

Gandhi, a Marxian Luddite

Gandhi fancied himself as the founder of “true”
economics

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The veil has been removed from my eyes. In *Breaking Free of Nehru* I wrote positively about Gandhi's advocacy of individual liberty.

However, the study of his entire completed works – in relation to economics - has made me realise that Gandhi is NOT a classical liberal. He may have some kind of an interest in individual liberty and property rights, but he is best classified as a collectivist, a Marxian collectivist.

Gandhi repeatedly abused the discipline of economics – without even having a remote understanding about it - and claimed there is a “true” economics of which he is the world's only proponent.

This booklet explores my findings about Gandhi the “economist”.

As usual, this is a draft document, subject to improvement as I undertake further research. Feel free to add to or critique this booklet. PLEASE SEE THE ORIGINAL BLOG POSTS FOR ANNOTATIONS IN COLOUR.

NOTE:

1) I use the word Marxian, not Marxist, since Gandhi adopted many of Marx's ideas, but did not directly advocate Marxist approaches.

2) I do agree with SOME bits of Gandhi's views. This will become clearer through this booklet.

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1. The complete works of Gandhi in searchable format

1.1 My compilation of the entire works of Gandhi in both PDF and text format

The combined – complete – works of M K Gandhi in a single PDF file (100+ MB)

I've been meaning to combine all 98 volumes of Gandhi's works into a single file, for ease of searching. I found time last week to do so. The file is over 102 MEGA bytes!

[Download here.](#)

This file (slightly smaller in size) is presumably also available [here](#), but it costs 20 Euros, and I thought it is best to have this VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION made available free of cost (apart from saving myself that little bit of money, for more useful purposes).

I also tried to convert into text and Word, but my Omnipage software crashes with this 100+ MB file. The alternative is to OCR each of these one by one and combine. This will take a massive amount of time, so it is project for another day.

ADDENDUM

I've finally given up on trying to convert and format the complete works of Gandhi into Word. However, [I've found a process](#) to convert the very large PDF document into text, and to have a super-fast text-editor to review the document.

[Download here.](#)

1.2 Case in which Gandhi's views are sensible or largely sensible

1.2.1 Property rights cannot be taken away by force

Property rights cannot be taken away by force

In this response to a question re: communism, Gandhi reverts to the innate liberal in him. He condemns communism in no uncertain terms. This marks him as being quite different to Nehru who was greatly appreciative of the communists.

126 THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI —————Page 20825—
————— BOLSHEVISM Q. What is your opinion about the social economics of Bolshevism and how far do you think they are fit to be copied by our country?

A. I must confess that I have not yet been able fully to understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism it not only does not preclude the use of force but freely sanctions it for the **expropriation of private property** and maintaining the collective State ownership of the same. And if that is so **I have no hesitation in**

saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. But be that as it may there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain: the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned for ever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes.

1.2.2 Opposition to utilitarianism

Opposition to utilitarianism

I've finally given up on trying to convert and format the complete works of Gandhi into Word. However, I've found a process to convert the very large PDF document into text, and to have a super-fast text-editor to review the document.

The text has now been linked to the main blog post ([here](#)). You can also download the full text (over 100MB) [here](#).

With this out of the way, I'll now commence an analysis of Gandhi's economic views

Gandhi's opposition to utilitarianism

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175. SARVODAYA

People in the West generally hold that it is man's duty to promote the happiness—prosperity, that is—of the greatest number. Happiness is taken to mean material happiness exclusively, that is, economic prosperity. If, in the pursuit of this happiness moral, laws are violated, it does not matter much. Again, as the object is the happiness of the greatest number, people in the West do not believe it to be wrong if it is secured at the cost of the minority. The consequences of this attitude are in evidence in all western countries.

The exclusive quest for the physical and material happiness of the majority has no sanction in divine law. In fact, some thoughtful persons in the West have pointed out that it is contrary to divine law to pursue happiness in violation of moral principles. The late John Ruskin was foremost among these. He was an Englishman of great learning. He has written numerous books on art and crafts. He has also written a great deal on ethical questions. One of these books, a small one, Ruskin himself believed to be his best. It is read widely wherever English is spoken. In the book, he has effectively countered these arguments and shown that the well-being of the people at large consists in conforming to the moral law.

[Note: The reference is to Bentham's maxim of "the greatest good of the greatest number". Gandhiji opposed it on moral grounds; vide "The Petersburg Claptrap", 13-8-1904. Ruskin, too, criticized the construction of a "science" of economics on the Newtonian model from which "social affections" had been wholly abstracted. Ruskin argued that the greatest art or science was that which aroused "the greatest number of the greatest ideas".

MY COMMENT

This is a standard argument against utilitarianism – that people's utilities (including their values) are not measurable, hence the outcomes of such a "calculation" could somehow be sub-optimal. Indeed, I have written about the limitations of utilitarianism in BFN, and also in

my notes on cost-benefit analysis.

Despite that, utilitarianism has very limited practical application, given the impossibility of measuring the relevant variables.

The closest that we get to is cost-benefit analysis, which is not particularly remarkable.

Indeed, Gandhi was fully acquainted with matters of cost and benefit. His detailed report on the [Phoenix School that he started](#) in 1904 bears witness to the fact that there was a FINANCIAL system at work even in such charitable work.

I don't see the argument against utilitarianism to be of sufficient import to entirely set it aside on the ground that some "consequences" have been seen in the West. This is shallow thinking at its best.

1.2.3 He reluctantly supported decontrol of prices towards the end of his life

He reluctantly supported decontrol of prices towards the end of his life

I chanced upon this – but don't know what caused Gandhi to change his view on prices. On the one hand he spend his ENTIRE LIFE advocating prohibition of imports and swadeshi. He wanted people to buy goods at a higher price merely because they were produced internally. But at the same time he seems (very mysteriously!) to take credit for a price decontrol policy that was apparently introduced in India in 1947.

What explains his simultaneous advocacy of price control and price decontrol? Anyone willing to enlighten me?

And who promoted decontrol? Was it Sardar Patel? Ambedkar? Someone truly intelligent in India at that time, a person whose ideas we deeply miss today.

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SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING NEW DELHI, December 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am told— and to some extent it is true—that controls on certain articles of food and clothing have been removed and will be removed from more articles. There is now no doubt that controls are on the way out and Brijkishan has told me of its very first consequence. Gur, which used to be sold at Re. 1 a seer is now available at 8 [annas] a seer. This is some achievement. Of course the price should be still lower. When I was young no one could have dreamt that gur would ever become so dear. A seer of it could be had for one anna or less. We should therefore hope that the price of this commodity will further fall. **No doubt we cannot have it free of cost.**

[Sanjeev: Here's something important - a message for HARDCORE SOCIALISTS like Arvind Kejriwal]

Similarly, sugar has come down from Rs. 32 to Rs. 20 a maund. Moong 1 , urad2 3 and arhar are now sold at 1_ seers for a rupee. The same is true of gram. Gram, in my opinion, is included in the pulses, but in this region it has various special uses and so it is kept separate. It used to sell at Rs. 24 a maund. Now the price is Rs. 18. The black-market price of wheat used to be Rs. 34 a maund. It is now Rs. 24. The same goes for other articles.

People used to frighten me that I did not know how markets were operated, how prices rose and fell, that I did not know economics, that I was saying what I did because I was a mahatma and did not have to suffer the consequences of decontrol; it was the poor who would have to suffer [Sanjeev: indeed, it must have

been his own students - who were taught CONTROL over prices and trade by him who said such nonsensical things]. But from the first results of decontrol I see that the people will live rather than die through the measure.

I shall therefore say that control on maize, barley and millet should also be lifted. Because those who are used to millet will continue to eat millet. They will not be able to digest wheat. Similarly there are many whose staple diet is maize. **I thus see no reason why control on these articles should continue.** Dr. Rajendra Prasad too had promised that gradually all controls would be lifted.

We have seen the desirable consequences of some controls being lifted.

Now take match-boxes. One has to pay an exorbitant price for a box of matches in the black-market, which is really the open market. There is no doubt that if it is decontrolled it will have a very good effect. Match-boxes never used to be so costly. In my time it cost almost nothing. Today a box of matches is sold, maybe, for one anna. Then one got a whole dozen for that price. Things were never so costly as they are now.

I am happy when people's incomes rise but the rise in prices always distresses me. If the prices rise the excess should go to the toiler, but even then prices cannot rise so steeply. This happens when **traders turn wicked and greedy** [Sanjeev: Here is the innate communist raring his head again] and want to pocket as much profit as they can.

We have got our independence and we have been through a great calamity also, but still we have not learnt purity of conduct. **If our traders content themselves with what is a just profit, I have not the least fear that decontrol will lead to a rise in prices.** [Sanjeev: actually, prices - relative prices - will ALWAYS fall with free markets. This simple idea is so hard for these fools to understand] Even those who have such a fear attribute it to the fact that we are wicked and dishonest. Traders care only for their profits and the farmers and other producers too are only concerned with filling their own bellies and nobody bothers about the consumers. If that is so, how can one say that there is democracy in India? **How can such things be permitted in a democracy?** [Sanjeev: there he goes: he wants to CONTROL behaviour. A reluctant supporter of decontrol]

In a democracy it is incumbent on the Government to trust the people. It must clearly say that it will do as the people desire but that if what they desire brings them hardships it cannot be held responsible. True, we have a Civil Service, but all of us who are here should consider ourselves soldiers and serve the people. Today malpractices flourish. I am continuously receiving telegrams, etc., from everywhere. I understand there are some fishy practices going on in Bombay though I do not know exactly what. This should stop. But the people should congratulate the Government for the good work that has so far been done. It also encourages it. So much for the lifting of controls.=

In all other economic matters it would be fair to say that Gandhi's views are **WRONG** – often gravely wrong.

1.3 Don't mistreat servants

Don't mistreat personal servants

Extract from current draft version of *DOF*.

This is an appropriate place to consider the use of personal servants. No doubt those who

choose this occupation do so voluntarily, and so it is not a direct attack on their liberty. But it is surely deeply humiliating, and in some ways dehumanising. Not all full-time servants are treated with dignity in India (I wish myself, in retrospect, that I too had treated some of my servants with more respect than I sometimes showed them). Pyarelal, the personal secretary of Mahatma Gandhi in his later years, reporting on a day of silence by Gandhi in his book, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, described Gandhi's views on this subject thus:

[On one of Gandhi's silent Mondays, a group of fifteen 'Socialist' students visited him. Gandhi jotted down replies to their questions on slips of paper, his practice on days of silence.]

Now tell me how many of you have servants in your homes? [They said a servant in each home.] And you call yourself Socialists while you make others slave for you? It is a queer kind of Socialism which, I must say, I cannot understand.... The first step in the practice of Socialism is to learn to use your hands and feet. It is the only sure way to eradicate violence and exploitation from society.[1]

It is the lack of job opportunities in socialist India that compels some people to become personal servants. Most Indian socialist leaders, being the most corrupt of all, have the largest number of personal servants (so much for the claims of equality in socialism). One cannot expect the prevalence of servants in India to dissipate until socialism and its associated corrupt governance system disappears. With increasing freedom, the poor will find more worthy occupations. As well, the middle class will no longer be able to afford servants.

In the meantime, some new laws are perhaps needed to regulate the employment of personal servants so that people don't deprive servants of their basic freedoms and dignity. In particular, people with full-time personal servants must be required to provide for the educational and career development of servants' children. Similarly, no servant should be made to work for 24 hours a day throughout the year. Now, it would be wrong to introduce labour market rigidities, for that will harm the poor the most. However, while greater freedom is needed in the labour market – such as the ability to create individual contracts which are self-regulated – certain minimum standards can be mandated. There is no liberty to mistreat our fellow humans.

[1] Cited in Louis Fischer *The Essential Gandhi*. Edited by Louis Fisher. Vintage Books. New York. 1962. p. 305.

2. Deep ignorance of economics but no hesitation to misrepresent it

2.1 Adam Smith would turn in his grave at Gandhi's gross misrepresentation of his work

Adam Smith would turn in his grave at Gandhi's gross misrepresentation of his work

Gandhi had not read Adam Smith (and had no intention of reading Smith or any of the moral philosophers, as he proudly confirmed in his speech in 1916). But he did have opinions about Smith. **Drastically incorrect opinions.** Let me cite, then briefly discuss.

In The Harijan

You know how Adam Smith in his Wealth of Nations, after laying down certain principles according to which economic phenomena are governed, **went on to describe certain other things which constituted the 'disturbing factor' and prevented economic laws from having free play. Chief among these was the 'human element'.** [Sanjeev: what is this!] Now it is this 'human element' on which the entire economics of Khadi rests; **and human selfishness, Adam Smith's 'pure economic motive', constitutes the 'disturbing factor' that has got to be overcome.** - Harijan, 21-9-34, p. 253 [Source]

A discussion in 1934

263. NEW LIFE FOR KHADI [summary of a discussion with some khadi workers about the need to reorganize khadi work. Before October 21, 1934]

While thinking about the reorganization of khadi production you should not forget that in certain matters the economics of khadi and the commonly prevalent economics are poles asunder. I am always reminded of one thing which the well-known British economist Adam Smith has said in his famous treatise The Wealth of Nations. In it he has described some economic laws as universal and absolute. Then he has described certain situations which may be an obstacle to the operation of these laws. **These disturbing factors are the human nature, the human temperament or altruism inherent in it.** [Sanjeev: surely a most amazing misrepresentation!]

Now, the economics of khadi is just the opposite of it. Benevolence which is inherent in human nature is the very foundation of the economics of khadi. **What Adam Smith has described as pure economic activity based merely on the calculations of profit and loss is a selfish attitude** and it is an obstacle to the development of khadi; and it is the function of a champion of khadi to **counteract this tendency.** Hence, the tactics normally adopted in a profiteering business have no place in khadi activity. For instance, cheating, fraud, falsehood, adulteration, exploiting people's addictions or their baser feelings things practised in mill industries and ordinary trade—are to be completely shunned in khadi activity. [Sanjeev: Gandhi is smearing the entire manufacturing and trading sector. Adam Smith shows how markets will weed out bad apples, unless sheltered by government; that remains true till today.]

The policy of paying **minimum wages** to the weaver or spinner with a view to

increasing profits can have no place in khadi activity. [Sanjeev: who would EVER pay a minimum wage to "increase profits!" - but I'm glad Gandhi opposed minimum wage, nevertheless].

At the same time, khadi activity cannot be carried on by incurring losses as a result of unpractical attitudes. The reason why our khadi organizations incur losses today is the inefficiency of our workers. In khadi activity spinners and other workers get full reward of their labour but the middlemen and organizers get nothing more than their due share. [Sanjeev: Gandhi was clearly smitten by the - false - labour theory of value] [Source]

SAME INTERVIEW TO KHADI WORKERS [On or before August 24, 1934] [1 This appeared under the title "Khadi—A New Orientation" as a "gist of Gandhiji's remarks" to prominent khadi workers of Andhra, including Patabhi Sitaramayya, Sitarama Sastri and Narayana Raju, The discussion continued for two days.]

"In reorganizing your khadi production, you should not forget that the science of khadi, in some respects, works on diametrically opposite lines to that of ordinary business. You know how Adam Smith in his Wealth of Nations, after laying down certain principles according to which economic phenomena are governed, went on to describe certain other things which constituted the "disturbing factor" and prevented economic laws from having free play. Chief among these was the 'human element'. Now, it is this 'human element' on which the entire economics of khadi rests; and human selfishness, Adam Smith's "pure economic motive", constitutes the "disturbing factor" that has got to be overcome. What applies to the production of mill-cloth, therefore, does not apply to khaddar. Debasing of quality, adulteration, pandering to the baser tastes of humanity, are current staple in commercialized production; they have no place in khadi, nor has the principle of highest profit and lowest wages any place in khadi. On the contrary, there is no such thing as pure profit in khadi. And there should be no loss. Loss there is, because we, the workers, are still incompetent novices. In khadi, the prices realized return to the prime producers, the spinners, the others getting no more than their hire. [Source]

MY COMMENTS

Gandhi was a good man, with strong convictions, but a **very** poor student. He didn't read widely nor care to understand the foundations of the liberty (he did get a glimpse through Thoreau, which gave him a libertarian streak).

This smearing of Adam Smith is atrocious! His grievous mistakes in understanding Adam Smith (and classical moral philosophers) was made worse with Nehru's mindless acceptance of Laski and other socialists.

The lack of diligent study by these two leaders has cost India dearly.

If Gandhi had understood Smith and the price system, imagine what we'd have become long ago! – A FREE country. But that was not to be.

Till today there are not more than a handful of people in India who understand Smith. Such has been the TERRIBLE influence of Gandhi on India – as far as economic policy is concerned.

[See also this: <http://adamsmithslostlegacy.blogspot.com.au/2013/12/libels-of-adam-smith.html>]

| Elements | Theory of moral sentiments | <i>Wealth of Nations</i> | Language |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Motivating desire | 'Pleasure of mutual sympathy' | 'Natural effort of every individual to better his own condition' | 'Desire to make mutual wants intelligible to each other' |
| Rules developed | 'Standards of moral judgement and rules determining propriety and merit' | 'Laws of justice; protection of property, contractual agreements and voluntary exchanges' | 'Rules of grammar pronunciation' |
| Currency | Personal sentiments and moral judgements | Private goods and services | Words, ideas and wants |
| Resulting unintended system of order | Commonly shared standards of morality and moral judgement | Economy: large-scale network of exchanges of goods and services | 'Communication through mutually intelligible' languages |

Figure 2.1 Smith's market model (J. Otteson)¹⁸

Source: Adam Smith: A Moral Philosopher and His Political Economy, by Gavin Kennedy

2.2 Gandhi's shocking ignorance of economics and false pride in his ignorance.

Gandhi's shocking ignorance of economics and false pride in his ignorance.

It was extremely disappointing to read this speech that Gandhi gave in 1916 at age 47. This was the fully matured man, not some baby starting his journey. So we can't ignore his confusions since these are very similar to opinions widely held in India today. They might have spread through him, paving the way for Nehru and his godchildren like BJP.

In his speech he made some STARTLINGLY BAD ASSUMPTIONS AND FALSE STATEMENTS. The full speech is available [here](#). These assumptions and falsehoods include:

- the minimum and the maximum wealth a man should have is 'none' [So this means we should aim for ZERO economic growth].
- being wealth is directly correlated to immorality [depends - how immoral are Bill Gates or Warren Buffet? There is no correlation between wealth and immorality.]
- train and steamer travel has created "a great deal of mischief" [FALSE!]
- there are fundamental differences among Western and Indian "conditions" (there are not; all humans respond to the same incentives) [FALSE!]
- wealthy societies tend to increased suicide [FALSE!]
- premature births and congenital defects have increased in wealthy societies [FALSE!]

Gandhi's speech at Muir College Economic Society, Allahabad, December 22, 1916

When I accepted Mr. Kapildeva Malaviya's invitation to speak to you upon the subject of this evening, I was painfully conscious of my limitations. You are an economic society. **Frankly and truly, I know very little of economics.** [An economist friend] found that I had not even read books on economics by such well-known authorities as Mill, Marshall, Adam Smith and a host of such other authors. In despair, he ended by advising me to read these works before experimenting in matters economic at the expense of the public. **He little knew that I was a sinner past redemption.**

In South Africa I observed almost invariably that **the greater the possession of riches, the greater was their moral turpitude.** Our rich men, to say the least, did not advance the moral struggle of passive resistance as did the poor. The rich men's sense of self-respect was not so much injured as that of the poorest. I venture to think that the scriptures of the world are far safer and sounder treatises on laws of economics than many of the modern text-books.

Jesus saith unto them: "Children, **how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!**"

I should not have laboured my point as I have done, if I did not believe that, **in so far as we have made the modern materialistic craze our goal, in so far are we going downhill in the path of progress.** I hold that economic progress in the sense I have put it is antagonistic to real progress. Hence the ancient ideal has been the limitation of activities promoting wealth. This does not put an end to all material ambition. We should still have, as we have always had, in our midst people who make the pursuit of wealth their aim in life. But we have always recognised that it is a fall from the ideal. [Sanjeev: This is hugely insulting] It is a beautiful thing to know that the wealthiest among us have often felt that to have remained voluntarily poor would have been a higher state for them. That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the highest value. We have to make our choice.

Western nations today are groaning under the heel of the monster-god of materialism. Wallace... shows how **factories have risen on the corpses of men, women and children,** how as the country has rapidly advanced in riches, it has gone down in morality. He shows this by dealing with insanitation, life-destroying trades, adulteration, bribery and gambling. He shows how, with the advance of wealth, justice has become immoral, **deaths from alcoholism and suicide have increased,** [Sanjeev: This is absurd nonsense] the **average of premature births and congenital defects has increased** [Sanjeev: This is absurd nonsense], and prostitution has become an institution.

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Later, the writer of the article states:

"Mr. Gandhi in the course of his remarks ... thought that the economist had a place in the economy of nature when he occupied the humble sphere for which he was created. If an economist did not investigate the laws of God and show them how to distribute wealth so that there might not be poverty, he was a most unwelcome intrusion on the Indian soil. [Sanjeev: no issue with elimination of poverty, but not distribution of wealth; that's part of social insurance]

He would utter the note of warning that Indian conditions being in some respects so **essentially different from the English and American conditions,** it was necessary to bring to bear on the matters that presented themselves to the economists a fresh mind. As regards intercourse with other nations, he said that he did not think that they necessarily advanced one little bit in their moral growth by bringing their masses with

others into physical contact and pointed to Indians in South Africa as an instance. **The rapid locomotion such as steamers, trains and others dislocated so many of their ideals and created a great deal of mischief.** [Sanjeev: How ridiculous can Gandhi get?]

As regards the question what was the minimum and the maximum wealth a man should have—he would answer in the words of Jesus, Ramkrishna and others who said ‘none’.

2.3 Opposition to the “maxims of “economics”

Opposition to the “maxims of “economics”

It is increasingly clear that Gandhi’s failure to read Adam Smith (and many others) set him off on a path of deep confusion regarding economics.

He didn’t understand that economics has in-built thing called reputation which no trader or businessman can maintain without SERVING the needs of his or her clients. The ethics of voluntary trade was lost to him. One man’s ignorance has cost India very dearly.

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— — — —

Suppose a ship’s captain places his son among the common sailors under his command. The captain’s duty is to treat all sailors as he would treat his son. In the same manner, a merchant may ask his son to work alongside of those under him. He must always treat the workers as he would then treat his son. This is the true meaning of economics. And as the captain is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of shipwreck, so in the event of famine or other calamities, the trader is bound to safeguard the interests of his men before his own. All this may sound strange. But the really strange thing about the modern age is that it should so sound. For anyone who applies his mind to it will be able to see that the true principle is as we have stated it. Any other standard is impossible for a progressive nation. **If the British have survived so long, it is not because they have lived up to the maxims of economics**, but because they have had many heroes who have questioned them and followed instead these principles of moral conduct. The harm that results from the violation of these principles and the nation’s consequent decline from greatness, we shall consider on another occasion. [Complete works]

SIMILARLY, ELSEWHERE:

God, no one worships the true God. Wealth cannot be reconciled with God. God lives only in the homes of the poor. This is what the British profess, but in practice they place wealth above everything else, estimate the prosperity of the nation by the number of its rich, and their economists formulate precepts for everyone to get rich quickly. True economics is the economics of justice. That people alone will be happy which learns how to do justice and be righteous under all conditions of life. All else is vain, a kind of moral perversity that presages doom. To teach the people to get rich at any cost is to teach them an evil lesson.

FURTHER

We saw in the three preceding chapters that the generally accepted principles of economics are invalid. If acted upon, they will make individuals and nations unhappy. The poor will become poorer and the rich richer; neither will be any the happier for it.

FURTHER

True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally, including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life. [Sanjeev: Clearly he has NEVER understood the ethics of voluntarism that is implied by classical economics. Without ethics and accountability there can be no freedom, but Gandhi never knew - for he never cared to ask]

FURTHER

Western economics is divorced from ethics;

2.4 His battle against a real economist. Posterity will judge him as the loser.

His battle against a real economist. Posterity will judge him as the loser.

Looks like Gandhi staked his ENTIRE reputation on the charkha and swadeshi. It is clear that he has lost.

The charkha is NO WAY to eliminate poverty in India.

Let me add that I retain my great regard for Gandhi.

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91. INDIAN ECONOMICS

A friend has placed in my hands a bulletin on Indian Piece- Goods Trade prepared by Mr. A. C. Coubrough C.B.E. by order of the Government of India. It contains the following prefatory note: The Government of India desire it to be understood that the statement made and the views expressed in this bulletin are those of the author himself. If so, why has the Government of India burdened the taxpayer with the expense of such bulletins? The one before me is 16th in the series. Do they publish both the sides of the question?

The bulletin under review is intended to be an answer to the swadeshi movement. It is an elaborate note containing a number of charts showing the condition of imports and home manufacture of piece-goods including hand-woven. But it does not assist the reader in studying the movement. The painstaking author has bestowed no pains upon a study of the present movement or its scope. That the Government of India treats the greatest constructive and co-operative movement in the country with supreme contempt and devotes people's money to a vain refutation instead of a sympathetic study and treatment is perhaps the best condemnation that can be pronounced upon the system under which it is carried.

The author's argument is:

1. The movement if successful will act not as a protective but a prohibitive tariff.
2. This must result in merely enriching the Indian capitalist and punishing the consumer.
3. The imports are non-competitive in that the bulk of the kind of piece-goods

imported are not manufactured in India.

4. The result of boycotting such piece-goods must be high prices without corresponding benefit.

5. The boycott therefore being against the law of supply and demand and against the consumer must fail in the end.

6. The destruction of hand-spinning which I have deplored is due to natural causes, viz., the invention of time-saving appliances and was therefore inevitable.

7. The Indian farmer is responsible for his own ruin in that he has indolently neglected cotton culture which was once so good.

8. The best service I can render is therefore to induce the agriculturist to improve the quality of cotton.

9. The author concludes: If instead of filling homes with useless charkhas he were to start a propaganda for the more intensive cultivation of cotton and particularly for the production of longer-staple cotton, his influence would be felt not only at the present day but for many generations to come.

The reader will thus see, that what I regard as the supreme necessity for the economical salvation of India, the author considers to be rank folly. There is therefore no meeting ground here. And in spite of the prefatory note of the Government of India reproduced by me, the author does represent the Government attitude. I have invited them and the co-operators definitely to make common cause with the people in this movement at any rate. They may not mind its political implications because they do not believe in them. And surely they need not feel sorry if contrary to their expectation, the rise of the charkha results in an increase in the political power of the people. Instead of waging war against khadi, they might have popularized its use and disarmed the terrible suspicion they labour under of wishing to benefit the foreign manufacturer at the expense of the Indian cultivator. My invitation is open for all time. I prophesy that whatever happens to the other parts of the national programme, **swadeshi in its present shape will bide for ever and must if India's pauperism is to be banished.**

Even though I am a layman, I make bold to say that the so-called laws laid down in books on economics are not immutable like the laws of Medes and Persians, nor are they universal. The economics of England are different from those of Germany. Germany enriched herself by bounty-fed beet sugar. England enriched herself by exploiting foreign markets. What was possible for a compact area is not possible for an area 1900 miles long and 1500 broad. The economics of a nation are determined by its climatic, geological and temperamental conditions. The Indian conditions are different from the English in all these essentials. What is meat for England is in many cases poison for India. Beef tea in the English climate may be good, it is poison for the hot climate of religious India. Fiery whisky in the north of the British Isles may be a necessity, it renders an Indian unfit for work or society. Furcoats in Scotland are indispensable, they will be an intolerable burden in India. Free trade for a country which has become industrial, whose population can and does live in cities, whose people do not mind preying upon other nations and therefore sustain the biggest navy to protect their unnatural commerce, may be economically sound (though as the reader perceives, I question its morality). Free trade for India has proved her curse and held her in bondage.

And now for Mr. Coubrough's propositions:

1. The movement is intended to serve the purpose of a voluntary prohibitive tariff.

2. But it is so conceived as neither unduly to benefit the capitalist nor to injure the consumer. During the very brief transition stage the prices of home manufactures may be, as they are, inflated. But the rise can only be temporary as the vast majority of consumers must become their own manufacturers. This cottage manufacture of yarn and cloth cannot be expensive even as domestic cookery is not expensive and cannot be replaced by hotel cookery. Over twenty-five crores of the population will be doing their own hand-spinning and having yarn thus manufactured woven in neighbouring localities. This population is rooted to the soil and has at least four months in the year to remain idle.

If they spin during those hours and have the yarn woven and wear it, no mill-made cloth can compete with their khadi. The cloth thus manufactured will be the cheapest possible for them. If the rest of the population did not take part in the process, it could easily be supplied out of the surplus manufactured by the twenty-five crores.

3. It is true that non-competitive imports are larger than those that compete with the manufactures of Indian mills. In the scheme proposed by me the question does not arise, because the central idea is not so much to carry on a commercial war against foreign countries as to utilize the idle hours of the nation and thus by natural processes to help it to get rid of her growing pauperism.

4. I have already shown that the result of boycott cannot in the end be a rise in the price of cloth.

5. The proposed boycott is not against the law of supply and demand, because it does away with the law by manufacturing enough for the supply. The movement does require a change of taste on the part of those who have adopted finer variety and who patronize fantastic combinations of colours and designs.

6. I have shown in these pages, that the destruction of hand-spinning was designed and carried out in a most inhuman manner by the agents of the East India Company. No amount of appliances would ever have displaced this national art and industry but for this artificial and systematically cruel manner of carrying out the destruction.

7. I am unable to hold the Indian farmer responsible for the deterioration in cotton culture. The whole incentive was taken away when hand-spinning was destroyed. The state never cared for the cultivator.

8. My activity, I am proud to think, has already turned the cultivator's attention to the improvement of cotton. The artistic sense of the nation will insist on fine counts for which long staple is a necessity. Cotton culture by itself cannot solve the problem of India's poverty. For it will still leave the question of enforced idleness untouched.

9. I therefore claim for the charkha the honour of being able to solve the problem of economic distress in a most natural, simple, unexpensive and businesslike manner. The charkha therefore is not only not useless as the writer ignorantly suggests, but it is a useful and indispensable article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war out of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill will towards the nations of the earth but of goodwill and self-help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources, but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as today they cook their food in their own homes. **I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of**

omission and commission but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the charkha. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, goodwill and love. And with all that, inasmuch as the loss of it brought India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom

Young India, 8-12-1921

FURTHER

He lost even during his own time:

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But unfortunately for the toiling millions of India, hand-spinning is even now struggling for its very existence. Many economists brought up in the European school even laugh at me when I advocate spinning as a scientific thing and a sign of beauty and art. And believing as they do, in the system of competition reigning supreme in this world as the final word on economics, they believe that spinning is merely a toy of mine, verily to be destroyed as soon as I retire from this world. You will, therefore, appreciate my great anxiety for this child, struggling for its very existence and you will forgive me if I warn you against mishandling this thing for me and I say this after a careful study of the subject since 1908; spinning is not one of the many handicrafts that boys and girls may learn or our people may take to, but it is in my opinion the central fact of the life of the starving masses of India. I have come to the conclusion that no solution of the deep and ever deepening poverty of the masses is possible without giving hand-spinning a central place in any scheme. Whilst, therefore, I tender my congratulations to the State for countenancing hand-spinning in the manner I have seen and whilst I congratulate the boys and girls, whom I saw today, as well as the teachers, on their having taken up spinning, I must beseech the State authorities and the teachers and the boys and girls and all those who have the welfare of the State in their keeping to give this subject their very serious attention.

THE IMPRACTICAL GOAL

The maxim of khadi economics is: 'Equity for all.' It therefore rules out the present soul-killing competitive method. Khadi economics are designed in the interest of the poorest and the helpless, and khadi will be successful only to the extent that the workers permeate the masses and command their confidence. And the only way of commanding their confidence is doing selfless work among them.

2.5 Every country has different economics

Every country has different economics

I've heard this idea – that there should be a "separate" economics for India – many times in India. Where did this weird idea come from? Possibly Gandhi:

The economics taught there is inadequate. If you are inquisitive, you will find that the economics taught in German, American or French languages differs from one another. From the talk that I had with a Hungarian visitor, I gathered that the economics of his country must be quite different. Each country has its own science of economics, based on the local conditions. It is not right to assume that one country's economics is true for the whole world. Why are the economics taught today ruining India? We do not know Indian economics, we have to discover it.

[Sanjeev: A man who never read Adam Smith, in fact REFUSED to read even basic

economics, had somehow figured out that there is a different economics in each nation. And what about Arthashastra? The principles in our own "Indian" economics are pretty much what is taught anywhere else in the world]

FURTHER

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The principles of economics are not, like the principles of mathematics, for instance, immutable, and for all times and climes. England will not accept the economics of France, nor France that of Germany, nor Germany that of America, and they would be wrong if they did so. A country which produces no food-stuffs and produces only minerals must have different economics from that which produces food-stuffs but has no mineral resources. India, therefore, cannot afford to go by the economics of France, England, America or Germany. India was once the land of gold. Not that it produced much gold, but it had such treasures of art, it produced cloth of such rich quality and spices of such value that other lands paid for them in treasures of gold. We have lost that proud position today and have become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water.

But even now we can regain that proud position, for, our natural resources are unique and no other country in the world, excepting China, can boast of the crores of living machines we have. Now, how can a country with crores of living machines afford to have a machine which will displace the labour of crores of living machines? It would spell their unemployment and their ruin. We have to employ all these crores of human machines that are idle, we have to make them intelligent machines, and unless cities decide to depend for the necessities of life and for most of their other needs on the villages, this can never happen. We are guilty of a grievous wrong against the villagers, and the only way in which we can expiate it is by encouraging them to revive their lost industries and arts by assuring them of a ready market. There is no one more patient and forbearing than God, but there comes a limit even to His patience and forbearance. If we neglect our duty to our villagers, we shall be courting our own ruin. This duty is no onerous one. It is incredibly simple. **We have to be rural-minded and think of our necessities and the necessities of our household in the terms of rural-mindedness.** The task does not involve much expenditure either. Volunteers are needed to go to the nearest villages to assure them that all that they produce would find a ready market in the towns and cities. [Sanjeev: Volunteers don't come FREE! There is a cost to everything] This is a task which can be undertaken by men and women of all castes and creeds, of all parties and all faiths. It is in consonance with the true economics of our country. I have no time to expatiate on this, but I would ask you to read what is written in the columns of Harijan, English and Hindi, from week to week.

Harijan, 1-3-1935

FURTHER

We are building up a new economics. Conditions differ from country to country. And, moreover, the rich and the poor have their own economics. Please, therefore, do not lose heart.

2.6 Ridiculous attempt to fight the laws of economics (competition/ lower prices)

Ridiculous attempt to fight the laws of economics (competition/ lower prices)

The more I read Gandhi's economic views, I see a pathetically ill-informed person trying to violate the basic laws of economics. He failed and took India down with him.

72. SPEECH AT A.I.S.A. COUNCIL MEETING WARDHA [On or before October 13, 1935]

We must once for all dismiss the thought of competing with futile soul-killing economics. Do you know the insidious way in which Japanese fents are glutting the market? Whereas less than five years ago they were a few thousand yards, they amount to millions of yards today. **How can you compete with these? No, we must no longer aim at reducing the prices in order to meet this competition.**

How can one INCREASE PRICES (particularly for a low quality product) and still sell anything? Utopia, thy name is Gandhi.

FURTHER

Khadi has to work against almost settled prejudices among the villagers, against unscrupulous competition without State protection, and against the prevalent opinion of so-called experts in the science of economics, against even the demand of khadi wearers for progressively cheaper khadi. It is thus largely a question of the education of the villagers and the city-dwellers in the true economics for this land of tears. These transcend all religions. Hindus, Mussal- mans and Christians who live in the villages suffer from the same disease of poverty and want. If there is a difference it is only one of degree.

I therefore maintain that though yard per yard khadi may be dearer than mill-made cloth, in its totality and in terms of the villagers it is the most economic, practical proposition without a rival. Khadi may be interpreted to include other village industries for the purposes of a thorough examination of the proposition.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

FURTHER

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But this place is now flooded with textiles from the mills of Japan, England and Ahmedabad. You buy that cloth thinking it is cheap, while you find the khadi prepared by the poor expensive. I can then only say that you do not deserve to live in India. You call the things made by the rich cheap. My economics does not accept this. If you realize this, You must know where your duty lies. My economics consists in buying the things made by the poor people at a higher price.

FURTHER

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FURTHER

The economics of khadi are to a great extent **contrary** to those of mill cloth. **Cloth manufactured in Manchester is meant for use not in Manchester or England or Europe, but to be exported to Asia or Africa for the use of the people there.** On the contrary khadi is meant to be made for the millions by the millions living in villages. Mills use cotton imported from all parts of the world. Cotton for khadi should be produced where it is turned into khadi. We have not yet attained the ideal of the science of khadi, and to that extent the foundation of khadi must be regarded as weak. There was no science of khadi when we began to use khadi. It has evolved with the progress of khadi, and even now it is far from being perfect. But ever-watchful khadi servants are constantly thinking about it and going on perfecting it in the light of experience. I am afraid it will be some time before we can reach the ideal pictured by the correspondent.

2.7 An anti-industry Marxian Luddite, condemning Satanic economics!

An anti-industry Marxian Luddite, condemning Satanic economics!

I didn't realise Gandhi had been influenced by Marx. This is pretty much Marx speaking:

Gandhiji said that khadi would in part rebuild the villages that were destroyed by modern industrialism and that it was the duty of prosperous merchants in cotton centres to help towards the revival of spinning. The khadi movement stood for even distribution of the good things of the world. Khadi represented dharmik political economy, whereas industrialism was rakshasik or Satanic economics. **For it stood for the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few.**

I am going to do my best to prevent this Satanic economics from destroying us. I want all of you—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, and all—to help me in this work.

He dealt with cow-protection in which the people of Davangere were keenly interested and for which they had an efficient organization called the Prani Daya Sangha. He said that well-conducted dairies and good tanneries for hides of dead cattle were absolutely necessary for true cow-protection in India.

2.8 Gandhi was in two minds about science and the scientific method

Gandhi was in two minds about science and the scientific method

As part of my research to investigate whether Hinduism promotes or denies reason, I've conducted a brief study of Gandhi's collected works – 98 volumes in all. (Today, **every** word that Gandhi wrote can be searched in a millisecond! Just go to advanced google search and restrict the search to the domain: [http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/.](http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/))

Gandhi is not a Hindu teacher, but his views were often informed by his Hindu upbringing. Posted below is my preliminary research. Happy to receive other evidence (either for or against) on this topic. In brief, I find that **Gandhi was not clear about the role of science and reason.**

(There is another possible candidate. I studied in DAV College Jullundur, most academics of which were Arya Samajis – followers of Dayananda Saraswati. DAV institutions have been at

the **forefront of science**. For instance, the Nobelist Hargovind Khorana not only studied in DAV High school Multan but got his BSc degree from DAV College Lahore. I can vouch for the high quality of the chemistry labs in DAV Jullundur. It is quite possible that Dayanand Saraswati might have advocated science and reason. Anyone know anything about that?)

1) Gandhi understood and broadly supported the scientific method:

"A person who is scientifically inclined does not take the truth of anything for granted; he tries to prove it himself. In this way he develops his own intellect and also obtains knowledge of the potentialities of things. Why does an apple fall off the tree, why does it not fly up? It is said that this question arose in Newton's mind and he discovered the law of gravitation. Is the earth flat like a plate? Is it stationary? Such questions arose in Galileo's mind and he discovered that the earth is spherical like an orange and revolves on its axis. Such discoveries have produced great results." (Source: Collected works of Gandhi, p.40, Vol. 81. <http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/VOL081.PDF>)

Also:

"It is enough for us to know that it is the correct goal and, having started the activity, we have to correct our mistakes and go forward. That is the essence of the scientific method. No science has dropped from the skies in a perfect form. All sciences develop and are built up through experience. Perfection is not an attribute of science. Absolute perfection is not possible either for man or for the science that he creates. For example, astronomy is continually progressing. Many mistakes have been made and corrected. The process still continues. The same may be said of the science of khadi." (Source: Collected works of Gandhi, p.179, Vol. 90. <http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/VOL090.PDF>)

2) But Gandhi was not a fan of technology:

"mass production" is a technical term for production by the fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery. I have said to myself that that is wrong. My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions.'[3]

3) He also thought that science did not offer anything substantial:

'Nothing that the modern civilization can offer in the way of stability can ever make any more certain that which is inherently uncertain; that, when we come to think of it, the boast about the wonderful discoveries and the marvellous inventions of science, good as they undoubtedly are in themselves, is, after all, an empty boast. They offer nothing substantial to the struggling humanity.'[4]

4) And he positively opposed modern medicine:

'Do not deceive yourself with the belief that allopathy today holds the field by virtue of the backing and patronage that it receives from the Government. In my opinion it holds its present position in the world because, though it is a false science, its votaries have faith in it and have made great sacrifices to advance it. But the modern naturopaths have made no sacrifices. They are easily satisfied. No wonder they feel they have earned the right to fleece the poor and gullible and grow rich.'[5]

[3] Collected works of Gandhi, p.20, Vol. 54. <http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/VOL054.PDF>

[4] Collected works of Gandhi, p.209, Vol. 53. <http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/VOL003.PDF>

[5] Collected works of Gandhi, p.157 Vol.

2.9 Gandhi wanted India to abandon all technology

“India’s salvation,” he wrote in 1909, “consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past fifty years. The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors, and such like have all to go.” [\[Source\]](#)

Without ever having heard of a protein or a vitamin, he considered himself an expert on diet, as on most things, and was constantly experimenting. Once when he fell ill, he was found to have been living on a diet of ground-nut butter and lemon juice; British doctors called it malnutrition. And Gandhi had even greater confidence in his abilities as a “nature doctor,” prescribing obligatory cures for his ashramites, such as dried cow-dung powder and various concoctions containing cow dung (the cow, of course, being sacred to the Hindu).

And in the end he let her Kasturba die, rather than allow British doctors to give her a shot of penicillin. [Source: [The Gandhi Nobody Knows](#), 03.01.83 Richard Grenier]

3. Great confusion regarding inequality

3.1 Mixed up poverty elimination with elimination of economic inequality

Mixed up poverty elimination with elimination of economic inequality

Here is an elaboration of Gandhi's view on economic equality. Unfortunately, he had not understood John Ruskin (whose work he claimed to promote), for Ruskin had clearly indicated that economic inequality is the NATURAL state of man. Even when total economic equality is enforced in an imaginary world, inequality will rapidly emerge.

It is not inequality that we should even remotely bother about, but poverty. And that can be **readily** addressed through a negative income tax based social insurance scheme.

Clearly, Gandhi was not averse to the use of STATE FORCE to regulate the rich. He used the existence of deep poverty as an excuse to hammer the rich. That's wrong. Let's keep poverty and economic inequality as two separate issues. The first is legitimate. The second, illegitimate.

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QUESTION : What exactly do you mean by economic equality? What is statutory trusteeship as conceived by you?

Gandhiji's reply was that **economic equality of his conception did not mean that everyone would literally have the same amount. It simply meant that everybody should have enough for his or her needs.** For instance, he required two shawls in winter whereas his grand-nephew Kanu Gandhi who stayed with him and was like his own son did not require any warm clothing whatsoever. Gandhiji required goat's milk, oranges and other fruit. Kanu could do with ordinary food. He envied Kanu but there was no point in it. Kanu was a young man whereas he was an old man of 76. **The monthly expense of his food was far more than that of Kanu but that did not mean that there was economic inequality between them. The elephant needs a thousand times more food than the ant, but that is not an indication of inequality.** So the real meaning of economic equality was: **"To each according to his need." That was the definition of Marx.** [Sanjeev: but this is the HUGE problem: who else can define a person's needs but the person himself? And why does someone's need concern us?] If a single man demanded as much as a man with wife and four children that would be a violation of economic equality. [Sanjeev: This is a deeply communist statement, close to Marxian]

Gandhiji continued :

Let no one try to justify the **glaring difference** between the classes and the masses, the prince and the pauper, by saying that the former need more. [Sanjeev: That's never the justification. The justification is based on JUSTICE. The laws of freedom to produce and pass on to one's progeny. Re: princes - these must be abolished.] That will be idle sophistry and a travesty of my argument. The contrast between the rich and the poor today is a painful sight. [Sanjeev: WHY! The ONLY issue is poverty. The rich are entitled to live as well as they wish.] The poor villagers are exploited by the foreign Government and also by their own countrymen—the city-dwellers. They

produce the food and go hungry. They produce milk and their children have to go without it. It is disgraceful. Everyone must have a balanced diet, a decent house to live in, facilities for the education of one's children and adequate medical relief. [Sanjeev: That's fine - a social minimum is essential and there can be no disagreement about it, but that's POVERTY, not INEQUALITY]

That constituted his picture of economic equality. He did not want to taboo everything above and beyond the bare necessities but they must come after the essential needs of the poor are satisfied. [Sanjeev: that's collectivist NONSENSE. The essential needs of the poor can be readily resolved - but that's ALL the state is required to do. Let everyone be as rich as they wish, after that] things must come first. As for the present owners of wealth, they would have to make their choice between class-war and voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. [Sanjeev: Clearly a communist threat] They would be allowed to retain the stewardship of their possessions and to use their talent to increase the wealth, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the nation and therefore without exploitation. **The State would regulate the rate of commission which they would get commensurate with the service rendered and its value to society. Their children would inherit the stewardship only if they proved their fitness for it.** [Sanjeev: here comes the punch: the VIOLENCE of the state]

He concluded :

Supposing India becomes a free country tomorrow, all the capitalists will have an opportunity of becoming statutory trustees. But such a statute will not be imposed from above. It will have to come from below. When the people understand the implications of trusteeship and the atmosphere is ripe for it, the people themselves, beginning with gram panchayats, will begin to introduce such statutes. Such a thing coming from below is easy to swallow. Coming from above, it is liable to prove a dead weight.

Q. What is the difference between your technique and that of the communists or socialists for realizing the goal of economic equality?

A. The socialists and communists say, they can do nothing to bring about economic equality today. They will just carry on propaganda in its favour and to that end **they believe in generating and accentuating hatred.** They say, when they get control over the State, they will enforce equality. Under my plan, the State will be there to carry out the will of the people, not to dictate to them or force them to do its will. **I shall bring about economic equality through non-violence,** by converting the people to my point of view by harnessing the forces of love as against hatred. **I will not wait till I have converted the whole society to my view but will straightaway make a beginning with myself.**

It goes without saying that I cannot hope to bring about economic equality of my conception, if I am the owner of fifty motor-cars or even of ten bighas of land. For that I have to reduce myself to the level of the poorest of the poor. That is what I have been trying to do for the last fifty years or more, and so **I claim to be a foremost communist** although I make use of cars and other facilities offered to me by the rich. They have no hold on me and I can shed them at a moment's notice, if the interests of the masses demand it.

4. Cow economics

4.1 Utopian NONSENSE about an economy designed to serve cows

Utopian NONSENSE about an economy designed to serve cows

If he was alive today, I'd need to consider Gandhi a **nut case** in some very basic matters. His incapacity to understand economics or to undertake a basic cost-benefit test (which America learnt so well from Franklin) meant that not only could he not understand the NON-VIOLENCE of the market economy (duly regulated for harm), but proposed some totally delusional utopian schemes involving IMPOSSIBILITIES. He not only wanted to stop the slaughter of cows (which, I have clearly demonstrated, was PART OF INDIAN CULTURE – except for milch cows – for thousands of years), but somehow magically wanted to create masses of land to "serve" the needs of cows. Cows would be served "every variety of grass" even as the humans would struggle to even get basic milk and returns from their investment. The profitability would run entirely on manure and urine.

He was totally oblivious of innovation, education, natural tendency to leave villages for cities, and all other concepts of human progress. He could not calculate basic cash flows, ROI and investment returns.

NONSENSE ON STILTS, IS THIS PARA, FOR INSTANCE:

Economists have furnished irrefutable figures to prove that the quality of cattle in India is so poor that the income from their milk is much less than the cost of their maintenance. We can turn our gaushalas into centres for the study of economics and for the solution of this big problem. **Gaushalas cost a great deal and at present we have to provide the expenses.** [Sanjeev: Where does such money come from? Duh?] The gaushalas of my conception will become **self-supporting in future.** [Sanjeev: Tosh!] They will not be located in the midst of cities. We may **buy land in the neighbourhood of a city** to the tune of **hundreds of acres** and locate these gaushalas there. [Sanjeev: So this land is free?] We can raise on this land crops to serve as **fodder for the cows and every variety of grass.** [Sanjeev: So the labour involved is free?] We shall find good use for the **valuable manure they yield by way of excrement and urine.** [Sanjeev: What's the value of manure and urine?] I hope you will all give the utmost thought to what I have said. The Gaurakshini Sabha in Motihari has accepted this suggestion. It is my request, in the end, that both these institutions come together and undertake this big task.

FURTHER

The thing simply doesn't work. So more exhortations.

I am growing stronger in my belief that cow-protection is an impossibility until we carefully study its economics, take into our fold the untouchables who can do immense service in this work until all the dairies are run on scientific lines and we take a vow to use the hide of dead animals only. Thus the duty now of workers for cow-protection is to understand well these significant points, act accordingly as far as possible and induce others to do so. I am growing stronger in my belief that cow-protection is an impossibility until we carefully study its economics, take into our fold the untouchables who can do immense service in this work until all the dairies are run on scientific lines and we take a vow to use the hide of dead animals only.

Thus the duty now of workers for cow-protection is to understand well these significant points, act accordingly as far as possible and induce others to do so.

4.2 Lamenting loss-making goshalas. He keeps trying to turn the world up side down.

Lamenting loss-making goshalas. He keeps trying to turn the world up side down.

Here, Gandhi is lamenting the LOSS-MAKING goshalas, and dreaming (delusionally, as usual) that if managed professionally, these could become profitable. NO. There is NO possibility of any goshala becoming profitable without the slaughter of those that are no longer able to produce milk. This is CHANAKYA'S LAW. Gandhi can't change it.

382 THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI —————Page
15695————— It is because we have not even thought about the economic benefits of cow-protection that, in a country where countless people regard the protection of the cow and her offspring as a sacred duty, the latter starve. We see them reduced to mere skin and bone, so much so that all their bones can be counted, and they are slaughtered only because of the indifference of Hindus. Cow-protection involves the very existence of Indian agriculture. Cow-slaughter would cease if every Hindu understood the economics of Cow-protection. The destruction of cows through the sheer stupidity of Hindus must be a hundred times greater than their slaughter in the name of religion. So long as Hindus themselves do not understand the right method of protecting cows, not all the crores of rupees which they can spend will save the latter.

In Gujarat, Banias, Bhatias and Marwaris take interest in the cause of cow-protection. They spend large sums on it. And even among them the Marwaris, especially, go to great lengths, Marwari business men run the largest number of goshalas in India. They cheerfully contribute lakhs of rupees towards these and it is for this reason that I have said that the problem of protecting cows cannot be solved without the help of Marwaris. I have often visited goshalas, but I cannot say that I saw any which was an ideal one.

These reflections were provoked by my visit to the goshala at Liluah in Calcutta. Two and a half lakh rupees are spent on it every year, but the return is practically nil. A goshala which gets two and a half lakh rupees every year should be able to save the lives of not less than 10,000 head of cattle in a year. Even the cattle tended by this institution do not come to so many. The organizers are not to be blamed for this, nor are they dishonest. The secretary who took me round to show the institution is serving it to the best of his ability. The system itself is to blame for this result. We do not know how to run such institutions, and so the people do not derive the fullest benefit from them.

Practical ability is not considered necessary in matters concerning religion. Such institutions are regarded as well run simply if those who manage them do not misappropriate funds. In a business firm in which additional capital of two and a half lakh rupees is invested every year, the best available paid workers are employed, whereas in this case persons engaged in their own business spare some of their time as a social duty. Those who do so deserve to be congratulated, but their work does not help the cause of cow-protection. This cause requires full-time services of able and efficient persons. Only men of spiritual knowledge who live a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice will offer such services, or able, worldly men if properly paid. It

would not matter if those who donate money for charitable purposes are not practical persons, but those who run charity institutions must be more capable and hard-working than even business men. All the moral rules which apply to business men also apply to charitable institutions. If goshalas were run as commercial concerns, men with scientific knowledge of such matters would be working in them, and they would daily conduct new experiments and save the lives of more and more cows, would carry out many experiments about rearing cattle in goshalas and about ensuring the purity and increasing the quantity of milk. It is quite obvious that the knowledge about rearing cattle which can be obtained through goshalas cannot be got elsewhere. Since, however, they are charity institutions, they are not being run properly and no one is concerned about them. It would be slighting the Vedas if schools which are meant to teach them taught us the least about them; the present-day goshalas are in the same condition.

FURTHER

From the Western countries we can learn a great deal about cattle economics apart from their slaughter for food. **If the nation, or say Hindus, would forego profits from cattle-keeping, the self-denial would be enough to keep cattle during the natural term of their lives even after they cease to give us a return in the shape of milk or labour.** The following passages from the introduction to Henry and Morrisson's treatise on Feeds and Feeding show how they regard cattle wealth in America.

Young India, 17-6-1926

4.3 The more something is economically viable (e.g. buffalo), the less he likes it

The more something is economically viable (e.g. buffalo), the less he likes it

I showed how Gandhi expected to create a **totally delusional economy created to SERVE THE COW**. He also opposed farmers using buffaloes – more economic, on the ground that the cow was somehow more economic. Any and every way to upturn the laws of nature. Only savings grace: he did not impose his utopia on others, but tried to persuade. Of course, no one has listened. How can they!?

It is likely that after the cow has been saved the buffalo may also remain to a certain extent. But if you allow the buffalo to compete with the cow, both the buffalo and the cow will be extinct. What is necessary is to realize that the cow is really the more economic proposition as our own forefathers realized when they styled their kings as the protectors of the cow and the Brahmin. But mark that they mentioned the cow first, because even the existence of the Brahmins, i. e., the spiritual leaders of the community, depends on that of the cow. You in Bardoli have laboured under the superstition that the cow cannot be economic and that the buffalo alone is your mainstay. I tell you that it is a myth and that if you bestow on the cow the care that you do on the buffalo and try to understand the real economics of the cow, you will find in the long run that it is more economic than the buffalo.

We have wasted our energies so far in saving the cow from the butcher's hands. Why should we try to wrest it from the butcher's hands? The butcher has to pursue his profession. To blame the butcher is like blaming the doctor for your fever. We have allowed it to go into the butcher's hands because of our gross neglect, and we

are wholly responsible for its slaughter. It is for us to make it economically unnecessary and so impossible to sell the cow to the butcher.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

FURTHER

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I am amazed at our partiality for buffalo's milk and ghee. Our economics is short-sighted. We look at the immediate gain, but we do not realize that in the last analysis the cow is the more valuable animal. Cow's butter (and ghee) has a naturally yellowish colour which indicates its superiority to buffalo's butter (and ghee) in carotene. It has a flavour all its own. Foreign visitors who come to Sevagram go into raptures over the pure cow's milk they get there. Buffalo's milk and butter are almost unknown in Europe. It is only in India that one finds a prejudice in favour of buffalo's milk and ghee. This has spelt all but extinction of the cow, and that is why I say that, unless we put an exclusive emphasis on the cow, she cannot be saved. It is a tragedy that all the cows and buffaloes put together cannot give us enough milk for the 40 crores of our people. We ought to realize the value of the cow as a giver of milk and the mother of draught and agricultural cattle. And how far is one to pamper popular prejudices? A cow proves valuable even if she dies, if we would make use of the skin, the bone, the flesh, the entrails and so on. But the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred. Why not? I would not hesitate to go into my house with shoes made of dead cow's hide, provided of course the shoes are clean. I should not hesitate to have my meal with such clean shoes on. I have to do all this in order to show that the cow is an asset and not a liability. Today in many places they bury dead cows or sell them away for a song. We despise the Harijans who eat carrion, but we forget that it is due to our own fault. If we treated the hide properly, if we knew the manurial value of the flesh, and the use of the bone and the entrails—which we are demonstrating at Nalwadi—there would be no carrion-eating.

FURTHER

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————— 748. DISCUSSION AT ALL-INDIA GOSEVA SANGH CONFERENCE February 3, 1942

Did Gandhiji mean to say that even as khadi saved the Indian mill-cloth, the protection of the cow would mean the protection of the buffalo?

Gandhiji said :

Yes, but I mean something more. I have often said that I should not shed a single tear, if all the mills were to be destroyed. I would never say this regarding the buffalo.

Explaining the matter at greater length he said :

No, my point is that, unless we protect the cow today, we will fail to save both the cow and the buffalo. And it is not possible to make a combined endeavour to save both. The combined endeavour will result in the buffalo devouring the cow. The cow is the more neglected animal, and that is why we should concentrate on the cow. But not even if Jamnalalji got a few crores of rupees can we achieve our object until we have converted the people to our view—especially the people who run goshalas and pinjrapoles.

There is no question of 'boycott', much less of the killing of buffaloes. Slaughter is a thing that suggests itself easily to Western economists. That is why they cut the Gordian knot by slaughtering the inferior breed of cows and bulls. But that solution

is not good for me.

It is my firm conviction that, if we master the real science of saving the cow, the science of saving the buffalo and other animals would automatically be revealed to us.

[Q.] But, supposing you were to boycott all the buffaloes in Sevagram, what would happen to them and their owners?

I promise to take charge of the buffalo in case you succeed in your mission of the cow to that extent. If the mill-owners voluntarily close down the mills, I shall dance with joy, but not if the owners of the buffaloes were to slaughter them. Western economics is divorced from ethics; our ethics and economics coincide or should, if they do not. My exclusive emphasis on the protection of the cow is due to the undue neglect of the cow although she in my opinion is a sound economic proposition. I do not need the aid of the Vedas to show me this, and this is a matter in which I would test the Vedic precept on the anvil of reason. Reason convinces me that if I save the cow I save the cow and the buffalo both. If anyone can convince me that the cow is dead beyond redemption, and that the buffalo alone needs to be protected, I am quite prepared to organize a 'Buffalo Protection Association'. But the reverse is the case. The buffalo needs no special protection, the cow needs it. The buffalo and the goat are as much my mothers as the cow. But I know that the poor goat cannot be saved, that the cow badly needs to be saved, and when we have saved the cow the buffalo will be automatically saved.

Gandhiji tentatively suggested that co-operative owning of cows and co-operative owning of pasture for them would go a great length in improving both the breed and the milk yield and in helping to solve the question of grazing. For the next year the Goseva Sangh should, suggested Gandhiji, concentrate on making cow's milk available throughout Wardha and its neighbourhood, on sending experts to pinjrapoles in order to collect material, throw out suggestions, and help in making them approximate to the ideal pinjrapole contemplated by the Sangh, and on having a laboratory in Wardha for the testing of milk and ghee, and so on. The Sangh will also try to enlist at least a thousand members.

Harijan, 15-2-1942

5. Swadeshi and khadi

Gandhi was ENTIRELY ignorant about wealth creation. He violated the law of comparative advantage at each stage.

5.1 More nonsense, this time about “swadeshi”

More nonsense, this time about “swadeshi”

This explains Gandhi's view on swadeshi. I have a few comments in blue.

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KEY TO ECONOMIC SALVATION

Generally speaking, there are very few villages in India without weavers. From time immemorial, we have had village farmers and village weavers, as we have village carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, etc., but **our farmers have become poverty-stricken and our weavers have patronage only from the poor classes.** [Sanjeev: the consumer cares for QUALITY. When imported products became better, they chose the better product.]

By supplying them with Indian cloth spun in India, we can obtain the cloth we may need. **For the time being it may be coarse**, but by constant endeavours, we can get our weavers to weave out of fine yarn and so doing we shall raise our weavers to a better status, and if we would go a step still further, we can easily cross the sea of difficulties lying in our path. [Sanjeev: 100 years after this, khadi retains its coarse quality]

We can easily teach our women and our children to spin and weave cotton, and what can be purer than cloth woven in our own home? I tell it from my experience that acting in this way we shall be saved from many a hardship, we shall be ridding ourselves of many an unnecessary need, and our life will be one song of joy and beauty.

I always hear divine voices telling me in my ears that such life was a matter of fact once in India, but even if such an India be the idle dream of the poet, it does not matter.

Is it not necessary to create such an India now, does not our purushartha lie therein? I have been travelling throughout India. I cannot bear the heart-rending cry of the poor. The young and old all tell me, “We cannot get cheap cloth, we have not the means wherewith to purchase dear cloth. Everything is dear—provisions, cloth and all. What are we to do?” And they heave a sigh of despair. It is my duty to give these men a satisfactory reply. It is the duty of every servant of the country but I am unable to give a satisfactory reply.

It should be intolerable for all thinking Indians that our raw materials should be exported to Europe and that we have to pay heavy prices therefor. [Sanjeev: This - a possible industrial obstruction by the British of local cotton mills - is not necessarily supported by the facts of a vibrant Indian cotton mill industry, but I reserve my opinion on this issue, not being an expert in economic history.]

The first and the last remedy for this is swadeshi. We are not bound to sell our cotton to anybody and when Hindustan rings with the echoes of swadeshi, no producer of cotton will sell it for its being manufactured in foreign countries. [Sanjeev: basically he wanted to prevent free export. That's a big issue - a socialist obstruction.]

When swadeshi pervades the country, everyone will be set a-thinking why cotton should not be refined and spun and woven in the place where it is produced, and when the swadeshi mantra resounds in every ear, millions of men will have in their hands the key to the economic salvation of India.

Training for this does not require hundreds of years. **When the religious sense is awakened, people's thoughts undergo a revolution in a single moment. Only selfless sacrifice is the sine qua non.** [Sanjeev: Now he has gone into delusional preaching. NEVER has any effort that goes against individual self-interest come to any good.]

The spirit of sacrifice pervades the Indian atmosphere at the present moment. If we fail to preach swadeshi at this supreme moment, we shall have to wring our hands in despair.

I beseech every Hindu, Mussulman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian and Jew, who believes that he belongs to this country, to take the swadeshi vow and to ask others also to do likewise. It is my humble belief that if we cannot do even this little for our country, we are born in it in vain. Those who think deep will see that such **swadeshi contains pure economics.** [Sanjeev: it contains PURE NONSENSE] I hope that every man and woman will give serious thought to my humble suggestion. Imitation of English economics will spell our ruin. [Sanjeev: What is "English" economics? Had Gandhi ever heard of Arthashastra? INDIA INVENTED ECONOMICS.] The Bombay Chronicle, 18-4-1919 ; also New India, 22-4-1919

FURTHER

The more I have studied the economics of India, the more I have listened to the mill-owners of India, the more convinced I have become that until we introduce the spinning-wheel in every home of India, the economic salvation and freedom of India is an impossibility. Go to any mill-owner you like, he will tell you that it will require fifty years if India is to become self-contained, so far as cloth supplies are concerned, if she has to depend upon her mills alone. [Sanjeev: he is alluding to some regulatory blockage - I'll need to take a rain cheque on this. The solution would have been to remove the blockage, not promote swadeshi]

FURTHER

Sisodra, which but a year ago had no hand-spinning, showed fifty maunds of hand-spun yarn beautifully piled up in a house. Hundreds of spinning-wheels are now working in this and the surrounding villages. The sight of women and children bringing to me presents of yarn is as usual now in Gujarat as in the Punjab. Indeed, the students of Gujarat can certainly give points to the Punjab in spinning. These students have learnt spinning in an incredibly short time and are now organizing villages for spinning work. Let the Punjabis beware. I should be sorry to find the Punjab beaten in the race. It has stubborn rivals in Andhra, Karnatak, and Gujarat. The sceptics should visit the centres where spinning is going on in an organized fashion, and they will discover economic laws which will falsify the teachings of the economics of the textbooks. [Sanjeev: clearly Gandhi had a delusional belief that he had "invented" "new" economics. Sad. Economics is IMMUTABLE. His khadi lies in

shambles.]

FURTHER

I have presented the matchless economics, the **irrefutable** economics of the charkha, to my calculating countrymen. But if we had faith there would be no necessity of demonstrating the economics of the spinning-wheel. [Sanjeev: The man surely had extreme over-confidence in an idea without basis!]

FURTHER

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317. KHADI ECONOMICS I have two pamphlets before me, one called Economics of Khadi by Sjt. Rajendra Prasad of Bihar, to be had of Bihar Charkha Sangha office, Muzaffarpur, for three annas. This pamphlet is the first of a series to be issued by Bihar Branch of the Charkha Sangha. The other is the report and accounts of the Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu, conducted under the direction of Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari. This can be had from the Secretary, Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu (S. India), for one-anna postage stamp.

The first is a sustained argument put in a popular style and in a brief manner so as to enable the average busy reader to understand the economics of khadi. I must not attempt to resummarize the argument which is itself a summary of the case for the spinning- wheel. But it may be stated that after examining all the arguments for and against, Rajendra Babu has shown that only the spinning -wheel can successfully displace foreign cloth, and only the spinning-wheel can give a supplementary occupation to the twenty-two crores and forty lakhs of agriculturists of India who without the wheel are living, and must continue to live, in a condition of semi-starvation because they are and must be in a condition of unemployment at least for 120 days in the year.

Sjt. Rajagopalachari's report is a scientific study in facts and figures, and seems entirely to illustrate and fortify Rajendra Babu's argument. The reader will be interested to learn that 85% of the Ashram goes to the spinners and weavers, 9 2 % to the workers, and 5 2 % for other establishment charges. The report contains instructive and illustrative tables showing the earnings of spinners and weavers and dhobis, all of whom probably and the spinners certainly, but for the advent of the charkha,would not be getting the income they are receiving today. The report contains also a certified account of the income and expenditure of the Ashram activity. It devotes a page to show how the price one pays for khadi is distributed.

Here are the figures:

Cotton grower 37 p.c.

Spinners and weavers 54 p.c.

Workers 6 p.c.

Other expenses 3 p.c.

and it says:

"Dress you must have, but if you choose to buy khadi, you help the re- construction of rural India."

This Ashram alone has distributed within 2 years Rs. 1,24,536 among the poorest villagers surrounding it, and that not by way of charity but against work done in their own homes. The Ashram maintains a free dispensary, which during the past 11 months attended to 10,145 patients. 148 operations were performed during the period. The patients included the so-called untouchables.

Young India, 1-12-1927

FURTHER

There is a serious level of extremism in Gandhi:

it is a crime against semi-starved humanity for any Indian to use any cloth but khadi.

FURTHER

khadi-wearers should know that the economics of khadi are different from the ordinary economics which are based on competition in which patriotism, sentiment and humanity play little or no part. Khadi economics are based on patriotism sentiment and humanity.

FURTHER

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35870—————

369. HOW TO POPULARIZE KHADI

A valued khadi worker writes a letter in Hindi which freely translated means:

Compared to mill-cloth khadi is not an economic pro- position in terms of prices. To compete with mill-cloth you have to drop the cost of hand-ginning, carding and spinning. Even for self-spinners, therefore, it is not a paying proposition. No doubt you have evolved new economics of khadi. But till the people at large appreciate them, khadi cannot be universal. Even the Congress Ministers do not understand or appreciate your new economics. In the circumstances, will you not guide khadi workers and even the Ministers and Congressmen in general? Your faith seems to be so strong that you would straightway give eight annas per day to spinners for eight hours' honest and skilled work if we, your co-workers, will let you. Frankly we do not possess your faith.

There is no doubt that khadi cannot compete with mill-cloth, it was never meant to. If the people will not understand or appreciate the law governing khadi, it will never be universal. It must then remain the fad of monied people and cranks.

FURTHER

I admit that in terms of orthodox and stereotyped standards of economics, as that science is understood and taught in our colleges today, and in a society governed by these standards, village industries including spinning have perhaps no chance, and to revive them might appear like reversion to Middle Ages. But I would like you to enter the Udyog Bhavan with a fresh and unsophisticated mind that has shed its prejudices. Envisage this spinning-wheel as a spinning mill in miniature, that enables a person to earn two annas daily in his home in this land of chronic and nationwide unemployment and starvation when otherwise he would not be earning two pice even. Picture this mill planted in lakhs of homes, as it is capable of being planted, and I see nothing in the world which can compete with it.

FURTHER

I have not the slightest doubt that khadi economics can be the only true and sound economics for India.

[From Hindi] Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 52-4

6. Anti-trade views, including state prohibition of imports

6.1 Japan is a menace to India because of its exports to India!

Japan is a menace to India because of its exports to India!

Gandhi's delusional economics is not widely known, but as I get to know it better, I'm beginning to see that he is perhaps equally, if not more responsible, for RUINING INDIA.

Chanakya would have GREATLY SCOLDED GANDHI. Chanakya wanted India to RESPECT foreign traders. I wish he was around and I'd have scolded him too. This is pure nonsense. A sure recipe for disaster. I think I now understand what is causing the nuisance in India: NEHRU PLUS GANDHI. The combination is fatal. (And, of course, BJP is merely a copycat. Ramdev is merely a copycat of Gandhi).

JAPANESE MENACE

In a letter which he sent to the Press some days ago declaring continuance of suspension of civil resistance, Mr. Gandhi had said that swadeshi would eliminate the unnatural Lancashire interest- and would help in purifying the British connection. But he believed he had said a greater thing in the same letter, viz., that swadeshi would rid them of the Japanese menace.

- If, said Mr. Gandhi, they did not realize what the Japanese menace meant for them, they did not know the first lesson of swaraj. Japan was gradually and steadily extending its hold over them. In the course of the last four years, it had increased its exports by several hundred per cent. Wherever they turned their eye, they saw Japanese articles, Japanese matches, Japanese saris, Japanese soaps, Japanese umbrellas and so on. What was the meaning of this? It meant increasing domination of Japan. **Just as the sowcar [sahukar] exploited and impoverished the poor agriculturist, even so, said the speaker, was Japan, exploiting and impoverishing India.** Japan was *fast becoming India's sowcar.*

6.2 Not voluntary use of khadi. He wanted to use force (the state) to block imports.

Not voluntary use of khadi. He wanted to use force (the state) to block imports.

I've probably not understood Gandhi well enough till now. I assumed he was more inclined to support VOLUNTARY use of khadi and other unviable things.

But no, he is a STATIST. He was comfortable with the use of FORCE to stop the trade in products. This changes things quite a bit.

I'm finding it more plausible now, to club both Nehru and Gandhi into the same bucket – socialists. So far, Gandhi's veneer of voluntarism kept me thinking that he was a crank in some matters but no one followed his cranky ideas, so that's fine. His good ideas (his fight against British rule) were triumphant, bad ideas ignored.

Turns out, though, that his support for Laski, Nehru and state control of trade was a FUNDAMENTALLY SOCIALIST worldview.

It is also increasingly clearer now why he might have promoted Nehru at the expense of Patel. Nehru represented his ideas more closely than Patel did.

Chanakya would have thoroughly condemned Gandhi. I hereby do so, on Chanakya's behalf and on behalf of all people of good sense.

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At present we are labouring under a heavy handicap. Cotton production has been centralized for the sake of Lancashire and, if you will, for the sake of Indian mills. Prices of cotton are determined by the prices in foreign lands. When the production of cotton is distributed in accordance with the demands of khadi economics, cotton prices would not fluctuate and, in any case, will be, in effect, lower than today. When the people, either **through State protection** or through voluntary effort, have cultivated the habit of using only khadi, they will never think of it in terms of money, even as millions of vegetarians do not compare the prices of flesh foods with those of non-flesh foods. They will starve rather than take flesh foods even though they may be offered free. But I recognize that very few Congressmen have this living faith in khadi.

7. Strong focus on Marx and collectivist ideas

7.1 Accepts the collectivist vision of Marx but not his methods

Accepts the collectivist vision of Marx but not his methods

Here's a fuller explanation of Gandhi's views on Marx. The first thing we note is that he did make some effort to read Marx, **having made almost no effort to read Adam Smith or related economists**. He didn't quite understand Marx, either.

He does differ from Marx on two basic points (1) the machine and (2) man is not material but spiritual. He therefore doesn't accept violent control over the state. He still thinks that Marx's basic conception (collectivist) are right.

I think he was a DEEPLY CONFUSED MAN. That's the most charitable view one can form of his "economics".

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APPENDIX VIII

TALK WITH PYARELAL ON MARXISM

[After August 9, 1942]

. . . After an **extensive reading of Marxian literature during his last detention at Poona**, he remarked: **"I think I could have written Marx better than Marx**, provided, of course, I had his scholarship which I do not have. He has the knack of making even simple things appear difficult." . .

On the fly-leaf of A Handbook of Marxism he scribbled: **"All for each and each for all." "From each according to his capacity to each according to his need."**...

[Sanjeev: This is PURE MARXISM. Clearly Gandhi thought the society owned the individuals]

I tried to get him to give his appraisal of some aspects of the Marxist philosophy....

I said, "Marx showed us that our ideologies, institutions, and ethical standards, literature, art, customs, even religion, are a product of our economic environment."

G. I do not agree that our ideologies, ethical standards and values are altogether a product of our material environment without any absolute basis outside it. On the contrary as we are so our environment becomes. Is not the Wardha scheme of Basic Education based upon the assumption that purposive activity of the hand moulds not only our thinking but our whole personality? Does that not come very near the materialistic theory of knowledge as propounded by Marx?

But the **Marxist wants to abolish the labouring hand altogether and substitute in its place the machine**. He has no use for the hand. Dependence on manual labour, according to Marx, is the symbol and root cause of the destitution and slavery of the worker. It is the function of the machine to emancipate him from this state. I, on the other hand, hold that machine enslaves and only intelligent use of the hand will bring to the worker both freedom and happiness....

The Marxist regards thought, as it were, 'a secretion of the brain' and the mind 'a reflex of the material environment'. I cannot accept that. Above and beyond both

matter and mind is He. If I have an awareness of that living principle within me, no one can fetter my mind. The body might be destroyed, the spirit will proclaim its freedom. This to me is not a theory; it is a fact of experience. [Sanjeev: these are the two key things he differs from Marx with]

P. The Marxists concede that an individual may transcend his material environment but class behaviour is essentially determined by it. It cannot change unless the economic environment is altered. To transform the capitalist the capitalistic order must be destroyed.

G. What an individual can do, a whole class of people can be induced to do, it is all a question of discovering the right technique. The whole of our non-violent non-cooperation movement, which aims at transforming the British ruling class, is based on this hypothesis. Trusteeship is my answer to the issue of class-conflict.

I passed on to the Marxist doctrine of economic motivation of history. The wars were an inevitable consequence of the institution of private property in the capitalistic system. Gandhiji rejected the one and disagreed with the other.

G. No, not the economic factor alone. Ultimately it is the Unseen Power that governs the course of events—even in the minds of men who make those events. Supposing Hitler were to die today, it would alter the whole course of current history. Similarly, supposing all capitalists were wiped out as a result of an earthquake or some other natural cataclysm, the history of class-war would then be changed in a way least dreamt of by the exponents of economic interpretation of history. Would not the history of the present war have been different if instead of Chamberlain a more dynamic figure had been the Prime Minister of England? Or, if Chamberlain had not shown lack of political courage at the last moment? [Sanjeev: here Gandhi is asserting the role of the individual - a savings grace, given his penchant for state regulation of trade and such things]

P. The Marxists say that to abolish war we have but to abolish the institution of private property. You have also taught that property is incompatible with the non-violent way of life.

G. This is only partly true. Was not Helen of Troy the cause of the Trojan War? Were the wars of the Rajputs related to the institution of private property? No, to banish war we have to do more. **We have to eradicate possessiveness and greed and lust and egotism** from our own hearts. We have to carry war within ourselves to banish it from society.

P. The remedies prescribed by Marx are of course wrong but can we not make use of his diagnosis of the malaise that affects our society for a proper understanding of the problem and devising right remedies for the same? . . . My point is that Marx knew of only one effective sanction, viz., of violence —force. If only he had been aware of the sanction of non-violence or satyagraha and its potency, he might have adopted it in place of violence. Even in our own time industry is being changed over from steam to oil and electricity.

G. I have also heard it said that often it is more economical to dispose of the old plant than to try to adapt it from one kind of motive power to another. In the present case, the difference between violence and non-violence is fundamental. It cuts at the very root of the Marxist theory. If you alter the foundation the whole superstructure will have to be changed. [Sanjeev: Here Gandhi seems to be distancing himself from the APPROACH towards communism, not the communist objective]

P. 1 agree. But you have derived non-violence from the Gita. I find a powerful support in the Marxist analysis for your method of non-violent non-co-operation.

G. My interpretation of the Gita is rejected by those who do not believe in ahimsa and those who are believers in ahimsa do not need it. Your interpretations will be dubbed un-Marxist by convinced Marxists. It will not appeal to them....

After some further discussion Gandhiji said:

You can advance this as your own original thesis on Marx. It might provide a rationale for the practice of satyagraha to those who lack the spiritual background. What has made the teaching of Marx dynamic is that he regarded mankind as a whole and transcending class divisions identified himself with the cause of the poor oppressed toilers of the world. But in that he is not alone. Others besides him have done the same.

He would not concede that Marx had founded an absolute science of society or discovered any laws of social dynamics which a priori have an objective validity. The Marxian system was just an attempt to forge a tool for the achievement of a certain goal which Marx held to be desirable. Finally he said:

We may criticize Marx but that he was a great man who can deny? His analysis of social ills or the cures he prescribed for them may or may not be correct. I do not accept his economic theories but this much I know that the poor are being ground down. Something has got to be done for it. Marx set about to do that in his own way. He had acumen, scholarship, genius.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 136-9

FURTHER

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—————

This time, while in jail, I read about Marx and whatever literature I could get about the great experiment in Russia. What a great difference between that experiment and our spinning wheel? There also, as in India, the whole nation is invited to join in the yajna. But the experiments there and here are as different from each other as East from West or North from South.

What a difference between our spinning-wheel and their machines driven by steam or electricity? But all the same I prefer the snail-like speed of the spinning-wheel. The spinning-wheel is a symbol of ahimsa, and ultimately it is ahimsa that will triumph.

FURTHER

409. LETTER TO SHANTA PATEL

July 16, 1945

CHI. SHANTA,

You have remained as crazy after becoming a communist and a mother as you were as a child. Many communists have stayed with me. In the same way you also can stay.

If Jawaharlalji goes against them, all the communists will have to sit up and think. For he has a soft corner for the Party but he will not tolerate anything unworthy. If you calm down and think before writing, you can help the communist cause. You must learn to distinguish between communism and communists. Besides, Marx stands for one thing, Lenin for another and Stalin for a third. The followers of the last are again divided into two groups. Gandhi is one thing, Gandhism is another and

Gandhiites are a third thing. There are always, and will remain, such differences. Immature people may identify themselves with one or the other group.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6639. Also C.W. 4287. Courtesy: Shanta Patel

FURTHER

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42658—————

Gandhiji was asked about Karl Marx. He got the opportunity and privilege of reading Capital, he told them, whilst he was in detention. He entertained high regard for his great industry and acumen. But he could not believe in his conclusions. He had no faith in violence being able to usher in non-violence. World thought was moving and was outdating Karl Marx. That, however, did not detract from the merit of the great man's labours.

7.2 He RECOMMENDS Karl Marx's Capital! Ouch! I had totally misunderstood him.

He RECOMMENDS Karl Marx's Capital! Ouch! I had totally misunderstood him.

I will need to seriously review my understanding about Gandhi after my ongoing research through his original writings. Things are getting worse than I had imagined. Not only he supports Laski and state prohibition of trade, and collective farming, **he ACTIVELY recommends Karl Marx!!!!**

THAT'S IT. I've misread Gandhi so far, considering his voluntarism as a defence of liberty. But he was a secret admirer of Marx!

593. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA SEVAGRAM ,
February 4, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is well that you have taken a vow about sugar-cane. If you were to take it for the sake of your health, it would not be necessary to give it up for good. If it were to control the palate you would have to give it up. In this case, both health and palate are involved. That is why I suggested a time-limit.

As for the books, **you can read Marx's Das Kapital**, all my articles on **economics** [Sanjeev: more JUNK was never written under the guise of "economics"] and also Shrimanji's and two books by Sampurnanand. The rest I shall tell you later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the *Hindi*: G.N. 4464

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BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4464

FURTHER

NEED TO READ: Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia wrote Marx, Gandhi and Socialism

7.3 Strong promoter of collective (communist) farming

Strong promoter of collective (communist) farming

As I read the original Gandhi (instead of interpreted Gandhi), I like him less and less.

Not only was he favourably inclined towards Laski and the idea of state prohibition on trade, but also strongly in favour of COLLECTIVE FARMING (not just cooperative farming of the sort that Sardar Patel advocated – in which the individual retained full private control over his/her assets – that is something I fully support).

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762. INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE?

Shri Jamnalal Bajaj has bravely taken the burden of the great work of cow service (in other words, cattle preservation) on his shoulders. The most important question for consideration before the recent Goseva Sangh Conference was whether cow-farming should be in the hands of individuals or done collectively. I myself had no hesitaton in saying that she could never be saved by individual farming. Her salvation, and with her that of the buffalo, could only be brought about by collective endeavour. It is quite impossible for an individual farmer to look after the welfare of his cattle in his own home in a proper and scientific manner. Amongst other causes lack of collective effort has been a principal cause of the deterioration of the cow and hence of cattle in general.

The world today is moving towards the ideal of collective or co-operative effort in every department of life. Much in this line has been and is being accomplished. It has come into our country also, but in such a distorted form that our poor have not been able to reap its benefits. Pari passu with the increase in our population land-holdings of the average farmer are daily decreasing. Moreover, what the individual

possesses is often fragmentary.

For such farmers to keep cattle in their homes is a suicidal policy; and yet this is their condition today. Those who give the first place to economics and pay scant attention to religious, ethical or humanitarian considerations proclaim from the house-tops that the farmer is being devoured by his cattle due to the cost of their feed which is out of all proportion to what they yield. They say it is folly not to slaughter wholesale all useless animals.

What then should be done by humanitarians is the question. The answer obviously is to find a way whereby we may not only save the lives of our cattle but also see that do not become a burden. **I am sure that co-operative effort can help us in a large measure.** [Sanjeev: he doesn't mean cooperative but collective farming]

The following comparison may be helpful:

1. Under the **collective** system **no farmer can keep cattle in his house** as he does today. [Sanjeev: this is the end of private property and all the boons it confers.] They foul the air and dirty the surroundings. There is neither intelligence nor humanitarianism in living with animals. Man was not meant to do so. The space taken up by the cattle today would be spared to the farmer and his family if the collective system were adopted.
2. As the number of cattle increases, life becomes impossible for the farmer in his home. Hence he is obliged to sell the calves and kill the male buffaloes or else turn them out to starve and die. This inhumanity would be averted, if the care of cattle were undertaken on a co-operative basis.
3. Collective cattle-farming would ensure the supply of **veterinary treatment** to animals when they are ill. No ordinary farmer can afford this on his own.
4. Similarly one selected bull can be easily kept for the need of several cows under the collective system. This is impossible otherwise except for charity.
5. Common grazing ground or land for exercising the animals will be easily available under the co-operative system, whereas today generally there is nothing of the kind for individual farmers.
6. The expense on fodder will be comparatively far less under the collective system.
7. The sale of milk at good prices will be greatly facilitated, and there will be no need or temptation for the farmer to adulterate it as he does as an individual.
8. It is impossible to carry out tests of the fitness of every head of cattle individually, but this could easily be done for the cattle of a whole village and would thus make it easier to improve the breed.
9. The foregoing advantages should be sufficient argument in favour of co-operative cattle-farming. The strongest argument in its favour is that the individualistic system has been the means of making our own condition as well as that of our cattle pitiable. We can only save ourselves and them by making this essential change.

I firmly believe too that **we shall not derive the full benefits of agriculture until we take to co-operative farming. Does it not stand to reason that it is far better for a hundred families in a village to cultivate their lands collectively and divide the income therefrom than to divide the land anyhow into a hundred portions? And what applies to land applies equally to cattle.** [Sanjeev: Clearly this man is a **dangerous COMMUNIST!**]

It is quite another matter that it may be difficult to convert people to adopt this way

of life straightaway. The straight and narrow road is always hard to traverse. Every step in the programme of cow-service [Sanjeev: he doesn't forget this - that the purpose of his existence is to serve cows] is strewn with thorny problems. But only by surmounting difficulties can we hope to make the path easier. My purpose for the time being is to show the **great superiority of collective cattle farming over the individual effort**. I hold further that the latter is wrong and the former only is right. In reality even the individual can only safeguard his independence through co-operation. In cattle-farming the individual effort has led to selfishness and inhumanity, whereas the collective effort can abate both the evils, if it does not remove them altogether.

SEVAGRAM , February 8, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

7.4 A recommendation for a Bajaj to study under Laski

A recommendation for a Bajaj to study under Laski

Looks like Gandhi was smitten by Laski, as well. Must have been indoctrinated by Nehru.

Good grief! Look at this letter:

243. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK July 6, 1936

DEAR HENRY,

This will be presented to you by Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalalji. However much we may fight Great Britain, London is increasingly becoming our Mecca or Kashi. Kamalnayan is no exception. I have advised him to take up a course in the London School of Economics. Perhaps you will put him in touch with prof. Laski who may not mind guiding young Bajaj. Muriel has undertaken to mother him.

Please treat this also as acknowledgment of your letter received some time ago. I am trying to become a villager. The place where I am writing this has a population of about 600—no roads, no post-office, no shop.

Love to you all.

BHAI

From a photostat: G.N. 3053

8. Gandhi, a typical upper caste racist

8.1 Gandhi was a typical upper caste Hindu racist (detested black Africans and staunchly supported caste)

Gandhi was a typical upper caste Hindu racist (detested black Africans and staunchly supported caste)

I'm trying to find the REAL reformers of Hinduism. Not even Raja Ram Mohun Roy comes up to my expectations. Although he rejected transmigration and started a new branch of Hinduism without the evil of caste, he did not really give up caste. On his voyage to UK he took along with him a Brahmin cook to prevent his caste from being affected. But at least he tried.

And we know that much as Vivekananda praised Islam for equality of all Muslims, he strongly supported caste.

Dayanand Saraswati supported the caste system as well although he claimed (on the basis of the Vedas which no one ever follows in India – only Dharmashastras like Manusmriti are followed) that caste was not necessarily hereditary. That is an entirely **fake** claim and I have no patience with such obfuscation. Be real, is what I say to people. If you agree in the principle of transmigration, you are a casteist and no amount of waffling can help.

Note that there redeeming features in all these reformers, so my overall opinion is NOT informed by their racism/casteism. To the extent they supported liberty (even though it was not real liberty), they are to be praised.

GANDHI THE GREAT RACIST, ALONG WITH VIVEKANAND AND DAYANAND

I knew that Gandhi supported caste, but I wasn't aware that he was a **BIGOTED RACIST**. (His opinions are **PRETTY** similar to what Dayanand Saraswati held about blacks – and Vivekananda). This information I picked up from random internet browsing on the subject.

Gandhi believed that **UPPER CASTE HINDUS** are entitled to equality with the "whites" (in South Africa) but **not** lower castes, and **DEFINITELY not** black Africans. So his great fight against racism was a fight for **UPPER CASTE HINDUS!!!**

"Upper caste" Hindus largely continue to hold themselves aloof from blacks and even call them seriously foul names. Kallu is the typical name today. **Gandhi used to call them kaffir – equivalent to "nigger"**. Details of Gandhi's **detestation of the blacks** are everywhere on the internet so I won't repeat. Just a few links to start you off:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/oct/17/southafrica.india>

http://www.secularhumanism.org/library/aah/singh_12_3.htm

http://sharpens.blogspot.com.au/2008/06/mp3-available-here_18.html

So much for his preaching love. I almost thought at one time that he was like a Jesus in his love for the oppressed. Turns out not. He was a **bigot**.

If the racism of Churchill and Hitler is to be rejected, Gandhi's racism too, must be rejected.

GANDHI THE GREAT SUPPORTER OF CASTE

I'll come to untouchability separately, but as far as caste is concerned, Gandhi was a **FANATIC**. He insisted on observing caste. Here are links to start off your research:

<http://www.truthseekersinternational.org/gandhi-the-caste-system-it-may-surprise-you/>

"I believe in caste division on the basis of birth because the roots of the caste system start from birth."

"According to me, the caste system is scientific. You cannot condemn it by argument. It controls the society socially and ethnically—I see no reason to end it. **To end casteism is to finish the Hindu Religion.** There is nothing against Varnastram. I have reason to believe that the caste system is an arithmetic principle. It has its own limitation and disadvantages. Even then there is nothing to be hated in this system." Harijan, 1932 (Translation from a Lower Caste tract circulated among Scheduled Castes and OBCs)

And so on.

Now Gandhi didn't want an end to the caste system. He was an orthodox Hindu (and extremely racist, as his writings against the blacks demonstrate). Gandhi was very particular about the Order of Varnas (Varnashramadharma or Chaturvarna), for, he wrote, 'caste has a close connection with the profession of one's livelihood. Everyone's profession is his own "dharma". Whoever gives it up, falls from his caste, and is himself destroyed, that is, his soul is destroyed'. [Source UNTOUCHABLE FREEDOM A Social History of a Dalit Community Vijay Prashad]

In NO WAY was Gandhi a reformer.

GANDHI'S UNTOUCHABILITY DRIVE WAS A POLITICAL ACT, NOT GENUINE

The more I read the more I understand that Gandhi was a hypocrite in relation to untouchability – the thing he is most well known for. Yes, he did make a few statements which indicate his opposition to untouchability.

But two things are paramount:

a) He had a clear view that if the Dalits (untouchables) were not brought into the fold of Hinduism, they would join the Muslims and significantly increase the strength of Muslims during the political battles underway in pre-independence India.

His Closed Chamber Dialogue with Sardar Patel, which reveal the reasoning behind Gandhi's actions, one day after he began his fast unto death opposing separate electorate to the Scheduled Castes, as recorded by Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's secretary, to justify his threat of self-immolation:

Sardar Patel: Why have you placed yourself between two stones? This is the battle of Touchable and Untouchables. I keep telling you not to do so. Let the two stone grind each other. Why must you cone in between?

M.K. Gandhi: The possible consequences of separate electorate for Harijans (this must be Desai's editing—the word Harijan was not yet used by Gandhi) fill me with horror. Separate electorates for all other communities will still leave room for me to deal with them, but I have no other means to deal with "untouchables". These poor fellows will ask why I who claim to be their friend should offer Satyagraha simply because they were granted some privileges; they would vote separately but vote with me. They do not realize that the separate electorate will create division among Hindus so much that it will lead to blood-shed. "Untouchable" hooligans will make common cause with Muslim hooligans and kill caste-Hindus[1]. [Source]

b) Ambedkar had a few meetings with him and came out feeling insulted and looked down upon. Listen to Ambedkar's own voice, here. What shame that he felt slighted by Gandhi. My opinion about Gandhi has plummeted seriously after this discovery.

8.2 Further proof that upper caste Hindus (like Gandhi) FIRMLY believe in transmigration as the basis of caste

Further proof that upper caste Hindus (like Gandhi) FIRMLY believe in transmigration as the basis of caste

I'm extracting from **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** This is further proof (if any was needed) that these "upper caste" "Hindus" actually believe that they are at the top of the world's "heap" because of good they did in their past life. So you do good in a past life and then you do BAD in this life by oppressing 40 per cent of India's population! That's a strange religion, indeed.

What bothers me is that some of these Hindus – who CLEARLY KNOW that transmigration is the **ONLY** basis for caste – pretend otherwise or try to CHEAT others by saying that caste is not determined at birth. At least Gandhi **didn't cheat** or falsify this basic truth.

The Vaikom Satyagraha

The demand for social and religious reforms was slowly gaining ground in Travancore State in the Nineteen Twenties. In 1918, the Exhale caste had already appealed to the Government to open out. The temples in the State to all Hindus, They late followed up with a threat to convert themselves to Christianity if the Government did not act decisively. It was in this climate that the Vaikom Satyagraha (1924-25) took place.

The issue concerned the use of a road which ran beside the temple at Vaikom. Untouchables and other low castes were not permitted to use this road. A few followers of Sri. Narayana Guru, several caste Hindus and a Syrian Orthodox Christian began a Satyagraha to open out the road to the untouchable castes Gandhi visited the area and began a negotiation with a Nambudri Brahman trustee of the temple. Mahadev Desais notes of that negotiation reveal Gandhi's reformist approach to the problem:

Gandhiji: Is it fair to exclude a whole section of Hindus, because of their supposed low birth, from public roads which can be used by non-Hindus, by criminals and bad characters, and even by dogs and cattle?

*Nambudri Trustee: But how can it be helped? **They are reaping the reward of their Karma.***

*Gandhiji: **No doubly they are suffering for their Karma by being born as Untouchables.** But why must you add to the punishment? Are they worse than even criminals and beasts?*

*Nambudri Trustee: **They must be so, for otherwise God would not condemn them to be born Untouchables.***

*From the discussion quoted above we get some idea of the **traditional understanding of the position of the Untouchable castes** and Gandhi's divergence from this position. [Sanjeev: It was a very minor divergence. That's not really a divergence, if you ask me. Just COSMETIC RUBBISH. He did not call for an end to caste. That would have been real divergence.] For **the Nambudiri Trustee the notion of Untouchability could not be separated from the being of the Untouchable, which was a result of his Karma.** it is clear from this discussion that while Gandhi's espousal of the cause against Untouchability is of great social importance, his reasoning appeared self-contradictory. The position taken by the Nambudiri Trustee was nearer the traditional understanding of Karma. Gandhi made a departure from tradition by rejecting the practice of Untouchability without giving up the system of caste.*

9. My previous ERRORS in understanding Gandhi

9.1 Gandhi was a MAJOR proponent of liberty. Most people have still to understand him

Gandhi was a MAJOR proponent of liberty. Most people have still to understand him

I came across a brilliant blog post (thanks, Mithun) published by Unpretentious Diva at the [Rational Libertarian Corner](#).

Unfortunately, the post is in such a combination of fonts/colour that my eyes burnt while reading it. I have therefore copied it onto this blog, below, and am reproducing it in full for the convenience of those who may find the original one hard to read. [I trust Unpretentious Diva will allow this reproduction. I'll let her know through a comment, presently.]

This blog post by UD is VERY important since MOST Indians are seriously confused about Gandhi's worldview. This post further reaffirms what I have already described in *BFN*, that **Gandhi did NOT support Nehru's socialism**.

There is a tendency in some Western circles (and even within India) to misrepresent what Gandhi stood for, merely because of his opposition to technology. This opposition of Gandhi to modern technology, which is paternalistic at its heart and therefore quite unlike him in many ways, is a perspective I can't understand, neither do I accept a few other aspects of Gandhi's worldview. **But on the whole, Gandhi was one of those MOST favourable to liberty, in India's independence movement.**

====by Unpretentious Diva====

Exploring the Anarchic roots of Gandhian Philosophy

"[Government] control gives rise to fraud, suppression of truth, intensification of the black market and artificial scarcity. Above all, it unmans the people and deprives them of initiative, it undoes the teaching of self-help" (Gandhi, "Speech at Prayer Meeting," 3 Nov. 1947, CWMG, vol. 97, 224)

*I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the heart of all progress (Sanjeev: I located this here:in *Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi by Ronand Duncan*. However, the original source that is cited is not clear.)*

It is obvious that Mahatma Gandhi was sincerely against the state and government, was Mahatma Gandhi an Anarchist?

Anarchy is often considered as a negative and anti-social concept and most of the times it is wrongly related with extremes like lawlessness or egalitarianism. However, anarchy is not lawlessness nor it is egalitarianism, rather it is the absence of hierarchy. Anarchy represents a state of pure democracy or direct democracy where, the power to take decision for the collective society or country is not allowed to be concentrated in the hands of a limited number of politicians, aristocrats or bureaucrats.

While it is still difficult to envisage a society with pure democracy, yet; many democratic countries across the world support at least three form of anarchic fundamentals which works in limiting governmental authority which are: initiative, plebiscite and recall.

Initiative is the process of demanding a plebiscite or referendum to decide over a certain cause or action.

Plebiscite or referendum means direct voting, however, it is not for selecting representatives of people to make decisions for them, rather it is voting to make decision. As for example, many states in the United States organized a plebiscite to decide whether gay marriages should be allowed or not. In India, people are demanding for a direct referendum over the issue of Janlokal Bill supported by Civil Society and Anna Hajare.

Recall is the political power that allows the citizen of a country to have a plebiscite or direct voting to decide to remove a politician, or government officer or the whole government from the office of power.

Mahatma Gandhi always advocated democracy in its pure form, which is the direct democracy or Anarchy. **He strongly opposed Nehru's form of government and constitution and said, "If India copies England, it is my firm conviction that she will be ruined. Parliaments are merely emblems of slavery."²** While he considered the Individual as the smallest minority, he also criticized the majority democracy of America and said, "It is a superstition and an ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority³." [Sanjeev: *Those who've understood Buchanan will appreciate why parliaments can be yet another way to enslave us. Checks and balances need to be strengthened if we are going to use such mechanisms.*]

Gandhi was a strong supporter of Swaraj or Individual Autonomy. He supported the idea of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and claimed, "Everyone will have to take [swaraj] for himself. If we become free, India becomes free and in this thought you have a definition of swaraj. It is swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves."⁴

In his book "Gandhi's hatred of State Oppression," George H. Smith mentions that "Gandhi repeatedly called himself an Anarchist, "

"He refused positions of political power ... he called for the abolition of the Indian Congress after independence ... he criticized Nehru's government ... he desired the abolition of the Indian military and the maintenance of, at most, a minimal police force. ... his entire social program revolved around establishing decentralized "village republics" which would use social sanctions to maintain order and which would be free of State control. ... Gandhi was a vigorous opponent of imperialism ... war (including World War II), censorship, and virtually every other kind of State intrusion".⁵

Mahatma Gandhi was hugely influenced by Henry David Thoreau. In South Africa, when he was imprisoned for three months in Pretoria, he read the book Civil Disobedience. In the book "The Triumph of Liberty," Jim Powell mentioned a few words on Mahatma Gandhi from his diary where he acknowledged that **Thoreau's**

"ideas influenced me greatly. I adopted some of them and recommended the study of Thoreau to all my friends who were helping me in the cause of Indian independence. ...Until I read that essay, I never found a suitable English translation for my Indian word Satyagraha."⁶

It is so obvious that Mahatma Gandhi was a Libertarian and a strong supporter of Individual liberty or Swaraj, and in order to make the idea become practical, he proposed the process of Decentralization of power. In one of his letters, he wrote;

"Independence begins at the bottom... It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its own affairs... It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without... This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbors or from the world. It will be a free and voluntary play of mutual forces... In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there

will be every-widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose center will be the individual. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it.”⁷

[Sanjeev: I think this is where I begin to differ from Gandhi. Village models are simply not sustainable. But his idea of self-governance, subsidiarity, is absolutely valid.]

One of the famous scholars of Thoreau’s philosophy, Walter Harding mentioned that after first reading “Civil Disobedience,” Gandhi “always carried a copy with him during his many imprisonments” in the years to come.

Mahatma Gandhi was an ardent supporter of Individual liberty. He wrote-

“the individual is the one supreme consideration. No society can possibly be built upon a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail, so will he not exist as man if he has no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own.”⁸

In January 1887, B.R. Nanda, one of the close aid of Mahatma Gandhi who wrote the book “Gandhi – A Pictorial Biography,” reported in Durban that Gandhi

was assaulted and nearly lynched by a white mob ... but [he] refused to prosecute his assailants. It was, he said, a principle with him not to seek redress of a personal wrong in a court of law. ... [T]he distrust of the apparatus of government was almost as deeprooted in [Gandhi] as in Tolstoy. He would have agreed with the nineteenth-century doctrine ‘that government is best which governs least. ... [T]his Jeffersonian maxim was central to Gandhi’s thinking. “A society organized and run on the basis of complete nonviolence,” he stated repeatedly, “would be the purest anarchy. ... That State is perfect and non-violent where the people are governed the least.” And again: “The ideally non-violent State will be an ordered anarchy. That State will be the best governed which is governed the least.”⁹

Mahatma Gandhi’s open acceptance of Anarchy as the best state confirms that he was an anarchist and his strong belief in individual liberty ascertains that he was a deep rooted libertarian.

But after independence, it became clear that the Congress would make national government and his idea of self-governance or Swaraj won’t be a reality any soon, so he tried to limit the government only to fund some educational programs and to provide basic frame for his proposed economic concept of trusteeship. However, **the power-hunger of other politicians and specially Nehru and his family ruined all the frames of decentralization and created a nation with a government which is no less than totalitarian in nature.**

[Sanjeev: This totalitarian government continues. Hence the *Freedom Team of India*. Also see <http://mises.org/daily/5002/Does-Gandhi-Deserve-a-Place-in-the-Libertarian-Tradition>]

1. Institute for Social Ecology: online library - Sanjeev: has been traced, as noted above.
2. Parel, Anthony (ed.) Hind Swaraj and other writings of M.K. Gandhi. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1997. p. 38
3. Parel, Anthony (ed.) Hind Swaraj and other writings of M.K. Gandhi. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1997. p. 92,
4. Murthy, Srinivasa. Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy Letters. Long Beach Publications: Long Beach, 1987. p. 8
5. Gandhi’s Hatred of State Oppression, George H. Smith
6. Triumph of Liberty, Jim Powell, Triumph of Liberty, Jim Powell

7. Murthy, Srinivasa. Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy Letters. Long Beach Publications: Long Beach, 1987. p. 189
8. Gandhi's Hatred of State Oppression, George H. Smith

9.2 Gandhi on liberty

Gandhi on liberty

On Gandhi jayanti, some Gandhian thoughts:

"Government that is ideal governs the least. It is no self-government that leaves nothing for the people to do".

"[Government] control gives rise to fraud, suppression of truth, intensification of the black market and artificial scarcity. Above all, it unmans the people and deprives them of initiative, it undoes the teaching of self-help".

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

"the individual is the one supreme consideration. No society can possibly be built upon a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail, so will he not exist as man if he has no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own".

"Submission [...] to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty [...] Civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state".

"[The] means to me are just as important as the goal, and in a sense more important in that we have some control over them, whereas we have none over the goal if we lose control over the means".

'I hope to demonstrate that real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority'.

9.3 Gandhi, a liberal during illiberal times

Gandhi, a liberal during illiberal times

- Here are some thoughts on Gandhi and his inclination towards liberalism – despite Nehru's persistent insistence that India must have socialism. This blog post is a direct cut and paste from [BFN](#). This post does not evaluate his enormous contributions to India and the world which I talk about at length in [DOF](#) in a number of places.
- **Gandhi's philosophy was the most compatible with the ideas of freedom among Indian thinkers of his period.** He placed great importance on individual freedom and independent action. **In his mind, the individual remained the maker of his own destiny, with the state having only a very limited role in an individual's affairs.** His views were based on a combination of his interpretation of Hindu ideas mixed largely with the ideas of the liberal American philosopher Henry David Thoreau (1817–62). **Thoreau had said, 'That government is best which governs least'. Gandhi repeated that like a mantra on**

many occasions. In fact, Gandhi merged the concepts of accountability from classical liberalism with those of the *karma* theory of Hinduism. His can be said to have been an eclectic synthesis of Hinduism and liberalism. Despite its indifferent contribution to liberty in the past, once an effort is made, it appears that just as Christianity can get along with liberalism, Hinduism can also get along with liberalism quite well, arguably even more so. I have little doubt that Islam can also be interpreted likewise given a broader understanding of its message. Turkey shows us that it is possible to do so.

Gandhi opposed the collectivist and centralized approaches of communism not on intellectual grounds but because of his ‘intuitive’ grasp over the concepts of accountability and justice. Quotations from Gandhi in the table below tell us about his liberal credentials. The page numbers at the end of these quotations are from Fisher.^[i] My comments on Gandhi’s views are in the second column.

[i] Fisher, Louis, op. cit.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>‘Government that is ideal governs the least. It is no self-government that leaves nothing for the people to do’ (p.196).</p> | <p>The government has a minimal role in a free society – a key message of classical liberalism.</p> |
| <p>‘I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear because, although while apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress’ (p.304).</p> | <p>Here Gandhi is reiterating the most fundamental principles of a free society. The individual is the hub of the society; the individual must be allowed to develop self-knowledge, self-respect and become responsible and accountable.</p> |
| <p>‘Submission [...] to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty [...] Civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul’s anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state’ (p.165).</p> | <p>Liberalism resists tyranny, and nothing is generally more tyrannical than a state that barter liberty for immorality, as socialist governments have, in India. Gandhi’s chosen method of protest was supremely ethical and persuasive. There was no secrecy involved, no deception. Attacking people, as terrorists do, never changes the beliefs that people hold.</p> |
| <p>‘[The] means to me are just as important as the goal, and in a sense more important in that we have some control over them, whereas we have none over the goal if we lose control over the means’ (p.305).</p> | <p>Liberalism focuses almost entirely on the process, or the means. The ends are seen as a natural consequence of the means. There is no coercion, only persuasion.</p> |
| <p>‘I hope to demonstrate that real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition</p> | <p>Liberalism requires the active participation of each citizen in the regulation and control of their government. In a free</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority' (p.202).</p> | <p>society the best of its citizens come forward as representatives. There is no better way to prevent the abuse of authority than for freedom loving people to form the government.</p> |
|---|--|

- Let me add that Gandhi was not a 'full-fledged' liberal given his lack of intellectual rigour about why he advocated what he did. He had strong liberal inclinations and intuition but no vision for human freedom as a whole (at least not one in which the proper mechanisms of freedom were fully defined). He was clearly not a Hayek and did not even understand the great moral character of capitalism. This is evident from his theory of trusteeship through which he sought (in his mind) a 'compromise' between freedom and economic equality. Gandhi did not grasp that these objectives are mutually contradictory. And so he needlessly hit out against capitalism. He wrote, 'I desire to end capitalism, almost, if not quite, as much as the most advanced Socialist or even Communist. But our methods differ, our languages differ',^[i] his difference being that he did not like using coercion. He also diluted his concept of equality somewhat by saying, 'Economic equality of my conception does not mean that everyone would literally have the same amount. It simply means that everybody should have enough for his or her needs'.^[ii] He then proposed a via-media of sorts – the theory of trusteeship, whereby the rich ('capitalists') would use their 'wealth [...] for the welfare of the community'.^[iii]

Unfortunately, this view seriously misrepresents the foundations of liberty and capitalism. For Gandhi to even imply tangentially that capitalists were not using their wealth for the welfare of the community was wrong. Businesses contribute to the welfare of society in many ways:

- First, they do so through the services they provide. By applying their mental energy to combine natural and human resources with capital, they generate products and services that would not have existed without their efforts. These products and services increase our knowledge and improve our health and longevity. That is their most important contribution.
- Second, businesses generate employment for thousands, if not millions, of families, taking each such person employed out of the quagmire poverty. This is their second most important contribution.

In this manner, those who achieve wealth through their own initiative have already contributed so disproportionately in comparison to ordinary people that we should be ashamed of asking them to further look after the 'welfare' of society. Are we beggars that we can't stand on our own feet? In the second chapter I will show how a free society readily delivers on things like the removal of poverty without requiring charity from anyone. Anyway, whether or not trusteeship was a good concept, it did not go anywhere. Nehru ignored it and no one else cared to pick it up.

Also, Gandhi was not a 'systems' thinker and was unable to elaborate the design of institutions by which governments of free India would be held accountable. It is not enough to say that a 'government is best which governs the least'. It is important to specify how this will happen. This inability to think at the systems level, i.e. by building from the level of individual incentives right up to the social level, is perhaps a cultural trait of most Indians. We prefer to tinker with things at the margin or to appeal to the good intentions of people, rather than think about systemic incentives which will give us the results we want. On the other hand, the West has been very competent in this area. And so, given Gandhi's rather limited understanding of systemic processes, we still need to look to the advances of

Western economic theory such as the theory of public choice for a more complete picture of governance.

[i] From the *Harijan*, 3 June 1939, p.145 (or *Harijan*, 4 May 1947, p.134).

See [http://www.gandhi-manibhavan.org/gandhiphilosophy/philosophy_trusteeship.htm].

[ii] *Harijan*, 31 March 1946, cited in Swarup, Devendra, ed, *Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism*, Deendayal Research Institute, New Dehi, 1992, p.126.

[iii] *Harijan*, 3 June 1939, p.145.

Addendum

Gandhi, the Liberal, in PERSPECTIVE, A fresh look at Gandhian economics by B Chandrasekaran — July 14, 2011 (PDF)

9.4 Gandhi on ABSOLUTE freedom of speech

Gandhi on ABSOLUTE freedom of speech

FREE SPEECH AS AN ELEMENTARY RIGHT

"**The person of a citizen must be held inviolate.** It can only be touched to arrest or to prevent violence" [[Young India, 24 April 1930](#)]

Indians like others ought to be allowed "free speech" etc. as these are fundamentals of British Constitution." [1895, [Source](#)]

"The present struggle is not so much to right the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, much less for swaraj. We are now fighting for **the elementary rights of free speech** and freedom to form associations [[Young India, 5 January 1922](#)]

"Individual freedom alone can make society progressive. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automation and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man." [[Harijan, 3 February 1942](#)] (cited [here](#))

"the elementary rights of free speech, free association and free Press" [[Source](#)]

"The immediate task before the country, therefore, is to rescue from paralysis freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of the Press." [[Source](#)]

"Freedom of speech of the individual is the foundation of Swaraj" [[Young India, 24 August 1945](#)] (cited [here](#))

"Freedom of speech and pen is the foundation of swaraj" [[Harijan, 29-9-1940](#)]

FREE SPEECH IN BRITISH INDIA WAS INSUFFICIENT

"the Punjab Government cannot tolerate free speech." [[Source](#)]

"Reading is trying to emasculate India by forcibly making free speech and popular organization impossible." [[Source](#)]

"aroused mixed feelings of surprise and regret amongst all those who hold the democratic rights of fair criticism and free speech dear." [[Source](#)]

"There is no freedom of speech in British India much less in Native States." [19.03.1941 [Source](#)]

"Free speech has been stifled. Goondaism is being practised in the name of law and order." [[Source](#)]

CONCLUSION

Although Gandhi often objected to hate speech, he never asked the Government to step in. He was all in favour of self-restraint and civilised discourse.

It is a pity that Gandhi did not comment on s.153 and s 295A of IPC. It would have been very helpful to India had he thoroughly condemned such laws.

10. General: Gandhi's views on suicide

10.1 Research into Gandhi's views on suicide #1

Research into Gandhi's views on suicide #1

I had a few minutes (not really: I had to squeeze them out), and thought I'd pursue Bhagwad Jal's claims that "The very fact that Gandhi was willing to go on a fast unto death meant that he was comfortable with the idea of ending one's own life by one's own free will."

Whatever I know of Gandhi rebels against such a wild claim, and indeed, a very cursory research at: <http://www.gandhiserve.org/> (please use google advanced search restricting your search to PDF files; that way you'll quickly be able to scan 98 volumes of ALL of Gandhi's writings) has proven this to be so.

In the less than 30 minutes I've spent in research on this topic I've come to the following view (to be further confirmed):

- a) Gandhi detested suicide
- b) He thought that his fasts were NOT fasts unto death because no one could control their life or death
- c) He saw his fasts a spiritual cleansing of HIMSELF.

Anyway, this more or less confirms my high esteem of Gandhi and I will further explore his precise views in order to distinguish between when someone try to fast – to cleanse the society – and when someone cannot. In my view Hazare's fast has all the trappings of a political tool. It is nowhere in the league of Gandhi.

Yet to finalise my views. Your input/research is invited. Please spare me your opinions. Provide me with SOLID research.

Here are some initial findings:

Gandhi is REPELLED by the thought of suicide

The whole of my own religious upbringing has been such as to make any thought of suicide on my part impossible. **vol. 58**

There is general agreement between Hinduism and other faiths that suicide is a sin. **vol. 58**

The Hindus even aspire to escape from the encumbrance of this body, but do not commit suicide for that purpose. **Vol 25**

His imploring people to NOT commit suicide

We should make up our minds that we ourselves will never commit suicide. The kind of people who commit suicide either worry too much about the world, or try to hide their faults from the world. We should never pretend to be what we are not, or try to do what is clearly beyond us. **Vol. 39**

He notes that fasting is illegal and suicide prohibited

12. Simple suicide is an offence under the present Law as I have been told.

13. If Gandhi took up his stand at the Viceregal gateway and threatened to fast even for one day unless the British Government withdrew from the country, the Government would be justly entitled to arrest him and imprison him till he came to his senses. **Vol 58**

One case when suicide is permitted:

Someone reporting his views: "He would think of only one occasion when it would be better to kill oneself. That was when a man cast an evil eye on another woman." **Vol. 25**

Yes, if his thoughts become impure and he is tempted to infect another person with his impurity, he may by all means commit suicide. Committing suicide is a thousand times preferable to sleeping with another's wife. **Vol. 25**

The power to die everyone has but few desire to use it. When someone wishes to dishonour a woman, when a man is in danger of being overmastered by lust, such a man and woman have a right to commit suicide. It is indeed their duty to do so. **Vol.25**

But then he adds:

If you wish to go and lay down your life, do so. Dying for India is not suicide. Suicide is bad both for Hindus as well as Mussulmans. Rather than violate a woman's chastity it is better for one to go and drown oneself. Suicide is bad but this type of suicide is good. **Vol. 25**

Fasting with a goal of death is repulsive to him

The method of fasting, committing suicide, still instinctively repels me. **vol. 58**

The mental model of spiritual fasting that Gandhi then employs

My fast was not a fast unto death in its literal sense. The Roman Catholic priest, who is a visitor to this prison, knows me, and when I was on the eve of taking that fast, he came over to me in his kindly manner just to say one word, and he said how he drew the distinction between a suicide and a sacrifice. A suicide carried with it a certainty of destruction. A sacrifice meant risking life, the greater the risk, the greater the sacrifice. But there should be nothing beyond risk. I had no hesitation in agreeing with the distinction, and my fast being conditional was not a fast amounting to suicide, but it was a fast involving the greatest risk, but still a risk and no more. **vol. 58**

Needless to say I write of spiritual fasts. I know that fasting may come also from despair. Then it is rank suicide. I should defend my fast against such a charge. For me it has always been a process of penance and purification. The fast of 1921 was not born of despair. The basis of all penitential fasts has always been faith in mankind, God and oneself. It gives an inward joy that sustains one. I therefore want you to share with me the joy of it. I hope you have understood my argument. Of course you know that there is no certainty about the 2nd January fast. It may have to be postponed. **vol. 58**

10.2 Research into Gandhi's views on suicide and fasting #2

Research into Gandhi's views on suicide and fasting #2

Back from the gym. This intriguing topic is compelling me to study the issue some more. Hence a second tranche of research findings, to be (separately) followed by another – an entire article by Gandhi on fasting.

EXTRACT 1

Yet Gandhi did not advocate the mere exaltation of life as an end in itself; nor did he believe in martyrdom. He said about a follower of his, who was threatening to fast unto death to gain his interest and was on the point of death: "I would rather that he lost his life than that untruth succeeded." And he shocked some of his more orthodox and literal interpreters of *ahimsa*, when he permitted the doctor to put to sleep, by an injection, a calf in his *ashram* which was in excruciating pain. [Source: N. A. Nikam, *Gandhi's Philosophy, The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Jun., 1954), pp. 668-678]

EXTRACT 2

This one is from: Anthony Parel, Symbolism in Gandhian Politics, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Dec., 1969), pp. 513-527

Fasting

Of all the Gandhian symbols, fasting was probably the most typical. It represented the following set of values. First the value of vicarious suffering in political action. Gandhi believed that all social and political conflicts had a dimension of sinfulness, and that atonement for them, by means of vicarious suffering, was necessary. Through the use of this symbol one sought to remind the community of the spiritual and moral foundations of social and political relations, and **to reduce, if possible, the volume of moral evil in oneself and in society**, and consequently, the volume of political violence. The most obvious example of the use of this symbol is Gandhi's famous **fasts to restore political harmony between Hindus and Muslims**.

Secondly, **fasting was a means of self-purification**, of acquiring mastery of the spirit over the body, of obtaining spiritual clarity in times of political and social confusion.

Thirdly, fasting represented **the value of voluntary suffering**. In conflict situations one resorted to it as a means of non-violent political persuasion. Gandhi attached very stringent conditions to the adoption of this symbol in the political arena. First of all, one had to take into account the state of the public opinion in regard to the effectiveness of the fast.' Secondly the issue on which a fast is contemplated must be just. Thirdly, the motive which prompts fasting must be the vindication of truth and justice as the one who fasts sees them, and **not embarrassment or blackmail of the adversary**. Fourthly, one must be sure, at least subjectively, of a divine inspiration to undertake the fast.

Because of the difficulty in meeting these conditions, and **because of the abuses most likely to occur**, Gandhi most frequently discouraged others from using this symbol. He claimed for himself an expert knowledge of how and when to use this symbol. Gandhi's idea was that **great moral integrity was required for the effective use of this symbol; otherwise it would be merely an exploitation of the public's high regard for a spiritual act."**

Gandhi had also a strict code of manipulating the fast-symbol. After fulfilling all the conditions mentioned above, the one who fasts must declare his intention to fast to the public, to the individual or group in regard to whom the fast is going to be undertaken. This must be followed by bargaining and negotiations. If the negotiations fail, the fast must be actually undertaken. During the fast, however, negotiations must be continued. Such devices as press conferences, private meetings with the "adversary," mass petitions, pacification councils, joint declarations, even token sympathy fasts, hartal (that is a token general strike for a specific period of time), renunciation of public honors and offices may also be used to press home the truth and justice of the issue involved.

If there are related symbols they may also be utilized during the time of fasts. Thus during the first fast, undertaken to restore Hindu-Muslim harmony, Gandhi stayed in the home of his famous Muslim friends, the Ali brothers. Similarly, if the fast was undertaken to restore religious harmony, during the days of the fast, sections from the sacred books of the relevant religions would be read, and appropriate religious hymns would be sung by eminent leaders. **Gandhi attached great dramatic significance to the manner of ending a fast**. For example, the famous fast in favour of the outcastes, undertaken in 1933, was supposed to have been ended by Gandhi taking the glass of orange juice from the hands of an Outcaste. Similarly, the Calcutta fast of 1947, undertaken to restore Hindu-Muslim peace

was ended when Mr. Suhrawardy, the Muslim leader (and later the chief minister of East Bengal), handed the orange juice, and the last fast (1948), undertaken also for Hindu-Muslim peace, was ended with Abul Kalam Azad, the Muslim minister of education handing the orange juice. **Gandhi clearly understood mass psychology, and the fact that without the aid of political imagination and political emotions the most rational and just of political goals could never be restored.** He verified this insight by the method of manipulating the fast-symbol.

The virtues particularly relevant to the effective use of the fast-symbol were chastity, truth, and fortitude. For fasting was a means "for the attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh," of "crucifying the flesh" which was necessary for the practice of Gandhian politics. With the aid of fast one acquired spiritual vision, and thus arrived at a better grasp of the truth of the question involved." Recall also Gandhi's dictum, "What eyes are for the outer world, fasts are for the inner." And without fortitude one could not endure the hardships and suffering involved in the use of this symbol.'

11. Was Gandhi unGandhian?

11.1 Was Gandhi un-Gandhian?

Was Gandhi un-Gandhian?

While debating [Anna Hazare's violent assaults on ADULTS in his village](#) (in any event no one is supposed to beat children with army belts, either), on FB, one defence (for Anna) provided to me was that Gandhi himself indulged in criminal acts. The example offered in this regard was of his alleged "exploitation" of women. I was given [this link](#).

Apparently this book *Gandhi: Naked Ambition* provides insights into Gandhi's hidden life, which is only now beginning to surface. I find this whole thing very reprehensible, very un-Gandhian. Gandhi had clearly wildly off-track somewhere down the line. How in heavens name is it possible to justify such actions? Prima facie, there is evidence of his exploitation of young girls. The key immediate question I have, though, is did Gandhi break any law? **Did he commit any *crime*?**

Relationship (?) with a person possibly below 18?

Sushila Nayar, the attractive sister of Gandhi's secretary, also his personal physician, attended Gandhi from girlhood. She used to sleep and bathe with Gandhi. When challenged, he explained how he ensured decency was not offended. "While she is bathing I keep my eyes tightly shut," he said, "I do not know ... whether she bathes naked or with her underwear on. I can tell from the sound that she uses soap."

Relationship (?) with an 18 year old

While in Bengal to see what comfort he could offer in times of inter-communal violence in the run-up to independence, Gandhi called for his 18-year-old grandniece Manu to join him – and sleep with him. "We both may be killed by the Muslims," he told her, "and must put our purity to the ultimate test, so that we know that we are offering the purest of sacrifices, and we should now both start sleeping naked."

This is a research post. Please provide information. I'll also keep adding information in due course, time permitting.

12. Raw material not yet analysed

<http://pragati.nationalinterest.in/2011/07/gandhi-the-liberal/>

<http://www.cobdencentre.org/2011/07/liberal-gandhi/>