर बात करें तो किसी भी हत्या

के अपराधी के अपने सुरक्षा बयान में जो धारा 313 में दर्ज होते हैं केवल उन प्रश्नों के उत्तर ही नोट किए जाते हैं जो उसे अपराध से निर्दोष सिद्ध करने-किसी हमले से बचने के लिए अपने बचाव पक्ष के तर्क में हों। ऐसे बयान भाषण नहीं होते और वह भी 5 घंटे के। अगर कोई, हमला करने वाले से बचाव के लिए मुठभेड़ करता है और उसमें हत्या हो जाती है तो वह सेल्फडिफेंस होता है। परन्तु किसी हत्या के लिए भावनात्मक तर्क या आधार नहीं होता और किसी न्यायिक बैंच के पास 5-5 घंटे के बयान रिकॉर्ड करने का वक्त भी नहीं होता। दूसरी बात यह कि जब सुनवाई करने वाले जज एक से अधिक होते हैं तो उन बकाया जजों की टिप्पणियाँ क्या थीं उन्हें भी सामने रखा जाना चाहिए। तीसरी बात यह कि जब डॉ. शरण यह कह रहे थे कि बैंच थी और हाई कोर्ट की सुनवाई थी तो उन्हें यह भी पता होना चाहिए कि किसी भी अपराधिक प्रकरण की सुनवाई हाईकोर्ट में अपील के रूप में होती है। परन्तु मुलजिम या गवाहों के बयान हाई कोर्ट में दर्ज नहीं होते और अगर कभी हाई कोर्ट किसी के आवेदन पर या स्वतः महसूस करे कि कोई बयान रिकॉर्ड किया जाना है तो वे उसे किसी जिला न्यायालय को रिकॉर्ड कराने के लिए भेजते हैं। इसीलिए जस्टिस खोसला के नाम से कही गई टिप्पणी और 5 घंटे के हाईकोर्ट के बयान की बात समझ से परे है। हो सकता है कि जिन लोगों ने श्री गोडसे को महात्मा गाँधी की हत्या के लिए प्रेरित किया हो उन्हीं लोगों ने उनकी ओर से यह बयान तैयार किया हो, जिसे अदालत में बतौर बयान के रूप में जमा कराया गया हो। चौथी बात महत्वपूर्ण यह है कि जस्टिस खोसला की जिस टिप्पणी की चर्चा डॉ. शंकर शरण ने की वह श्री खोसला के पूर्वाग्रहों और विधान से इतर कार्य और टिप्पणी है। किसी कोर्ट में श्रोता जूरी नहीं होते। जूरी वही लोग बनते हैं जो कानून की जानकारी रखते हैं। फिर न्यायालय में किसी मुलजिम की सुनवाई सुनने के लिए आम तौर पर उसके परिवार या सम्बन्धी पक्ष के लोग हो जाते हैं जिनका अपराधी से कोई न कोई नाता होता है और इन सम्बन्धित लोगों का, अदालत द्वारा दोषी सिद्ध पाए जाने पर और सम्भावित मृत्यु दण्ड के भय से रोना स्वाभाविक है। हम लोग आए दिन अदालतों में देखते हैं कि मुलजिम की सुनवाई के दौरान उसके परिवार और पक्ष के लोग अदालत प्रांगण में जब होते हैं तो आम तौर पर सजा होने पर फूट फूट कर रोते हैं। श्री खोसला की टिप्पणी उनके पूर्वाग्रहों का प्रमाण है। श्री शंकर शरण जो लिख रहे हैं तो इसका मतलब साफ है कि श्री खोसला न तो निष्पक्ष जज थे न वैधानिक प्रक्रिया का पालन कर रहे थे। इस सम्भावना के लिए जस्टिस खोसला की मानसिक पृष्ठभूमि की भी पड़ताल जरूरी है। जस्टिस खोसला का जन्म लाहौर में हुआ था। यह बात सही है कि भारत के विभाजन की सर्वाधिक पीड़ा और तकलीफ या तो उन लोगों को हुई थी जो हिन्दू होने के कारण पाक से भागने को मजबूर किये गये थे या फिर उन मुस्लिम भाइयों को जो हिन्दुस्तान से भागकर पाकिस्तान गये थे। इसलिये जो हिन्दू भाई पाकिस्तान से भागकर हिन्दुस्तान आये उनकी पीड़ा कितनी भयावह रही होगी इसकी कल्पना करना व इसे शब्दों में कह पाना भी कठिन है। उनके मन में भोगी हुई पीड़ा की प्रतिक्रिया और उसके फलस्वरूप पैदा हुई घृणा व आक्रोश बहुत स्वाभाविक है। और चूंकि देश में एक वातावरण जाने अनजाने या किसी दुरभि संधि या जाति या अन्य कारणों से ऐसा बनाया गया था कि भारत विभाजन के अपराधी महात्मा गाँधी हैं। यह भी कि अगर महात्मा गाँधी ने भारत विभाजन को रोकना चाहा होता तो विभाजन नहीं होता। महात्मा गाँधी की बातों और कथनों को इस ढंग से प्रचारित व प्रसारित किया गया कि उस समय आमतौर पर हिन्दू समाज में और बँटवारे के बाद पाकिस्तान से आये हुई भाइयों में महात्मा गाँधी की एक हिन्दू विरोधी की छवि व केवल मुस्लिम समर्थक की छवि बनाई गई थी। यही कारण था कि महात्मा गाँधी की हत्या के चार-पाँच प्रयास पहले भी हो चुके थे। हालांकि श्री गोडसे तथा इनके सहयोगी इनके प्रयासों में पहले भी असफल हो चुके थे। महात्मा गाँधी की हत्या के एक दिन पूर्व तत्कालीन गृह मंत्री स्व. वल्लभ भाई पटेल व प्रधानमंत्री स्व. जवाहर लाल नेहरू गाँधी जी से मिले थे और उन्हें

इस घटनाक्रम के बारे में सरकारी रपट बताकर पुलिस पहरा लगाने की सलाह दी थी। इसे महात्मा गाँधी ने पूर्णतः नकार दिया था और, गाँधी जी ने यहाँ तक कहा कि पुलिस की सुरक्षा व जांच पड़ताल में अगर प्रार्थना की जाये तो इससे तो अच्छा होगा कि प्रार्थना ही न की जाये।

डॉ. शंकर शरण ने लिखा है कि डॉ. अम्बेडकर ने गोडसे के वकील को संदेश भेजा था कि अगर गोडसे चाहें तो उनकी सजा वे आजीवन कारावास में बदलवा सकते हैं। उनके अनुसार इस प्रस्ताव को गोडसे ने इंकार कर दिया। अब इस प्रस्ताव के प्रमाण के बारे में उन्होंने किसी दस्तावेज़ का उल्लेख नहीं किया है।

डॉ. अम्बेडकर का सम्पूर्ण वाङ्मय प्रकाशित हुआ है, उसमें भी इसका कोई उल्लेख कहीं नहीं है।

तत्कालीन भारत सरकार में कभी चर्चा हुई हो इसका भी कोई उल्लेख नहीं है, और डॉ. अम्बेडकर ने भी ऐसे किसी प्रस्ताव की चर्चा न तो सार्वजनिक रूप से न व्यक्तिगत रूप से और न ही किसी पत्र में की है। इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि डॉ. शरण गोडसे को महिमा मंडित करने को झूठ प्रकाशित कर रहे हैं। गोडसे के भाई श्री गोपाल गोडसे को भी सजा हुई थी और उन्होंने महात्मा गाँधी के बेटे स्व. रामदास गाँधी के पास सजा की माफी के लिये पहल की थी। तथा स्व. रामदास गाँधी ने तत्कालीन गृहमंत्री सरदार पटेल को पत्र लिखा था जो निम्नानुसार है :-

“नाथूराम गोडसे को मृत्यु दण्ड देना बापूजी की अहिंसा की सोच के विपरीत हो जायेगा और उनकी अहिंसा को कलेश पहुँचेगा। आखिरकार नाथूराम गोडसे की मृत्यु से बापूजी पुनः जीवित होने वाले नहीं हैं। हम परिवार वालों की क्षतिपूर्ति होनी असंभव है। लेकिन हमारे या समस्त देश के उस अवसाद में प्रति हिंसा और क्रोध का सर्वथा अभाव था। हम विपक्ष थे लेकिन बैर लेकर क्या करते और किससे बैर लेते? नाथूराम तो निमित्त मात्र था इसलिये प्रतिशोध की हिंसा जगाकर हम लोगो को बापू जी की समस्त जीवन की साधना को क्षय नहीं करना चाहिये। ऐसा करने से अहिंसा के पुजारी का अपमान हो जायेगा।”

स्व. रामदास गाँधी का यह पत्र डॉ. शंकर शरण सरदार वल्लभ भाई पटेल के दस्तावेज़ों में देख सकते हैं। इतना ही नहीं इसके बाद की घटना का उल्लेख स्व. रामदास गाँधी की बेटी श्रीमती सुमित्र कुलकर्णी ने अपनी पुस्तक में किया है। “गाँधी व्यक्तित्व-परिवार “पुस्तक के पेज नं. 142 पर उन्होंने उस घटना का जिक्र किया है कि स्व. रामदास गाँधी की बीमारी का समाचार पढ़कर गोपाल गोडसे उनसे मिलने मुम्बई के अस्पताल आये थे और उनसे मिलना चाहते थे। चूंकि स्व. रामदास गाँधी लगभग मृत्युशय्या पर थे अतः गोपाल गोडसे को जिन्हें सुमित्र जी पहचानती भी नहीं थी ने मिलाने से इंकार किया। तब गोपाल गोडसे ने कहा “देखिये रामदास गाँधी एक व्यक्ति थे जिसने महात्मा गाँधी हत्या-केस में हमारी जान बचाने का प्रयास किया था। मैंने आजीवन उस सज्जन को दिल में सँजोये रखा है। आज वह बीमार है मैं उन्हें कष्ट नहीं दूँगा। उनके चरण-स्पर्श करके कृतार्थ हो जाऊँगा। हमारे मन में तो रामदास गाँधी महात्मा से भी बढ़कर है” स्व. रामदास गाँधी पूना में ही रहते थे और नाथूराम गोडसे उनके परिजन व भाई गोपाल गोडसे की पहल पर ही स्व. रामदास जी ने नाथूराम गोडसे, को माफी का पत्र स्व. वल्लभ भाई पटेल के लिए लिखा था। इस पत्राचार से यह प्रमाणित हो जाता है कि महात्मा गाँधी और उनके परिवार की महानता का रूप कैसा था। प्रमाण इस घटनाक्रम से मिल जाता है। हालांकि मैं जानता हूँ इस कटु सत्य को पहचानना डॉ. शंकर शरण और उनकी वैचारिक जमातों के लिये सहज नहीं है। इन जमातों का चरित्र तो इससे ही पता लग जाता है कि उनकी (स्व. रामदास गाँधी की) मृत्यु के एक दिन पूर्व गोपाल गोडसे ने एक बयान दिया कि मरते समय महात्मा गाँधी ने “हे राम” नहीं कहा था। जबकि गोपाल गोडसे घटना स्थल पर ही नहीं था और नाथूराम गोडसे ने ऐसा कोई बयान नहीं दिया था। यानी गोडसे के पीछे भी जो शक्तियाँ हैं, उनका एक मात्र उद्देश्य, महात्मा जी की छवि को धूमिल करना है।

डॉ. शंकर शरण यह भी लिखते हैं कि महात्मा गाँधी की हत्या के बाद गाँधी समर्थकों ने बड़े पैमाने पर गोडसे के जाति समुदाय चितपावन ब्राम्हणों की हत्या की थी। क्या इससे भी बड़ा कोई झूठ दुनिया का हो सकता है? मैं उनसे अपील करूँगा कि वे पूना के मृतकों का नाम बतायें ताकि असल बात सामने आये। इन्हें पता नहीं कि पूना के अधिकांश चितपावन ब्राम्हण गाँधी जी के समर्थक थे। स्व. एस.एम. जोशी, मधु दण्डवते, मधु लिमये व हज़ारों-सैकड़ों की संख्या में गाँधी भक्त लोग थे। उन्होंने अपने तर्क में 31 जनवरी 1948 के “न्यूयॉर्क टाइम्स” में प्रकाशित समाचार का हवाला दिया है। परन्तु उन्हें बम्बई ‘पूना और हिन्दुस्तान का कोई अखबार उदाहरण को नहीं मिला। यह भी आश्चर्यजनक है कि छः वर्ष स्व. अटल जी प्रधानमंत्री रहे 5 वर्ष से लगातार श्री मोदी जी प्रधानमंत्री है। इससे पहले श्री आडवाणी गृहमंत्री रहे, श्री राजनाथ सिंह गृहमंत्री रहे पर किसी ने भी न तो इन घटनाओं की जाँच कराने का ना तो आदेश दिया और ना ही इसकी कोई चर्चा की।

डॉ. शंकर शरण कितनी दुर्भावना से ग्रस्त हैं यह इससे स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि उन्होंने इन झूठी घटनाओं को ‘गाँधीवादी हिंसा’ लिखा है? अगर बहस के लिये मान लें कि ऐसी हिंसा हुई हो तो उसका गाँधी जी से क्या संबंध। उसके लिये गाँधी जी का विचार कैसे जिम्मेदार हो सकता है? डॉ. शंकर शरण तो विद्वेष की उस सीमा तक चले गये हैं कि उन्होंने लिखा कि “गोडसे ने गाँधी की हत्या कर उन्हें वह महानता प्रदान करने में केन्द्रीय भूमिका निभाई जो सामान्य रूप से मिलने वाली नहीं थी”। जबकि तथ्य यह है कि महात्मा जी की हत्या से गाँधी जी की महानता पर कोई असर नहीं पड़ा बल्कि गोडसे जैसे अपराधी मानस के हत्यारो को मीडिया में प्रचार जरूर मिल गया। कई बार अपराधी को बड़े व्यक्ति के साथ अपराध करने से प्रचार मिलता है। रावण ने सीता का हरण किया इसलिये रावण के नाम की भी चर्चा होती है। अगर किसी सामान्य व्यक्ति की पत्नी का हरण किया होता तो रावण का नाम कौन जानता?

डॉ. शंकर शरण और उनके विचार के संघ के अनेक लोग गाँधी जी पर यह आक्षेप करते हैं कि गाँधी जी ने कहा था कि विभाजन मेरी लाश पर होगा और महात्मा गाँधी ने विभाजन को रोकने के लिये अनशन तक नहीं किया। इस संबंध में एक तो वे जान लें गाँधी जी विभाजन के खिलाफ थे। परन्तु उन्होंने अनशन की घोषणा कभी नहीं की थी। दूसरे जो उन्होंने कहा था कि “विभाजन मेरी लाश पर होगा उनका यह पूर्वानुमान सही निकला”। विभाजन उनकी लाश ही पर हुआ। उस निर्दोष व्यक्ति की हत्या सिर्फ 6 माह के अंदर इसलिये कर दी गयी कि झूठे प्रचार करने वालों ने उन्हें विभाजन का अपराधी बना दिया। जबकि यह स्थापित सत्य है की गाँधी जी विभाजन के खिलाफ थे जिसे रोकने के लिये उन्होंने हर प्रकार के उपाय किये थे :-

वे कई बार स्व. जिन्ना से मिले और उन्हें समझाने का प्रयास किया। जिसको लेकर महात्मा गाँधी की आलोचना भी हुई। और तो छोड़ो मौलाना अब्दुल कलाम तक ने उनकी आलोचना की। गोडसे ने तो उनका बंबई में जिन्ना से मिलने जाने का तीव्र विरोध किया था। याने गोडसे के पीछे की शक्तियाँ विभाजन चाहती थी तथा दोष महात्मा जी पर डालना चाहती थीं। दूसरे जब उन्हें समाचार पत्र से भारत के विभाजन के प्रस्ताव पर कांग्रेस की सहमति की सूचना मिली तो उन्होंने पत्र लिखकर अपनी आपत्ति दर्ज कराई और कांग्रेस पार्टी की विशेष बैठक बुलाने की माँग की। इस बैठक में भाग लेने के लिये महात्मा गाँधी नोआखली (बंगाल) से चलकर दिल्ली पहुँचे थे। इस बैठक में उन्होंने स्पष्ट कहा कि मुझे इस प्रस्ताव के बारे में कोई सूचना नहीं दी गयी, सहमति का तो प्रश्न ही नहीं। डॉ. लोहिया, जो बैठक में उपस्थित थे ने इस तथ्य को अपनी पुस्तक “भारत विभाजन के अपराधी” में दर्ज किया है। जिसे शंकर शरण जी चाहें तो पढ़ सकते हैं।” परन्तु मात्र दो सदस्यों ने उनका समर्थन किया बकाया पूरी कांग्रेस लगभग विभाजन का समर्थन करती रही है। यह एक ऐसी अकल्पनीय परिस्थिति थी जिसकी कल्पना गाँधी जी ने नहीं की थी। महात्मा गाँधी उसके पूर्व लगभग एक दशक से कांग्रेस के नैतिक मार्गदर्शक थे पदाधिकारी नहीं। उन्होंने विभाजन के बाद पैदा होने वाली समस्याओं से होने वाली

संभावित हिंसा पर चिंता प्रकट की थी, परन्तु तत्कालीन कांग्रेस नेतृत्व ने सामान्य बताकर उनकी शंकाओं का खण्डन किया। गाँधी जी ने समझ लिया था कि एक तरफ जिन्ना व मुस्लिम लीग और दूसरी तरफ गोडसे व हिन्दू कट्टरपंथ समर्थक, तीसरी तरफ कांग्रेस के विभाजन के समर्थकों ने तथा समाज के मूक दर्शकों ने वातावरण को एक ऐसे घृणा के जहरीले माहौल में बदल दिया है कि तत्काल कोई कदम उठाना इस वातावरण का निराकरण नहीं कर सकेगा। जिस पार्टी को उन्होंने अपने जीवन के 25-30 साल लगाकर खड़ा किया था, वही पार्टी और उसका परवर्ती नेतृत्व उनके विचारों के विपरीत खड़ा था और इसलिये गाँधी जी के सामने अपनी कार्य योजना पुनः तैयार करने का ही रास्ता शेष था। शंकर शरण जी को जानना चाहिये कि राष्ट्रवाद के सिद्धांत की चर्चा एक तरफ पूना से सावरकर के द्वारा और दूसरी तरफ जिन्ना से ही ज्यादा प्रचारित और मजबूत हुई थी। गाँधी जी को हिन्दू विरोधी प्रचारित करने वाली ताकतें और उनके प्रति लोगों के मन में नफरत का जहर बोने वाली ताकतें वही थी जो हिन्दू के नाम पर पृथक देश चाहती थी और जिस विचार के विरासती श्री शंकर शरण हैं। महात्मा गाँधी की जिन बातों को शंकर शरण जी ने भ्रष्ट ढंग से उद्धृत किया है उनके आशय को समझना किसी संकीर्ण मानसिकता के व्यक्ति के लिये ही संभव है।

श्री शंकर शरण ने गोडसे द्वारा गाँधी जी की हत्या को 'दण्ड देना' बताया है। परन्तु क्या यह आश्चर्यजनक नहीं है कि भारत के विभाजन के जिम्मेवार अपराधी तो माउंटबेटन, जिन्ना, नेहरू और पटेल जैसे लोग थे। गोडसे व अन्य समर्थकों ने उन्हें दण्ड देने के बजाय गाँधी जी की हत्या क्यों की? इससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि गाँधी जी की हत्या के पीछे विभाजन और उस काल में गाँधी के खिलाफ योजना बद्ध तरीके से फैलाये गये झूठ व घृणा थी। परन्तु वास्तविक कारण कुछ और भी थे।

श्री शंकर शरण को महात्मा गाँधी के देश व दुनिया की लोक स्मृति में पाये हुये स्थान को लेकर बहुत पीड़ा है जिसे वे बार-बार व्यक्त करते हैं। अगर वे यह मानते हैं कि "अगर गाँधी जी की हत्या न होकर प्राकृतिक मौत हुई होती तो उनका स्थान तिलक और जयप्रकाश जैसा होता।" शायद यह लिखना उनकी लाचारी भी है। उन्होंने महात्मा गाँधी के प्रति आक्रोश व घृणा के लिये निम्न कारण बताये हैं :-

महात्मा गाँधी हिन्दू 'सिखों को जली कटी सुनाकर उनके घाव पर नमक छिड़कते रहते थे। दिल्ली की एक सभा में उन्होंने ताने देते हुये कहा था कि वे जान बचाकर क्यों चले आये? वहीं रहकर मर जाते? तो अहिंसा की विजय होती। उन्होंने इस पर भी आक्षेप किया है कि पाकिस्तान में हिन्दू, सिखों के लिये गाँधी जी ने अनशन क्यों नहीं किया।

शंकर जी के लिखने से ऐसा लगता है कि वे चाहते हैं कि गाँधी जी के अनशन का ऐजेन्डा तत्कालीन हिन्दूवादी संस्थाएँ या गोडसे तय करते। जबकि उन्हें उत्तर इस बात का देना चाहिये कि इन हिन्दूवादी संगठन के लोगों ने अगर वे वास्तव में दुखी थे तो उन्होंने स्वतः अनशन या प्रतिकार क्यों नहीं किया? यहाँ तक कि इन लोगों ने तो पाकिस्तान के दूतावास पर वायसराय के घर पर प्रधानमंत्री और गृहमंत्री के घर पर अनशन तो दूर एक दिखावे के लिए धरना व एक ज्ञापन भी नहीं दिया।

पश्चिम बंगाल में महात्मा गाँधी ने नोआखली में स्वतः जाकर दंगों को रूकवाया और अनेक बार अपनी और अपने साथियों की जान जोखिम में डाली। श्री शंकर शरण को तत्कालीन वायसराय माउंटबेटन का वह बयान पढ़ना चाहिये जिसमें उन्होंने सार्वजनिक रूप से स्वीकार किया था कि "बंगाल में शांति की स्थापना सरकार के द्वारा नहीं हुई। जिसके पास लाखों की फौज थी बल्कि वह केवल एक व्यक्ति की सेना के द्वारा संभव हुआ जिसका नाम महात्मा गाँधी हैं।"

महात्मा गाँधी तो विभाजन से इतने क्षुब्ध थे कि वे 15 अगस्त 1947 को प्रधान मंत्री के निमंत्रण के बाद भी दिल्ली में खण्डित आजादी के जश्न में शामिल नहीं हुए। महात्मा गाँधी का विश्वास अहिंसा व अपने

जीवन मूल्यों पर कितना गहरा था और वे इस पर कितने अडिग थे, यह सब शंकर शरण जी शायद ही समझ सकें। उन्होंने पश्चिम पंजाब से आए हुये हिन्दू-सिखों को कभी कोई पीड़ा जनक बात नहीं कही। वे तो शिव के समान थे जो जहर खुद पीते थे और अमृत दूसरों को बाँटते थे।

उनके कथन का तात्पर्य उनका अहिंसा में गहरा विश्वास था और वे अन्याय के सामने झुकने के बजाय अहिंसक प्रतिकार करने में विश्वास रखते थे।

शंकर शरण जी को याद होगा जब दक्षिण अफ्रीका के एक स्टेशन पर अंग्रेजों ने उन्हें देर रात रेल से बाहर फेंक दिया-तांगे में सीट न छोड़ने पर उन्हें पीटा, जब अंग्रेजों ने उनके विरुद्ध हिंसक हमले करने के प्रयास किये तब भी महात्मा गाँधी ने अफ्रीका नहीं छोड़ा और अहिंसक सविनय अवज्ञा के माध्यम से भारतीयों को अधिकार दिलाये। बहुत संभव है कि उनकी ऐसी अपेक्षा पंजाब से आये हुए या भगाये गये भाईयों से रही हो। उनकी अपेक्षा से मत विभिन्नता हो सकती है परन्तु गाँधी जी के ऊपर कोई दुर्भावना का आरोप न लगाया जा सकता है, न सिद्ध हो सकता है।

अपने पूर्वग्रहों के अति उत्साह में शंकर शरण जी भूल गये कि दक्षिण अफ्रीका में महात्मा गाँधी के ऊपर एक बार एक मुस्लिम भाई ने भी हमला किया था और उन्हें जान से मारने का प्रयास किया था। परन्तु गाँधी जी ने उसका भी अपने ढंग से अहिंसक प्रतिकार किया। शंकर शरण जी, उनकी जमातों, 1940 के दशक के हिन्दूवादी संगठनों को उन हिन्दूवादियों से भी कोई शिकायत नहीं है। जिन्होंने द्विराष्ट्र के सिद्धान्त के नाम पर हिन्दू व मुस्लिम राष्ट्र के अलग-2, होने को प्रचारित किया था, वे केवल महात्मा गाँधी के खिलाफ घृणा का माहौल तैयार करते रहे, झूठ फैलाते रहे परन्तु हिन्दू भाईयों की पीड़ा में सहभागी बनने के लिये कभी कुछ नहीं किया जिनको लेकर वे महात्मा गाँधी की वे आलोचना करते हैं। अगर इन हिन्दूवादी संगठनों के लाख दो लाख स्वयं सेवक पाकिस्तान कूच कर गये होते तो इतिहास शायद कुछ और होता।

हिंसा कायरों की भाषा है और अहिंसा बहादुरों की। शंकर शरण जी, हिंसा की भाषा व कायरों के समर्थक हैं। और यह कायरता का ही पर्याय था कि जिन्ना, माउंटबेटन, नेहरू जिनके पास सत्ता की ताकत थी, उन्हें छोड़कर एक ऐसे व्यक्ति को मार दो जो अपने सिद्धांत के अनुसार सुरक्षा भी नहीं लेता। अगर कभी शंकर शरण जी इतिहास को बारीकी से पढ़ने का प्रयास करेंगे तो समझ पायेंगे कि महात्मा गाँधी तो विभाजन को नकार कर पुनः एक बनाने के लक्ष्य पर काम कर रहे थे। जब शंकर शरण जी स्वतः कहते हैं कि गाँधी जी उपेक्षित हो चुके थे तो फिर उनकी जान लेने की क्या जरूरत थी? एक उपेक्षित व्यक्ति से ये जमातें इतनी परेशान क्यों थी?कहीं ऐसा तो नहीं कि हिन्दूवादी संगठन जो द्विराष्ट्रवाद के समर्थक थे, अंग्रेजों से मिलकर विभाजन को स्थिर करने के लिये परस्पर घृणा का वातावरण बनाने में लगे थे और गाँधी जी के प्रभाव से कहीं पुनः विभाजन रेखा मिटाकर भारत एक न हो जाये इस चिंता से भी गाँधी की हत्या प्रयासों में संलग्न थे? श्री शंकर शरण ने नाथूराम गोडसे को भगत सिंह और ऊधम सिंह के समतुल्य रखने का घटिया प्रयास किया है। जब जनरल डायर ने जलियाँवाला बाग में गोली चलाने का आदेश दिया तो गोली चलाने वाले बहुत सारे अफसर व पुलिस देशी लोग थे परन्तु ऊधम सिंह ने आदेश देने वाले जनरल डायर को ब्रिटेन में जाकर गोली मारी थी और इसी तरह भगत सिंह ने अंग्रेज अधिकारी सैंडर्स को गोली मारी थी। अगर ऊधम सिंह की भावना गोडसे जैसे लोगों में होती तो वे पाकिस्तान जाकर जिन्ना को मारते, दिल्ली में बैठे वायस राय को मारते। श्री शंकर शरण ने जाने अनजाने में गोडसे की पक्षधरता में अमर शहीद भगत सिंह और ऊधम सिंह का अक्षम्य अपमान किया है, जिसे भारतीय कभी माफ नहीं करेंगे। श्री शंकर शरण ने अपने झूठ को पुष्ट करने के लिये डॉ. लोहिया को भी गलत ढंग से उद्धृत किया है। वे लिखते हैं कि “गाँधी जी ने स्व. पटेल को नेहरू की मदद करने के लिये विभाजन स्वीकार करने के लिये विवश किया इससे बड़ा झूठ क्या हो सकता है”। लोहिया की पुस्तक में पेज नं.

27 पर उन्होंने लिखा है कि “महात्मा गाँधी ने दो बार कहा कि विभाजन की जानकारी उन्हें नहीं थी। पेज 29 पर उन्होंने लिखा है कि इस मीटिंग में नेहरू पटेल ने गाँधी जी के साथ असभ्य और टुच्चे पन का व्यवहार किया।” गाँधी जी ने कांग्रेस कार्य समिति को विभाजन के लिये स्वीकार करने को नहीं कहा था बल्कि उन्होंने कहा था कि कांग्रेस यह प्रस्ताव करे कि विभाजन का प्रस्ताव होते ही अंग्रेज़ आगे का कार्य “कांग्रेस व मुस्लिम लीग पर छोड़ दें तब वे कांग्रेस का समर्थन कर सकते हैं”। लोहिया लिखते हैं कि “इससे ज्यादा कूट नैतिक प्रस्ताव नहीं हो सकता है”। इसको अंग्रेज़ नहीं मानते और बंटवारा नहीं होता। शंकर शरण ने लोहिया को एक दम ही गलत ढंग से पढ़ने व लिखने का प्रयास किया है जब वे लिखते हैं देश का विभाजन और गाँधी जी की हत्या एक ही सिक्के के दो पहलू हैं। एक की जाँच किये बिना दूसरी की जाँच करना समय की बर्बादी थी। “इसी से अर्थ स्पष्ट है कि देश का विभाजन उन लोगों का अपराध है जिन लोगों ने बीस के दशक से ही द्विराष्ट्रवाद का सिद्धांत प्रतिपादित करना शुरू कर दिया था और हिन्दू व मुस्लिम अलग-अलग राष्ट्र हैं यह कहना शुरू किया था। इस प्रचार से द्विराष्ट्र के नाम पर अलगाव का इतना प्रचार किया गया कि समूचे देश में तनाव व घृणा की आग फैल गयी। हिन्दू और मुसलमान जिन्हें बड़े पैमाने पर गाँधी जी ने संगठित कर अंग्रेज़ों के खिलाफ संघर्ष शुरू किया था उस एकता को तोड़ दिया। इतने स्पष्ट कथन के बाद भी इस कथन को गलत ढंग से प्रस्तुत करना यह उन जमातों की योजना है जो गाँधी जी के विशाल कद से लड़ने के असफल प्रयास हमेशा से करते रहे हैं। जब कभी भी विभाजन की विभीषिका के वातावरण की निष्पक्ष जांच होगी तो उन संस्थाओं और व्यक्तियों को सही चेहरा सामने आयेगा जिन्होंने महात्मा गाँधी की हत्या के लिये वातावरण तैयार किया था। हत्या करने वाले हाथ तो चिन्हित हो गये थे और उन्हें पहचान लिया गया था परन्तु हत्या की प्रेरणा देने वाले समूह अभी भी छद्मावरण में हैं। हमारा राष्ट्रीय फर्ज है कि इस दिशा में बढ़ा जाये।

शहीद भगत सिंह और ऊधम सिंह के समकक्ष गोडसे को खड़ा करने का प्रयास इतिहास के साथ सबसे भद्दा और शर्मनाक मजाक होगा जो सफल भी नहीं होगा। गाँधी के कद को छोटा करने के निरन्तर हो रहे षड़यंत्र, जिनमें अल्ट्रालेफ्ट के नाम से जानी जाने वाली श्रीमती अरुंधति राय से लेकर साम्प्रदायिक सोच के बुद्धिजीवी तर्क कृतर्क के खण्डन मण्डन और जोड़ तोड़ से दशकों से महात्मा गाँधी के खिलाफ अभियान चला रहे हैं। वे न आज तक सफल हुये हैं न होंगे। बल्कि मूक गाँधी का विशालकाय व्यक्तित्व और अधिक महान हो जाता है। नये दौर में भोपाल की सांसद सुश्री प्रज्ञा ठाकुर ने महात्मा गाँधी के खिलाफ अपनी अज्ञानता में जब बयान दिया तो न केवल सम्पूर्ण समाज ने उन्हें धिक्कारा बल्कि उनकी पार्टी भाजपा और उनके नेताओं द्वारा जन प्रतिक्रिया को देखते हुये सार्वजनिक रूप से कहना पड़ा कि वे प्रज्ञा ठाकुर के बयान से सहमत नहीं हैं। इतना ही भारत के प्रधानमंत्री श्री मोदी ने न केवल उसे अनुचित करार दिया बल्कि यहां तक कहा कि मैं प्रज्ञा ठाकुर को मन से कभी माफ नहीं कर पाऊँगा। और सुश्री प्रज्ञा ठाकुर ने न केवल अपने बयान को वापिस लिया बल्कि तीन दिन का प्रायश्चित्त स्वरूप मौन भी रखा। अब डॉ. शंकर शरण क्या चाहते हैं, इसे भी कभी न कभी जरूर सोचा जायेगा।

मैं शंकर शरण से अनुरोध करूँगा कि वे इतिहास की तोड़ मरोड़ बन्द करें और कलंकित प्रतिमाओं को गढ़ने के विकृत मानस और प्रयासों से मुक्त हों।

लोहिया सदन,
जहाँगीराबाद, भोपाल (म.प्र.)

पुस्तक-समीक्षा

असंभव गाँधी में संभव गाँधी की तलाश*

अम्बिकादत्त शर्मा

अलबर्ट आइन्स्टाइन जैसे महान् वैज्ञानिक ने गाँधी के विषय में कहा था कि आने वाली पीढ़ी को इस सच्चाई पर विश्वास करना मुश्किल होगा कि मोहनदास करमचंद गाँधी नाम का कोई व्यक्ति वैसे ही हाड़-मांस का पुतला रहा होगा जैसे कि हम और आप हैं। इसी प्रकार विश्व प्रसिद्ध धर्म-विज्ञानी आर.सी. जेनर ने अपनी रचनाओं में 'और युधिष्ठिर लौट आया' कहते हुए गाँधी को सन्दर्भित किया है। सुधीर चन्द्रजी भी अपनी इस नवीन कृति के शीर्षक के माध्यम से गाँधी को एक 'असंभव सम्भावना' कहते हुए कुछ इसी प्रकार के ऊह को वाग्विग्रहित करने का एक सार्थक प्रयास किया है। यद्यपि पुस्तक के शीर्षक की व्यंजना में बलाघात 'असंभव' पद पर है लेकिन पुस्तक जैसे-जैसे आगे बढ़ती है वैसे-वैसे बलाघात 'सम्भावना' पद पर एकत्रित होने लगता है। गाँधी के विषय में दिये गये उपर्युक्त और वैसे ही अनेकों उदानपरक वक्तव्यों से ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि कहीं ऐसा तो नहीं कि उनके व्यक्तित्व को आधुनिक मनोविज्ञान में स्वीकृत आत्म रक्षा और आत्म प्रेम जैसी व्यावर्तक प्रवृत्तियों से परिभाषित होने वाले 'व्यक्ति' की सीमा में बाँधा नहीं जा सकता। यदि यह संभव है तो भारत के स्वाधीनता आन्दोलन की परिसीमा में गाँधी को मूल्यांकित करने वाले नफा-नुकसान के प्रचलित मानदण्डों को बदलना होगा। सुधीर चन्द्रजी ने इस पुस्तक में गाँधी के इतिवृत्त को एक उपाख्यान बना कर जिस तरह से प्रस्तुत किया है उससे गाँधी को मूल्यांकित करने वाले प्रचलित मानदण्डों की अपर्याप्तता ही संकेतित होती है। जब नेहरू जैसे व्यक्ति भी गाँधी के विषय में ऐसा वक्तव्य दे सकते हैं कि "वे (गाँधी) सैद्धान्तिक और वैचारिक दृष्टि से कभी-कभी अचम्भे की हद तक पिछड़े हुए थे" तो इससे गाँधी को समझे जाने वाले तौर-तरीकों पर बलात सन्देह होना स्वाभाविक ही है। वास्तव में गाँधी एक 'विचार-पुरुष' थे और ऐसे विचार-पुरुष जिसमें भारत का 'सनातन सत्य' अपनी सोलहों कलाओं के साथ अवतरित हो कर मानो युगानुरूप नवीकृत हुआ था। इसे भारत भूमि का पुण्य संभार ही कहिये कि यहाँ समय-समय पर ऐसे 'सत्याग्रही' महापुरुष जन्म लेते रहते हैं - धर्म संस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे-युगे।

सुधीर चन्द्रजी औपनिवेशिक और उपनिवेशोत्तर भारत के इतिहास की सामाजिक चेतना को एक बाह्य-द्रष्टी की तरह नहीं देखकर बल्कि उसके अंतरंग होकर अपनी इतिहास साधना का रंग-रोगन करने वाले इतिहासकार हैं। इस पुस्तक में भी उन्होंने गाँधी के 'सत्य के प्रयोग' में निजता और सार्वजनिकता के द्वन्द्व को

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यूजीसी केयर लिस्ट, ग्रुप-सी (मल्टीडिसिप्लिनरी), क्र.सं.-15

अंतरंग होकर उभारा है। इसीलिए यह पुस्तक पाठक को गाँधी के सत्य के साथ इस कदर अंतरंग बना देती है कि वह गाँधी के साथ-साथ, या उसके बहाने, अपने को देखने में भी मुब्तला हो जाता है। ऐसी स्थिति में पाठक अपने वेदन-तंत्र के मुताबिक हृदय रूपान्तरण की एक अजीबोगरीब मनोवैज्ञानिक स्थिति में आने को पाता है जहाँ वह मूलगामी रूप से आत्मचेतन मनुष्य होने के नाते गाँधी की सफलता-विफलता को निज की सफलता-विफलता के रूप में गुनने लगता है। सुधीर चन्द्रजी की पुस्तक की यही वह विशिष्टता है जिसके चलते गाँधी पर लिखी गई हजारों पुस्तकों में 'इस' एक और पुस्तक के लिए थोड़ा ही सही लेकिन बखूबी स्थान बनता है। अन्यथा, गाँधी को देवतुल्य सिद्ध करने वाली, उनके सन्तुलित मूल्यांकन का प्रयास करने वाली और यहाँ तक कि गाँधी को लांछित करने वाली किताबों की भरमार तो पहले से ही है।

कहा जाता है कि सत्य तो एक होता है लेकिन सबके अपने-अपने झूठ होते हैं। ऐसे ही गाँधी का सत्य तो भारत की ऋषि परम्परा का सनातन सत्य है जिसे महाभारत जैसे जटिल और बेहद पेचीदे स्थिति में भी विषाद ग्रस्त अर्जुन के समक्ष कृष्ण ने, बतौर गीता की शुरुआत करते हुए, यह कहते हुए उद्घाटित किया था कि -'हे अर्जुन! तू कर्तव्य निर्णय के लिए जिस प्रतिज्ञा को आधार बना रहे हो, अर्थात् कौन मरेंगे और कितने मरेंगे, वह कर्तव्य निर्णय के लिए आधार बनने योग्य ही नहीं है। प्रज्ञावान् व्यक्ति के लिए जीवन-मृत्यु के विचार का वास्तव में कोई महत्त्व ही नहीं होता (अशोच्यानन्व शोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे। गतासुनगताशूश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः)। किसी को भी कुरुक्षेत्र की आर्थिक-राजनीतिक परिस्थिति में समाधान की यह सूझ कितना अतिक्रामी प्रतीत हो सकता है? इस किताब में भी भारत के राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन की सियासत के कश्मकश के बीच गाँधी विषयक बहुतांश के अपने-अपने झूठ (दृष्टिकोण) में उलझे हुए गाँधी के सत्य को भाँपने की कोशिश की गई है। परन्तु सत्य को भाँपना और भाँपे गये सत्य को निःशंक और बेबाक रूप में खड़ा करना दोनों अलग-अलग बातें हैं। इसमें दूसरा ही लेखकीय धर्म के पुरुषार्थ से सम्बन्धित होता है। इस कृति में सुधीर चन्द्रजी का पुरुषार्थ यह है कि वे एक दुविधा, एक असमंजस की स्थिति में सबकुछ पाठक पर छोड़ देते हैं कि हो सके तो वे अपने-अपने गाँधी विषयक झूठ या फिर वैसे झूठ जो बिना विचारे ही गतानुगतिक रूप से अपना लिए गये हैं, उनमें परिष्कार कर लें। लेखक ने बड़ी ईमानदारी से यह स्वीकार किया है कि नये बौद्धिक प्रभावों के कारण अपने आरम्भिक दिनों में उनका मन गाँधी के प्रति वितृष्णा से भरा हुआ था लेकिन किसी अवान्तर प्रसंग में गाँधी के प्रार्थना-प्रवचनों का संग्रह पढ़ते हुए उन्होंने भी अपने झूठ का परिष्कार किया। इस तरह पीछे मुड़कर गाँधी को देखते हुए उन्हें गाँधी की महानता का आभास तो हुआ लेकिन वे स्वयं कहते हैं कि गाँधी का सत्य अभिव्यक्ति की सरलता के आवरण में छिपा हुआ है। इस कारण वह अपनी सम्पूर्ण गरिमा और गहराई के साथ हमारे वेदन-तंत्र को सीधे-सीधे अर्थबोध नहीं करा पाता है। स्वयं गाँधी को अपने विचारों की दुब्याख्या की चिन्ता रहती थी। उन्होंने स्वयं कहा है -“मेरी भाषा सूत्रात्मक है, उसमें स्पष्टता नहीं है, इसलिए उसकी अनेक व्याख्यायें सम्भव हैं।” वास्तव में यह बात गाँधी के ऊपर सौ प्रतिशत सही उतरती है। इसके लिए जरूरी है कि गाँधी का पुनरावलोकन करते हुए गाँधी की सरलता को सशक्त बौद्धिक-विमर्श के धरातल पर खड़ा कर उसके अन्तरार्थ को खोला जाय। परन्तु सर्वसमर्थ होते हुए भी ऐसा न करके लेखक ने स्वयं की सरलता में गाँधी की अपनी सरलता पर एक और आवरण चढ़ा दिया है। इस कारण यह पुस्तक गाँधी के कुछ चुने हुए प्रार्थना प्रवचनों के आधार पर गाँधी के सत्य की सिलसिलेवार झाँकी प्रस्तुत करने वाला 'रीडिंग' भर बन कर रह गई है। यद्यपि यह 'रीडिंग' भी बेशक महत्त्वपूर्ण है और वह इस मायने में कि इसके आधार पर स्वयं सुधीर चन्द्रजी या कोई उनका समानधर्मा गाँधी के सत्य की निःशंक प्रस्तुति करने वाला एक दूसरा ही प्रौढ़ ग्रन्थ रच सकता है।

आईये अभी इस दूसरे ग्रन्थ की सम्भावना को दरकिनार करते हुए देखें कि इस पुस्तक की वर्तमान बुनावट क्या और कैसी है। इस पुस्तक के पहले अध्याय का शीर्षक है - गाँधी : अपना सामना। स्पष्ट ही इस शीर्षक की व्यंजना लेखक के हृदय को प्रकट करने वाला है लेकिन पूरी पुस्तक पढ़ लेने के बाद, बतौर प्रस्ताविकी, यह अध्याय हल्का लगने लगता है। यह सम्भव है कि लेखक को आसानी से सस्ते में ही गाँधी की महानता और उनके सत्य का एहसास हो गया हो लेकिन इस अध्याय में जिन सामग्रियों और सन्दर्भों के द्वारा लेखक ने गाँधी का सामना किया है उसमें पाठक के लिए कुछ भी वैसा नहीं है कि जिससे पाठक की चेतना यकायक उन्मीलित हो जाय। सुधीर चन्द्रजी स्वयं यह स्वीकार करते हैं कि पुस्तक की प्रेरक-भावना गाँधी के प्रति श्रद्धा रही है जो बचपन से ही उनके संस्कारों में रची-बसी थी। इस बात को उनकी एक आपबीती भी प्रमाणित करती है कि जब उन्होंने सुना कि गाँधी नहीं रहे तो वे बिलख-बिलख कर रोने लगे। यद्यपि एक समय उनके जीवन में ऐसा भी आया (कॉलेज और यूनीवर्सिटी के दिनों में) कि उनका मन गाँधी के प्रति वितृष्णा से भर गया। काश सुधीर चन्द्रजी अपनी इस मध्यवर्ती वितृष्णा का कोई चित्र खींचते तो पाठक के लिए वह श्रद्धा से वितृष्णा और वितृष्णा से पुनः सत्य के साक्षत्कार की ओर लौटने का एक अच्छा सोपान बनता। इसे एक संयोग ही कहिये कि 19वीं सदी में ईसाई हो जाने वाले सवर्ण हिन्दुओं पर काम करने के सिलसिले में गाँधी के प्रार्थना-प्रवचनों का संग्रह पढ़ते हुए उन्हें गाँधी की आत्म-प्रतिमा का प्रबोध हुआ। द्रष्टव्य है कि ये प्रवचन 1 अप्रैल 1947 से 29 जनवरी 1948 के बीच हर रोज शाम प्रार्थना सभा में दिये गये प्रवचन थे। समूचे पुस्तक की जमीन इसी दौरान के प्रार्थना-प्रवचनों के आधार पर तैयार की गई है। यही कारण है कि यह पुस्तक गाँधी के 'अन्त' को समझने की कोशिश करने वाली पुस्तक है। यद्यपि 'अन्त' कोई अपने आप में अलग-थलग वस्तु नहीं होती, वह 'आदि' और 'अद्यतन' को अपने में अन्तर्भुक्त किये रहती है। इस तरह बहुत-सी हल्की-फुल्की बातों के बावजूद लेखक ने गाँधी के 'अन्त' को समझते हुए एक 'अचरज' का सामना किया है और वह न केवल जायज है बल्कि उसमें एक 'सार्वजनीन अचरज' होने का भी सामर्थ्य है। वही गाँधी जिनकी जिजीविषा इतनी प्रबल रही कि वे कहा करते थे कि "उमर से बूढ़ा होने पर भी मुझे नहीं लगता कि मेरा आन्तरिक विकास रुक गया हो या काया विसर्जन के बाद रुक जायेगा" परन्तु ऐसा क्या हुआ कि वे अन्त के दिनों में अपने पार्थिव अन्त की कामना करने लगे। निश्चय ही यह 'अचरज' हमें गाँधी के सत्य को सम्भव और व्यावहारिक के संकुचित वर्तमान के गिरफ्त से मुक्त हो कर सोचने और समझने के लिए आत्मचेतन रूप से उकसाता है। एक तरह से देखा जाय तो समूचे ग्रन्थ में इसी 'अचरज' की तफसील की गई है।

पुस्तक का दूसरा अध्याय है - 'गाँधी का स्वराज', परन्तु यहाँ गाँधी के स्वराज की कोई हल्की-सी तस्वीर भी नहीं खींची गई है बल्कि 'स्वराज' इस अध्याय का प्रपोज़िशन भर है। अध्याय की शुरुआत ही गाँधी के एक अरण्यरोदन को सन्दर्भित करते हुए की गई है कि आज तो कॉंग्रेस और न ही हिन्दू और मुसलमान ही गाँधी की सुनते हैं। इस आधार पर लेखक ने यह दिखाया है कि यों तो 1947 से पूर्व लगभग तीस साल के दौरान गाँधी जितना कॉंग्रेस के अन्दर रहे उतना ही बाहर भी रहे लेकिन तब गाँधी कॉंग्रेस से निकलते थे, निकाले नहीं जाते थे, परन्तु अब की परिस्थिति में गाँधी निकाले जा रहे थे। लेखक ने गाँधी को निकाले जाने के मर्म को बड़ी सहूलियत से पकड़ा है और वह मर्म है गाँधी के एकमात्र वारिस जवाहर लाल नेहरू का अपने श्रद्धापुरुष से मोहभंग। जाहिर है कि इस मोहभंग के बीच का मुद्दा स्वराज विषयक दोनों की अलग-अलग या फिर परस्पर विरोधी संकल्पनाओं का होना है। इसका संकेत हमें नेहरू की आत्मकथा (लन्दन, 1942, पृ. 73) की उस पंक्ति में मिलता है जहाँ वे कहते हैं कि "हम आपस में उनकी खब्तों और विचित्रताओं की अक्सर चर्चा

करते थे, और थोड़ा हँसते हुए कहते थे कि स्वराज के बाद इन खब्तों को बढ़ावा नहीं मिलना चाहिए।” ऐसा भी नहीं कि गाँधी को अपने स्वराज की संकल्पना में निहित खब्तों का पता नहीं था। इसलिए स्वराज प्राप्ति के अपने द्विस्तरीय लक्ष्यों या कहेँ कार्य योजनाओं का खुलासा करते हुए उन्होंने 1921 के यंग इण्डिया में हिन्द-स्वराज के पाठकों को आगाह करते हुए लिखा था - “मैं पाठकों को एक चेतावनी देना चाहता हूँ। वे ऐसा न समझें कि हिन्द-स्वराज में जिस स्वराज की तस्वीर मैंने खड़ी की है, वैसा स्वराज कायम करने के लिए आज मेरी कोशिश भी चल रही है। मैं जानता हूँ कि अभी हिन्दुस्तान उसके लिए तैयार नहीं है। ऐसा कहने में शायद ढ़िकाई का भास हो, लेकिन मुझे पक्का विश्वास है कि हिन्द-स्वराज में जिस स्वराज की रूपरेखा मैंने बनाई है, वैसा स्वराज पाने की मेरी निजी कोशिश जरूर चल रही है। परन्तु इसमें कोई दो राय नहीं कि आज मेरी सामूहिक प्रवृत्ति का ध्येय तो हिन्दुस्तान की प्रजा की इच्छा के मुताबिक ‘पार्लियामेन्टरी’ ढंग का स्वराज पाना है।” ... गाँधी के इस स्पष्टीकरण में यह आशय बिलकुल ही साफ़ झलकता है कि उनकी दृष्टि में भारतीय स्वाधीनता आन्दोलन का प्राथमिक लक्ष्य हिन्दुस्तान में पार्लियामेन्टरी ढंग का राजनीतिक स्वराज पाना था और इस राजनीतिक स्वराज को वास्तविक अर्थों में स्वराज की ओर बढ़ने का सोपान बनाना था। वही स्वराज जिसकी एक हल्की-सी झलक गाँधी के इस कथन में दिखती है कि “मैं तो कहूँगा कि सात लाख गाँव हैं तो सात लाख हुकूमतें बनी, ऐसा मानो...।” भारत की राजनीतिक स्वतन्त्रता गाँधी के लिए साधन थी, साध्य नहीं। व्यापक अर्थों में साध्य था वास्तविक स्वराज, यानि सत्य, अहिंसा, प्रेम, करुणा इत्यादि सनातन मूल्यों पर आधारित एक पूर्ण सभ्यता बोध को धरती पर उतारना और उसके अवतरण के लिए प्रथम और उपर्युक्त प्रयोग-भूमि भारत को बनाना।

अब जब 1947 में भारत को पार्लियामेन्टरी ढंग का स्वराज प्राप्त हो गया तो जवाहर लाल नेहरू के लिए तो यही साध्य था, जबकि गाँधी इस उपलब्धि को महज एक साधन मानते थे। ऐसी स्थिति में गाँधी अब नेहरू के साध्य का साधन के रूप में उपयोग न करने लगेँ, इसके लिए गाँधी के स्वराज की संकल्पना में यूटोपिया का प्रश्न उठाना, उनके प्रयासों और प्रतिबद्धता में खबते देखना, उन खब्तों को तनिक भी बढ़ावा नहीं देना यानि कुल मिलाकर गाँधी को मन ही मन सिरे से खारिज कर देना नेहरू के लिए स्वाभाविक ही था। वस्तुतः गाँधी और नेहरू के विवाद आज़ादी मिलने के निकट पूर्व ही सामने आ गये थे। सुधीर चन्द्रजी ने बड़े ही सटीक तरीके से स्वराज विषयक आबा-ओ-अजदाद (गाँधी) और वारिस (नेहरू) के बुनियादी मतभेद को उजागर करने के लिए इस अध्याय में गाँधी के एक लम्बे पत्र और नेहरू के अनमने जवाब का बड़ा ही चुनिन्दा हवाला दिया है। यों तो गाँधी और नेहरू के बीच पत्राचार तो बहुत हुए हैं, लेकिन जिस पत्र को यहाँ नमूने के तौर पर प्रस्तुत किया गया है, वह बेजोड़ है। इतना ही नहीं, लेखक ने गाँधी के इस आलेखनुमा पत्र में ‘हिन्द स्वराज’ के नये संस्करण की सम्भावना देखते हुए उसकी विवेचना करने की कोशिश भी की है। सचमुच ‘हिन्द स्वराज’ के नये संस्करण की झलक इस पत्र में देखना एक मौलिक सूझ है क्योंकि 1909 में लिखे गये ‘हिन्द स्वराज’ में पश्चिम की आधुनिक तकनीकी सभ्यता की आलोचना ज्यादा और बदले में हिन्दुस्तानी स्वराज की रूपरेखा कम है। इस सूझ के माध्यम से लेखक को अच्छा अवसर प्राप्त हुआ था कि वे गाँधी द्वारा आधुनिक पश्चिमी सभ्यता को उसकी ज्ञानमीमांसा में ही खारिज किये जाने के बाद हिन्दुस्तान के ग्राम स्वराज की रूपरेखा, एक वैकल्पिक सभ्यता बोध को उपस्थापित करें और साथ ही साथ नेहरू की ‘डिस्कवरी ऑफ़ इण्डिया’ को भारत के महिमा गान की पुस्तक न मानकर ‘रिप्लेसमेंट ऑफ़ सिविलायजेशन’ की पुस्तक करार दें। परन्तु सुधीर चन्द्रजी, इरादा रखते हुए भी, इस अवसर का लाभ नहीं उठा पाये और इस पूरे मजबूत को एक

छोटे से निष्कर्ष, एक दर्द भरे एहसास में सिमटा दिये कि गाँधी को यह बोध हो गया था कि उनके वारिस ने उनको पूरे तौर से नकार दिया है। वस्तुतः यह नकार गाँधी के हिन्द स्वराज का नकार था।

अब शुरू होता है गाँधी के दुःख-दर्द और व्यथा की कहानी। इसीलिए इस पुस्तक के तीसरे अध्याय का शीर्षक दिया गया है -“गाँधी का दुःख”। इसमें बहुतेरे सन्दर्भों और गाँधी के अनेकों वक्तव्यों की टीका करते हुए लेखक ने बड़े विस्तार से गाँधी की वेदना को जगजाहिर किया है। साथ ही साथ दुःखानुभव की नितान्त मनोवैज्ञानिक वैयक्तिकता को ध्यान में रखते हुए उसे इस देश की दुःख-गाथा भी समझा है। यहाँ न तो यह सम्भव है और न ही उचित कि हम लेखक की व्यथा-कथा को फिर से दुहरायें। परन्तु लेखक की जुबानी ही उसका सार यह है कि “एक बार कलकत्ता में बातों ही बातों में गाँधी ने कहा था कि जीवन में जो दारुण दुःख उन्हें भोगने पड़े थे वह काफी थे हुगली नदी में डूबकर आत्महत्या करने के लिए। पर ईश्वर में उनके विश्वास ने उन्हें बचाये रखा था। महादेव देसाई का जाना, कस्तूरबा का जाना, परिजनों का दूर होते जाना, गाँधी के बड़े दुःखों में शामिल थे। पर इन दुःखों को वे अपने अन्दर दबाये रखते थे। जिन दुःखों ने उन्हें त्रस्त कर रखा था वे सार्वजनीन दुःख थे। नोआखाली के हिन्दुओं में उनका कोई सगा या जानने वाला नहीं मरा था कि बाकी सबकुछ छोड़कर पहुँच लिए शान्ति कायम करने वहाँ। न ही बिहार के मुसलमानों में मारा गया था उनका कोई अपना कि नोआखाली छोड़ चल दिये बिहार।” पुनः 1946 के अन्त में गाँधी की हताशा और पस्तता की पराकाष्ठा देखी जा सकती है। उन्होंने निर्मल कुमार बोस को चुपके से बताया था - अपनी डायरी में भी लिखा था - कि उनका शरीर गिर जाता है, और यह भी कहा था कि मेरा दिमाग हार जाता है।

वस्तुतः इस अध्याय में गाँधी की व्यथा-कथा का लेखक ने जैसा मार्मिक चित्रण किया है वह उन दिनों का करुण-क्रन्दन है जब इस देश को निकट भविष्य में किसी भी दिन आजादी मिलना एक तरह से तय हो गया था। यह भी एक अचरज से कम नहीं कि जब अपने किये का कुछ फल मिलने वाला हो तो वह काल मुदिता का हुआ करता है लेकिन कैसी विडम्बना है कि गाँधी के वही समय सबसे कातर और त्रसद काल में रूपान्तरित हो गया। सुधीर चन्द्रजी ने इस अचरज और विडम्बना की तफसील करते हुए बताया है कि गाँधी के दुःख का एक कारण तो यह था कि उन्हें इस बात का एहसास हो गया था कि जिस अंग्रेजी राज में कभी सूरज नहीं डूबता था और फिर कभी खून नहीं सूखता था, वह भी गाँधी के साथ वैसा बर्ताव नहीं कर पाये थे जैसा कि उनके ही वारिस, उनके अपने कहे जाने वाले और कांग्रेसी उनके साथ आजादी मिलने से पहले ही करना शुरू कर दिये। अवधेय है कि गाँधी यह सब कुछ और इससे भी अधिक अपना देश निकाला तक भी सह सकते थे बशर्ते फलश्रुति ठीक हो। परन्तु स्वाधीनता आन्दोलन की फलश्रुति से पहले ही कुछ ऐसी अनपेक्षित और विषम परिस्थितियाँ पैदा हुई कि गाँधी को यह लगने लगा कि जिस हिन्दुस्तान के स्वराज की लड़ाई वे तीस-पैंतीस वर्षों से सत्य और अहिंसा के अस्त्रों से लड़ रहे थे, उसका कोई नतीजा नहीं निकला। अतः गाँधी की दारुण-वेदना का दूसरा और सबसे बड़ा कारण इस बदली हुई हिंस्र परिस्थिति में अपने सत्य और अहिंसा के प्रयोग के हस्त को उसकी असफलता में देखना है। 16 जून 1947, 14 जुलाई 1947, और इस दौरान गाँधी द्वारा दिये गये अन्य वक्तव्यों से लेखक ने यह दिखाया है कि स्वयं गाँधी ऐसा सोचने लगे थे कि अब तक जो चलती थी वह अहिंसा नहीं थी, बल्कि मन्द-विरोध था। यह अहिंसा दुर्बलों की अहिंसा थी।

कुल मिलाकर इस अध्याय में सुधीर चन्द्रजी ने गाँधी की व्यथा-कथा की विवरणिका प्रस्तुत कर हिन्दुस्तान के स्वाधीनता आन्दोलन के मनोविज्ञान को फ्रायड के ‘दमित के प्रतिशोध’ के सिद्धान्त के आधार पर ही समझा है। साथ ही साथ भारत के विभाजन की जद्दोजहद और नोआखाली में मुस्लिम पहल से भड़की

हिंसा तथा उसकी प्रतिक्रिया में कलकत्ता, बिहार, दिल्ली और पंजाब में हो रहे मार-काट के बीच शान्ति बहाल करने का प्रयास कर रहे गाँधी के मनोविज्ञान की तफसील करते हुए यह दिखाया है कि गाँधी भी ऐसा मान रहे थे कि सत्य और अहिंसा को सामूहिक प्रवृत्ति का ध्येय बनाने का उनका प्रयोग असफल हो गया है। उन्हें तो इस बात का भी बोध हो गया था कि जिस अहिंसा को वे अपना धर्म समझ रहे थे वह कांग्रेस के लिए एक 'नीति' भर थी। नीति उसी वक्त तक धर्म रह सकती है जब तक कि उसे चलाया जाय। कांग्रेस को पूरा अधिकार है कि जिस वक्त जरूरत न रहे उसी वक्त नीति को बदल दे। धर्म की बात और होती है। वह कभी बदल नहीं सकता। यहाँ धर्म और नीति के भेद का तनिक खुलासा करना गाँधी की अहिंसा को समझने के लिए उचित होगा। धर्म में हर कर्म अपने आप में उचित होता है, अपने आप में करणीय, अहेतुक और निष्प्रयोजन ही करणीय। यदि ऐसा नहीं तो वह धर्म नहीं होगा। धर्म भाव से अहिंसा की साधना में वह स्वयं ही उपेय होता है, उपाय नहीं। उसका उद्देश्य उसके परे नहीं, उसी में निष्ठ होता है। परन्तु नीति उपाय है, किसी उपेय की प्राप्ति का साधन। नीति शब्द का प्रयोग विशेषकर राजनीति में होता है लेकिन गाँधी की विशेषता यह है कि वे नीति को भी उपेय अहिंसा का उपाय बनाना चाहते थे। कांग्रेस पर इस सन्दर्भ में टिप्पणी करते हुए गाँधी यही कहना चाहते हैं। गाँधी के दुःख की आन्तरिक वेदना भी यही थी कि वे नीति को उपेय अहिंसा का उपाय बना कर अपनी अहिंसा को समष्टि धर्म नहीं बना पा रहे थे।

पुस्तक के चौथे अध्याय का शीर्षक है -“अहिंसा की सम्भावना”। यदि इस सुविचारित शीर्षक को किताब के मुख्य शीर्षक की अन्विति में देखें तो इसे इस किताब का हृदय कहना अनुचित नहीं होगा। यही वह अध्याय है जिसकी पादपूर्ति में अगल-बगल के अध्याय लिखे गये हैं और लेखक अपने अप्रकट प्रतिपाद्य को प्रकट करने के लिए अपने ही असमंजस को एक दिशा देना चाहते हैं। यहाँ गाँधी की अहिंसा-साधना को 'अग्नि-परीक्षा' या फिर कहें कि 'यक्ष-परीक्षा' में खड़ा किया गया है। यह दिखाया गया है कि अपने अन्तिम दिनों में किस तरह गाँधी अहिंसा के सत्य को सिद्ध करने के लिए सन्नद्ध हो गये थे। उन्हें यह तो विश्वास हो ही गया था कि जिन्हें वे अपना और हिन्दुस्तान का कायदे आजम समझ रहे थे, वे अब उनके स्वधर्म को खब्त समझकर उसे तनिक भी बढ़ावा देना उचित नहीं समझ रहे थे। वे यह भी देख रहे थे कि किस प्रकार स्वाधीनता आन्दोलन की परिणति हिन्दुस्तान के दो टुकड़ों में बँटने की भारी मुसीबत की दहलीज पर पहुँच चुकी थी। इतना ही नहीं बँटवारे से पूर्व और बँटवारे के बाद भी एक ही देश के दो धड़ों में धधकती हुई हिंसा की ज्वाला में गाँधी अपनी अहिंसा को झुलसते हुए देख रहे थे। बड़ी मार्मिक है इन सन्दर्भों में 15 जून 1947 का उनके मौन दिवस पर पढ़ा गया लिखित संदेश - “मैं तो दिवालिया हो गया हूँ। परन्तु अहिंसा का दिवाला कभी नहीं निकल सकता। मेरे जैसे लाखों आदमी भले इस सत्य को इस जीवन में सिद्ध न कर पायें, यह उनकी कमजोरी तथा नाकामयाबी होगी, न कि अहिंसा की”।

इन परिस्थितियों को परिप्रेक्ष्य बना कर सुधीर चन्द्रजी अपनी किताब के इस अध्याय में गाँधी के जीवन के एक नये अध्याय को दिखाने का प्रयास किया है। अब गाँधी के लिए ग्राम स्वराज की लोकतांत्रिक अभियांत्रिकी के मुद्दे पर नेहरू को अपनी बात समझा ले जाना और उस पर अमल करने के लिए उन्हें तैयार कर लेना उनकी प्राथमिकताओं में नहीं था। प्राथमिकता बन गई हिंस्र उन्माद को शान्त करने के लिए सत्य और अहिंसा के प्रयोग की अन्तिम बाजी लगाना और आत्मोत्सर्ग पर्यन्त उसकी रक्षा करना। लेखक ने गाँधी के जीवन के इस पहलू को विभिन्न घटना चक्रों के मध्य जिस संजीदगी से विश्लेषित किया उससे दो बातें उल्लेखनीय रूप में सामने आती हैं। पहला तो यह कि इन दिनों में गाँधी अपनी अहिंसा के सत्य की लाज रखने

के लिए सबके बीच रह कर भी एक निजी लड़ाई लड़ रहे थे। दूसरा यह कि वे अपनी लड़ाई की जीत इस बात में देखना चाहते थे कि हिन्दुस्तान-पाकिस्तान के भौगोलिक बँटवारे के बावजूद भी हिन्दू-मुसलमान के नाम पर आवो अवाम के दिलों का बँटवारा न होने पाये। जाहिर है कि आसन्न परिस्थिति में दिलों के बँटवारे को रोक कर ही अहिंसा की प्रतिष्ठा की जा सकती थी। इन दोनों ही उद्देश्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए लेखक ने उस दौरान गाँधी द्वारा किये गये आमरण अनशनों के औचित्य और प्रभावमत्ता का विश्लेषण बड़े विस्तार और समारोह के साथ किया है। इसमें पहला अनशन गाँधी ने 1947 में 1 सितम्बर को कलकत्ता में नोआखाली जाने से ठीक पहले किया था। इस अनशन के द्वारा अहिंसा की जीत इस रूप में हुई थी कि 78 घंटे चले इस उपवास को सुहरावर्दी के हाँथों मौसमी का रस पीकर तोड़ते हुए गाँधी ने कलको के मुसलमानों से नोआखाली में हिन्दू-सुरक्षा की जमानत ले ली थी। दूसरा अनशन 13 जनवरी 1948 का है। यह दिल्ली में किया गया था। गाँधी कलकत्ता से चले थे पंजाब के लिए लेकिन दिल्ली की हालत ऐसी बिगड़ी कि बीच में ही उन्हें दिल्ली रुकना पड़ा। दिल्ली में भी गाँधी के भगीरथ प्रयास का फौरन असर हुआ। भले ही अनशन कलकत्ते की तुलना में दो दिन अधिक चला हो, लेकिन दिल्ली में शान्ति बहाल हो गई। गाँधी ने इसके लिए सात शर्तों को रखा था। उन शर्तों का लिखित आश्वासन देने में भी सर्वदलीय सदस्यों को कोई दिक्कत नहीं हुई।

इस दूसरे अनशन की तफसील करते हुए सुधीर चन्द्रजी ने अपने पक्ष में और अपने प्रतिपाद्य की जमीन तैयार करने के लिए एक अच्छी टिप्पणी की है। वह यह कि “.... पर गाँधी की नजर से देखें तो वह लोगों का अपने साथ और गाँधी के साथ धोखा था। अनिवार्यतः, समस्त फौरी कल्याणकारिता के बावजूद, अश्रेयस्कर था। दिलों में घर किये बैठा शैतान दुबक-भर गया था, परिस्थितियों के दबाव में, थोड़ी देर के लिए मौका पाते ही दिलों को फिर दबोच लेने के लिए तत्पर।” (पृ. 60) यद्यपि टिप्पणी उन्होंने राजेन्द्र प्रसाद के नेतृत्व में सर्वदलीय समिति पर की है लेकिन इसका विस्तार चाहें तो वे इस अनशन को तोड़ने के लिए पाकिस्तान के घड़ियालु आँसू बहाने तक भी कर सकते हैं, क्योंकि तब तक भारत की सरकार पाकिस्तान को 55 करोड़ रुपये अभी नहीं लौटाने का अपना पूर्व फैसला बदल चुकी थी। यह फैसला भी गाँधी के इस अनशन के दबाव में ही हुआ था।

इस तरह कहा जा सकता है कि गाँधी अपने प्राणों की बाजी लगाकर अहिंसा की लाज निजी तौर पर तो बचा ली। परन्तु उनके सन्तोष के लिए यह काफी नहीं था। वे अपनी लोकप्रियता और भारतीय जनमानस में अपने मान-सम्मान के आधार पर अहिंसा की जीत नहीं चाहते थे। इस बदली हुई परिस्थिति में भी वे अहिंसा को आनृशंस्य या कर्हें निर्बैरता की चैतसिक भूमि पर पहले हिन्दुस्तान में खड़ा करना चाहते थे और बाद में पाकिस्तान तक इसके विस्तार की योजना एवं दृढ़ इच्छा-शक्ति सँजोये हुए थे। परन्तु यह सब गाँधी की खब्तें थीं या फिर चेतना की उच्च भूमि पर किया गया सत्य का साक्षात्कार। इसका निर्णय कैसे किया जाय! सुधीर चन्द्रजी कहेंगे कि यह प्रश्न हमें गाँधी से न पूछ कर स्वयं से पूछना चाहिए। लेखक ने पुछवाया भी है क्योंकि यह पूरी किताब गाँधी के ‘मैं’ में अहिंसा के ‘हम’ की तलाश करने के लिए ही लिखी गई है।

अन्त में यह किताब गाँधी को एक असम्भव सम्भावना कहते हुए समाप्त होती है। क्या कहना चाहते हैं सुधीर चन्द्रजी गाँधी को असम्भव सम्भावना कहते हुए? उन्होंने दिखाया है कि एक समय ऐसा था जब गाँधी अपने पार्थिव अन्त की कातर कामना करने लगे थे। फिर 125 वर्ष जीने की और क्या हुआ दिल्ली के अनशन के बाद कि उनमें 133 वर्ष से एक वर्ष भी कम नहीं जीने की अदम्य जिजीविषा उभर आई। जाहिर है कि यह सब कुछ अहिंसा के सत्य की निजी जीत का कमाल था। यह जीत फिर से ससब करने का, पीछे छोड़े गये मुद्दों

को फिर से प्राथमिकता में लेकर एक नई लड़ाई शुरू करने का साहस दिया था उन्हें। वे कहा भी करते थे कि लड़ाई को वे अपने नसीब में लिखा कर आये हैं। यह बात अलग है कि गाँधी तो हमारे लिए ही लड़ते रहे लेकिन हम उनकी लड़ाई में शरीक हुए या नहीं। यदि हम शरीक नहीं हुए तो गाँधी की जीत हुई और हार गये हम। हमारी हार ही सम्भवतः गाँधी को असम्भव सम्भावना में रूपान्तरित कर देती है। वस्तुतः इसी अर्थ में यह छोटी-सी किताब अपने आप में कभी खत्म न होने को तैयार एक बड़ी किताब है जो गाँधी के बहाने अपने को भी देखने का अवसर प्रदान करती है।

परन्तु इस किताब के मूल प्रतिपाद्य से सहमति जताते हुए एक दूसरी तस्वीर भी खींची जा सकती है। ऐसी तस्वीर जो गाँधी के दुःख को सान्त्वना दे सके और उन्हें यह भरोसा दे सके कि सत्य और अहिंसा की लड़ाई में हम उनके साथ रहे हैं। गाँधी को इस अर्थ में सम्भावना कहना कि अहिंसा की उनकी निजी-साधना सफल रही और इस अर्थ में उन्हें असम्भव कहना कि वे अहिंसा को सामूहिक प्रवृत्ति का ध्येय अर्थात् समष्टि धर्म नहीं बना सके - एक अर्द्ध सत्य है। सच्चाई यह है कि हिन्दुस्तान के स्वराज की लड़ाई में गाँधी का यह प्रयोग विभाजन से पूर्व और विभाजन के पश्चात् भी पूरे तौर से सफल रहा है। यदि इसकी असफलता देखना आवश्यक हो तो पहले मन में और बाद में धरती पर बने पाकिस्तान के परिप्रेक्ष्य में ही महानायक के इस महान् प्रयोग की असफलता देखी जा सकती है। यह बात सही है कि सत्य और अहिंसा सार्वभौमिक मूल्य हैं और मानव मात्र के लिए श्रेय हैं। गाँधी भी ऐसा ही समझते थे। परन्तु किसी भी मूल्य के अनुप्रयोग की एक सांस्कृतिक पृष्ठभूमि होती है। भारत की सांस्कृतिक पृष्ठभूमि में सत्य और अहिंसा के न्यूनाधिक रूप में चरितार्थ होने का जितना लम्बा उतना ही परीक्षित इतिहास रहा है। यहाँ तो अहिंसा की क्या बात, 'आनृशंस्य' को परम धर्म का दर्जा दिया गया है। आनृशंस्य क्रियात्मक अहिंसा की पूर्व भूमि है जहाँ चेतना में ही द्रोह का अभाव होता है और तब व्यवहार में हिंसा का प्रतिपक्ष 'मैत्री और करुणा' आचरण में उतरते हैं। भारत का यह सांस्कृतिक चरित्र विभाजन के पूर्व ही नहीं विभाजनोपरान्त भी अपनी अहमियत को बनाये रखा है। कुछ एक प्रतिक्रियात्मक घटनाओं की तुला पर भारत के सांस्कृतिक चरित्र को तौलना और अपने को कोसना ठीक नहीं है। यहाँ हम अपनी बात को और स्पष्ट करने के लिए एक अतिविवादास्पद और उतना ही संवेदनशील एक ऐतिहासिक निर्णय को उदाहरण बनाना चाहेंगे। अवधेय है कि 1947 में अत्यन्त प्रतिरोध के बावजूद देश का दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण विभाजन हुआ। इस विभाजन की परिस्थिति और उसके लिए जिम्मेदार मानस इतना कठोर था कि गाँधी को भी इसके विरोध में आमरण अनशन करने की हिम्मत नहीं हुई। यह उचित भी था क्योंकि अनशन की फलश्रुति हृदय रूपान्तरण में है न कि आत्महत्या में। इस विभाजन ने जहाँ एक इस्तामिक राष्ट्र की संरचना को तो सम्भव बनाया लेकिन दूसरी ओर बतौर प्रतिक्रिया हिन्दू राष्ट्र की अभिकल्पना को जन्म नहीं दिया। जबकि पाकिस्तान बनने के बाद शेष भारत को हिन्दू राष्ट्र बनने का नैतिक अधिकार अपने आप प्राप्त हो गया था। परन्तु शेष भारत ने अपनी सांस्कृतिक आत्म-प्रतिमा को धार्मिक-राजनैतिक इस्लाम की प्रतिक्रिया में परिभाषित करना उचित नहीं समझा। यह यूँ ही नहीं हुआ। दरअसल यह उस संस्कृति और उसके मूल्यबोध का कमाल था जो युगों-युगों से इस महादेश की चेतना का संस्कार करती आ रही थी। क्या यह गाँधी की बहुत बड़ी सफलता नहीं जिस पर स्वयं उन्हें और हम सब को आज भी गर्व करना चाहिए। यह बात दीगर है कि वजूद में आये पाकिस्तान की इस्तामिक सांस्कृतिक-धार्मिक पृष्ठभूमि में सत्य, अहिंसा, प्रेम और करुणा के लिए कितनी जगह रही। क्या यह सत्य नहीं कि जाने-अनजाने में यही सफलता गाँधी को हार मानने से अन्ततः बचा ही लिया और उन्होंने फिर से सत्य और अहिंसा से लड़ाई की पहल एक नये सिरे से की। वह यह कि भूगोल का

बँटवारा भले हो गया हो लेकिन दिलों का बँटवारा नहीं होना चाहिए। यदि दिलों के बँटवारे को रोका जा सके तो भूगोल पर बँटवारे की खिंची लकीर को कभी भी मिटाया जा सकेगा। सुधीर चन्द्रजी को हम यहाँ स्मरण दिलाना चाहते हैं कि गाँधी ने इसकी शुरुआत भी बचे-खुचे हिन्दुस्तान से ही किया, पाकिस्तान से पाकिस्तान जाकर नहीं। वस्तुतः कोई भी समाज और संस्कृति जैसे अपनी महत्तम उपलब्धियों का आकलन अपनी सांस्कृतिक आत्म-प्रतिमा की अनुरूपता में करता है वैसे ही ऐतिहासिक निर्णयों के सन्दर्भ में वह अपने समष्टि-धर्म का ही परिचय देता है। भारत और पाकिस्तान दोनों ने ऐसा ही किया है। अब सुधीर चन्द्रजी ही निर्णय लें कि भारत और पाकिस्तान में कौन गाँधी के साथ खड़ा रहा। यह भी कि जो गाँधी के साथ खड़ा नहीं रहेगा, क्या वह अपने वजूद को बनाए रखने के लिए अपने को योग्यतम भी सिद्ध कर पायेगा या नहीं।

दर्शन-विभाग,
डॉ. हरीसिंह गौर विश्वविद्यालय
सागर (म.प्र.) 470003