

Introduction to Modern Indian Political Thought
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Lecture - 12
Mahatma Gandhi: Introduction

Hello and welcome friends. Today, in this lecture, we are going to discuss our next thinker, that is Mahatma Gandhi and we will discuss from his thinking or thought. First his critique of Modern Civilization or Hind Swaraj and then also idea and his ideas or his dream about India from his book all India of my dreams. So, these are the 2 thematics which we are going to discuss from Mahatma Gandhi and this 2 theme is divided into 3 lectures.

So, today is the first lecture of this 3 lecture part on Mahatma Gandhi and we will discuss today his personal, political life, intellectual influence or intellectual context or historical context in which Gandhiji was actively involved. At the same time, developing some of his profound ideas with shape the politics of modern India and provided the leadership to the congress and also some of the key, key themes in his political thought like Satyagraha, nonviolence, Sarvodaya and his views on state and society and finally, we will conclude.

In the next lecture, we will discuss or focus more on his critique of modern civilization through his text Hind Swaraj and finally, in the third part of the series or third lecture, we will discuss Gandhi's vision or dreams about India and also conclude this series by situating Gandhi and his thought in the larger context of modern Indian political thought and his response and debates to many or with many thinkers like B R Ambedkar, Rabindranath Tagore, etcetera. So, that is how we are going to discuss Mahatma Gandhi and his political thought.

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Introduction

- Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi is regarded as the father of nation. His ultimate objective was search after truth. Truth for him was his God which he wanted to find/experience through non-violence of *satyagraha*. Gandhiji emphasized equally on the purity of means and ends. And using these ideals he transformed the freedom struggle in India as a mass movement and provided his leadership from 1920s until India attain its independence in 1947. In the words of Judith M. Brown, he is "the single most important organizer of the numerous movements that cohered loosely as a nationalist movement against imperial rule in India."
- Significance of Gandhi as a political leader is not only limited to India, but his ideals of *satyagraha* and non-violence has wider audiences across the globe. These ideals inspired a great many movements in modern world i. e. lead by Martin Luther King in USA and Nelson Mandela in South Africa. His ideals and methods remains a continuous source of inspiration for numerous protests movements and mass mobilizations in contemporary world.
- Apart from being an activist, Gandhi was also a great thinker and was perhaps greatest among the first wave of anti-colonial intellectuals. For Anthony J Parel, philosophy of Gandhiji is the most significant aspect of his life. It is due to relevance of Gandhiji's methods for India and abroad Parel has recently classified his political philosophy as 'Pax Gandhiana'.

So, in this lecture, we will begin with his personal political life and as well some of the key themes so, as we are aware the Mahatma Gandhi, which is also known as Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi is regarded as the father of the nation and all his initiatives, political activism, self-reflection, experimentation with thought and his social reforms, movements, his ultimate objective was search after truth.

So, for Gandhi, truth was his god and this god or truth he wanted to find or experience through the method of nonviolence or Satyagraha and to experience or to find that truth, Gandhi equally emphasized both on the purity of means and ends and using these ideals of truth, satyagraha, non violence and puttings equally emphasis on means and ends, he transformed the freedom struggle of India and turned it as a mass movement cutting across different divides based on caste religion class etcetera.

So, prior to the Gandhi Indian struggle for freedom was largely carried or led by a western educated or English educated tiny section of Indian middle class and Gandhi for the first time energized the masses and involve them in the struggle for freedom. So, prior to that, politics is seen as a kind of spectator for the masses to be seen from distance and something, where the middle class can only play a role for them or on behalf of them, for the first time Gandhi in still the belief in them to directly participate in the politician that can shape or transform the society and politics.

And also, made them freedom a struggle more effective and this he did in a unique nonviolent way. These ideals remain very fundamental to his politics, to his political philosophy and to the many initiatives he undertook during the freedom struggle and he also provided he was the unmatched or unrivalled leader of Indian freedom struggle from 1920s after the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak till India attained independence in 1947.

So, recognizing or acknowledging this fact, Judith M Brown writes that the single most important organizer of the numerous movements that cohered loosely as a nationalist movement against imperial rule in India. So, Gandhi was credited with his organizational capacity to bring together different sections of society and put forward a united front against the British rule.

So, this he did in a very unique way of understanding the condition and also the strength of the masses and Gandhi. In that sense transform and made greatest contribution in the freedom struggle and he also emphasize on the ethical and moral side of politics and not just instrumental or a kind of very narrowly sense of doing politics for the power or accumulation of power (Refer Time: 05:31).

So, Gandhi in a way when he was mobilizing the masses for the political struggle, he was also preparing them or empowering them to change social religious or economic condition of their life and how to lead a good life, how to lead a life which is self-ruled or swaraj, which is not merely a political independence, but something which is more than that when individual is himself or herself capable of governing themselves without relying to any outside forces. So, Gandhi has a very multiple dimension of his thought and his political activities and he was a crusader in so many ways.

Now, the Gandhi and the significance of his action and thought or as a political leader is not limited to India, but many of his ideals like Satyagraha or nonviolence has wider audience across the globe. These ideals inspired a great many movements in modern world such as Martin Luther King. When he was organizing or leading civil rights movement in U S A or Nelson Mandela against the apartheid regime in South Africa, they were greatly influenced and inspired by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and his ideals and methods remains a continuous source of inspiration for numerous protests movements and mass mobilization in contemporary world.

So, the significance and relevance of Gandhi was not limited or confined to the time in which he was acting or involved in political struggle, but it transcends the geographical boundary of India and as well as the limitation of time and space where he remains relevant. Even to the contemporary world as well and many social movements or resistance movements derive their inspiration or a strength from Gandhian modes of protest Satyagraha or nonviolence or fast which is frequent in even our contemporary politics.

So, in Gandhi, what you also see that a part from being an activist who is deeply and actively involved in the politics of his time. Gandhi was also a great thinker and was perhaps greatest among the first wave of anticolonial intellectual. So, there are different ways of contesting the domination or hegemony of colonial knowledge or orientalism which side calls.

So, the colonial production of knowledge was challenged by many thinkers and during the first wave of anticolonial intellectual, Gandhi was perhaps the greatest thinker to articulate the damage that colonial rule do not just to the physical or material condition of the colony, but also the intellectual or the psyche of the colonial subject.

So, he was countering to the psychological or the intellectual hegemony of colonial knowledge production as well. And for Anthony J Parel, in the philosophy of Gandhiji is the most significant aspect of his life and it is due to relevance of Gandhiji's methods for India and abroad. Even today, Parel has recently classified his political philosophy as Pax Gandhiana. So, he is a very unique original novel thinker responding to the time in which he was actively involved in the politics, but his ideas and methods remain relevant even today.

So, it transcends the limitation of time and space and therefore, his thought and methods are classified by Parel as the Pax Gandhiana methods and message remains relevant and it has its own unique logic or the epistemology to understand the world to respond to the world and to challenge to solve the challenges that contemporary world is facing. So, now to look at very briefly about his brief biography.

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A brief biography

- He was born at Porbandar in Gujarat to Putlibai and Karamchand Gandhi in 1869. He got married to Kasturba in his childhood. She was her lifelong companion in many initiatives and socio-religious reform movements.
- He went to England to study law and returned to India in 1891. He was not very successful as a lawyer and soon joined a Gujarati trading firm in South Africa in 1893.
- During his overseas life, he was exposed to Christianity and Islam. This influenced him to question dogmas of his own religion and offered an outlook to look at religion beyond particular religious traditions. For him, religion did not mean any specific religious creed but a quest for ethical values basically- truth and non-violence.
- It is his exposure to England and South Africa that Gandhi developed an all India consciousness first and foremost over any provincial or local identities. He started his political activism and experiment with truth in South Africa. He established an Ashram – *Tolstoy Ashram* which soon became the center for his innumerable social, religious, and political reforms movements. He first experimented with the non-violence method of political protest in South Africa against the discriminatory policies of Colonial government. He led and motivated the Indian settlers in South Africa to fight for their right and dignity and for this purpose he mobilized the public opinion in India as well.
- It is in South Africa that Gandhi developed the notions of *Satyagraha* (holding on to truth) and non-violence which remained as primary means of protest against all form of injustices throughout his life.

He was born at Porbandar in Gujarat to Putlibai and Karamchand Gandhi in 1869 and he was relatively from a prosperous family. His father was a Dewan of the Rajkot and he was married to Kasturba in his childhood and both of them were at the age of 13 when they married and Kasturba remain a lifelong companion of Gandhiji in many of his initiatives and social or religious reforms movements.

Now, after completing his high school, Gandhiji went to England to study law which he completed in 2 and half years and returned to India in 1891. Then, after return to India, he tried to established himself as a lawyer. But he had very little success in his legal profession and soon joined a Gujarati trading firm in South Africa in 1893. And in South Africa, he really began his political activism his reflection or his thinking about many of the challenges that contemporary world including India was facing.

So, it is during his overseas life and exposure to the foreign countries he came into contact with Christianity and also Islam and this close contact, which Christianity and he visited many church to understand the best message or learned best message of Bible or studied Quran. This enabled him to question dogmas of his own religion and offered an outlook to look at religion beyond particular religious tradition.

So, Gandhiji himself being a deeply religious person, asserted himself as a Sanatani Hindu yet he was not a kind of narrow fanatic or Nehru fanatic Hindu and accommodative or understand the true meaning or true message of all religion has one

and same. So, in through his prayers, through his various activities, he remained a deeply religious person, but define or interpret the religion in such way which can accommodate all forms of religious worship or religious tradition.

And for him, religion did not mean any specific religious creed, but a quest for ethical value and that ethical value for him remains truth and nonviolence. So, search of truth the experiment with truth as he entitled his autobiography. So, his whole life was this experiment with truth and that he wanted to do through following inert kind of rationalistic or modern rational approach to life and to society to politics.

But, he remain embedded in the religious practices or tradition of Hinduism, but interpreted it liberally and accommodate it in a way where it can accommodate different practices, different different religious system, religious system as well and for him. The task of all these religion beyond dogmas beyond their particularity is to search for truth or that truth has to be search or experience through the non-violence means where the means and ends are equally significant.

So, unlike many scholars, like certainly utilitarian's greatest good of the greatest number Gandhi Gandhiji method was the means is as important perhaps as ends which is contrary to the many of political thinkers and leaders of his time. So, this toleration or liberal interpretation of religion Gandhiji developed precisely. Because of his study or close engagement with the religiosity of Christianity or Islam, but also the affinities of affinities with these religious during his foreign visits.

It is his exposure to England and South Africa, something crucial happens in Gandhiji and that is the development of an all India consciousness first and foremost over the provincial or the local identities. So, if we look at the growth of or the evolution of modern Indian political thinkers or leaders. They started with their provinces and even in provinces from their smaller local community level identity and then the further develop into a kind of all India all India leader or thinker.

But they remain grounded or embedded in their local provincial identities and this remains a kind of complex with the Indian identity as such where we simultaneously carry different kind of identities certainly one as a provincial identity and other as a national identity.

So, those trends in modern Indian selfhood or modern Indian being is very much their even in contemporary times, but for Gandhi, something really unique happened where he developed this all India consciousness. First and foremost, over any other kind of local or provincial identities beat caste, beat religion or language or any other identity. So, for first and foremost, Gandhiji imagined himself, envisioned himself as a all Indian than a Gujarati than a Katewadi than a Bania and so on and so forth.

And, and this he develop because of his engagement, because of his exposure in England or in South Africa and most important in South Africa with different communities from Christian to Tamil to various communities settled in South Africa. There different backgrounds that help Gandhiji to develop this all India concessions which becomes a kind of strength or a kind of different approach in his political activities and he start and the other side of his life was that unlike many many modern Indian thinkers.

Gandhiji started his political activism and experimented with truth in South Africa and he established an ashram their Tolstoy ashram, which soon became the centre of his numerous social religious and political reforms movement and he first experimented with the nonviolence method of political protest in South Africa against the discriminatory policies of colonial government. There he led and motivated the Indian settlers to fight for their right and dignity and for this purpose he mobilized the public opinion in India as well.

So, Gandhi's political activity started in South Africa. And here, there is a kind of criticism of Gandhi. Also, because of his involvement in Boer; Boer war and Boer war sided with the British and here in their racial hierarchy of the colonial white settlers Indians and the indigenous population he wanted some kind of better treatment of treatment to the Indians which is criticized by.

So, within the racial hierarchy, he wanted Indians to be given some more preferential status, but not really question the very basis of racial hierarchy also which of course, later he evolve and in Gandhi also there is a kind of any he himself quoted many a times that the contradictory things or Gandhi himself was a reflective person constantly questioning his own believe, his own ideas, his own dogmas and we have discuss during Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhi debate how some of his irrational or superstitions let to Tagore criticize many of the statement of Mahatma Gandhi.

So, in South Africa also we find him not really questioning the very basis of racial hierarchy, but to fight for the discriminatory practices against the discriminatory practices of colonial rule against the Indian settlers there, but nonetheless many of his thoughts and ideas were articulated and developed during this phase of Gandhiji's political activism and for this, he not only mobilized the Indian settlers in South Africa, but also came to India and mobilized the public opinion in the support of Indians and their struggle in South Africa.

So, there Gandhi developed this notion of Satyagraha that is holding on to truth and nonviolence and this Satyagraha and nonviolence remain the primary means of protest against all forms of injustices that Gandhiji launched while coming back to India through what is life. Now, to think about some of the intellectual influence on Gandhiji's thought and political activities, we also find Gandhiji was also a voracious reader and he read a great many texts and treatises by western or Indian thinkers or writers alike.

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- Truth
- Gandhi was also a voracious reader and he read a great many texts and treatises by the western and Indian writers alike. He was deeply influenced by the writings of Tolstoy – *The Kingdom of God is Within You*; *How shall we escape*; *The Slavery of Our Times*; Ruskin's – *Unto this Last*; *The Political Economy of Art*; Carpenter's – *Civilisation: Its Curse and Cure*; Taylor's – *Fallacy of Speed*; Henry David Thoreau's – *Principle of Civil Disobedience*; *Life Without Principles*. He learnt the many-sidedness of the truth from his fellow Gujarati Jain, mystic and diamond merchant Ravjibhai Mehta. He also read *Gita*, Tulsi's *Ramcharitmanas*; *Upanishads*; Patanjali's *Yogasutras* and *Laws of Manu*. *Gita* remained his most cherished text and he wrote his own interpretation to it. From this text he learnt the ideals of *Sthithaprajna* – the man of steady mind and steady wisdom – his ideal person.
 - Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and founded one Ashram in Ahmedabad. In the same year, he was awarded *Kaiser-e-Hind* gold medal for his service to the Indians in South Africa. He started his political activism from Champaran Satyagraha in Bihar in 1917.
 - Introduction of Rowlatt Bill and the following massacre in Jallianwala Bagh led Gandhi to start Non-cooperation movement in 1919 which was called off after the Chauri Chaura incident.
 - In 1930, he started the Civil Disobedience Movement with his famous Dandi March.
 - He protested against the 'communal award' but had to compromise with B.R. Ambedkar.

And he was deeply influenced particularly by Tolstoy some of his works like the kingdom of God is within you how shall we escape the slavery of our times Ruskins unto this last the political economy of art or carpenter civilization. It is cure and its curse and cure Taylors fallacy of speed Henry David Thoreaus principle of civil disobedience and the Satyagraha nonviolence method to a great extent is influenced by this principle of civil disobedience life without principle.

And he learnt the many besides these texts, he also learned a great many Indian text or treatises as well and the many sidedness of the truth. So, truth for him is one and it is absolute, but our knowledge of that truth our experience of that truth is not complete. It is not absolute, it is relative. Now, that remains a kind of Gandhiji search for realizing or experiencing the truth in it is totality.

So, this idea of the many sidedness of the truth he learn from his Gujarati Jain mystic and diamond merchant named Ravjibhai Mehta. Similarly, he also read Gita, Tulsi's Ramcharitmanas, Upanishads, Patanjali's, Yogasutras and Gita for him remained the most profound and most cherished text and he wrote his own interpretation to it and give it a liberal interpretation a kind of message to act in the political life in a non violent manner.

So, about Gita, there is a kind of dichotomy or contradiction in it is interpretation for many a scholars and thinkers. Gita is a text which sanction violence for the novel cause, but Gandhi give it altogether non violent interpretation and derived a lot of inspiration and strength from this text Gita and especially this idea of Sthithaprajna, that is the man of steady mind and steady wisdom which is ideal person for Gandhiji. He derived from Gita and many of his argument or responses to various political opponents or political challenges he remain very adamant very firm to what he believed or what he was convinced of even when he faced a lot of criticism even from his contemporaries also.

So, for Gandhi the conviction in truth or belief in non violence or Satyagraha method was something which is. So, forms. So, convincing that he shaped or he transform the way politics or the way mass masses of India participated in the political struggle including the women weak the lower caste the Dalits or different marginalized sections. So, through this ideal of truth or non violence or Satyagraha Gandhiji enable even those who are marginalized or helpless or weak to fight against the mightiest empire of that time British Empire.

So, many of these ideal so, this extensive reading shaped many of his thought and philosophy about modern civilization politics religion, the masses the form of a state or the ideal of a state the ideal of society or men. So many of these ideas Gandhiji develop not just through his activism or exposure to different culture different religious tradition,

but also through is very wide or extensive reading of western and Indian thinkers and writers.

Now, when Gandhi return to India in 1915 he found an ashram in Ahmedabad and Todd India extensively through train to understand the real or countryside of India and for him that countryside that village is real India. The soul of India for Gandhiji lives in it is villages and he did extensive tour of different parts of the country in this same year when he returned to India because of his involvement in South Africa and helping the British to fight or suppressed Zulu revelian there Zulu was the indigenous tribe fighting for their right, legitimate right to live in their online for which the foreign rule was or. White rule was demanding some text or event to live on their online.

So, against that fight Gandhiji form a crop to help the British the medical crop and for which he was awarded the Kaiser i Hind gold medal and he started his political activism in India from Champaran Satyagraha in Bihar in 1917 and he was also involved in many farmers movements or workers movement in different different parts of country.

Especially, in Gujarat or Maharashtra and he mobilized the workers, the farmers or many other sections of society and form a kind of broad based alliance among the often appearing or visible contradictory forces of the society and that is perhaps the greatest contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to India's freedom struggle. He energized, he give them hope is sense of purpose or urgency to these masses to actively involve and believe in their capacity to the throne the mightiest empire of that time in the form of British empire.

So, when and so, for Gandhiji was also somewhat believer in the good intention of the colonial rule. So, the constitutional practices the legal basis of the colonial he thought of as something which can lead to a good outcome in India, but with the Rowlatt bill and the massacre in Jallianwala Bagh in 1919 give him enough scope and prior to that also he was a skeptical of the foreign rule and wanted swaraj and which we will discuss in the next lecture.

But, certainly after this, Rowlatt and following massacre in Rallianwala Bagh and on top of that British refusal to punish those who ordered this mass killing disillusion Gandhiji faith in the justice or the good intention in the British and he began to directly confront the British.

So, during the First World War also Gandhiji remains somewhat loyal to them to the British and their cause, but after this he directly confronted the British and launch many movement and here also one can see a kind of episodic involvement in Gandhiji. So, during 90 after 19 1919 (Refer Time: 30:36) he started non cooperation then in 1930s he started civil disobedience movement and again in 1942 quits India movement.

So, these are the 3 major movements Gandhiji launched against the British rule and for the remaining period he retreat in his ashrams involve in many other activities which he thought of you know reconstructing the society enabling the society to discipline themselves or work as a satyagrahi fearlessly to attain not just the political freedom, but also the capacity to govern oneself self-rule.

So, Gandhiji was in that sense if leader a political activist, but at the same time a reformer social reformer or a visionary who wanted to create a society based on some ethical moral value of truth non violence. And on that basis, only if a swaraj in true sense of the term can be achieved and in the course of his engagement he engaged with many thinkers. Also, certainly on communal award when British tried to divide the Hindus in the and provide reservation among them historically and economically backward section of hind society Gandhiji vehemently opposed it.

So, Gandhiji ford for them untouchables or what a calls the Harijans, but he was dead against any kind of further division of a hind society and he had to compromise on many of these things with B R Ambedkar which we will discuss when we deal with Ambedkar.

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- During the World War two Gandhi started Quit India Movement and was jailed for two years (from 1942-44).
- He launched the scheme of Basic Education in 1937 which emphasized on the vocational education of the pupils as a means of working independently of the Government.
- Unlike many of the nationalists who denounced media as a colonial propaganda, Gandhi made full use of the press. He was engaged with several newspapers and magazines throughout his life which includes Indian Opinion (1903), Harijan (1933), Navajivan, Young India etc.
- Besides Congress, he was associated with different organizations such as All-India Spinners' Association (1925), All India Village Industries Association (1934); etc.

Gandhi debate. So, besides this political movements which energize the Indian masses Gandhiji also launch or initiated many constructive program such as basic education or focus on the vocational education and this he wanted to do independently of the government. So, Gandhi use a different unique techniques also to the advantage of his cause or his objectives.

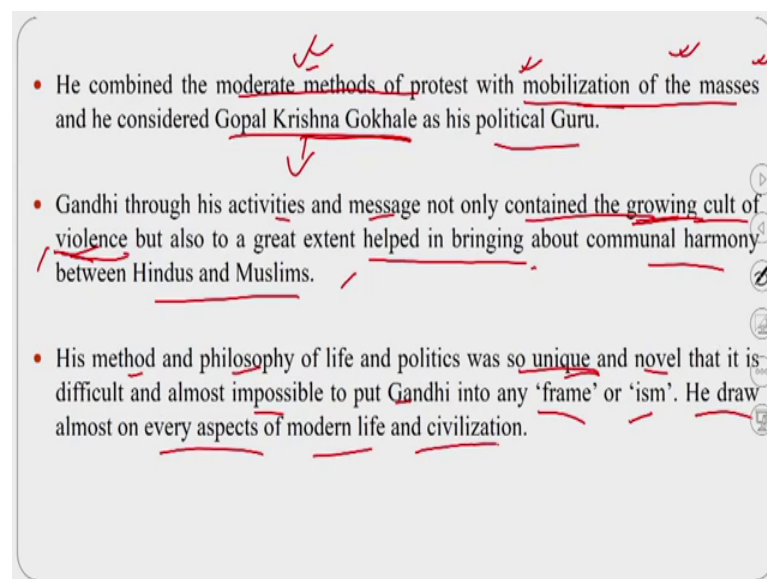
So, like many unlike many nationalist who denounced media as a colonial propaganda. So, by the time Gandhi came the print technology was there and it is used as a kind of tool for public opinion and for ruler or for the task of government besides the force, the military force the public opinion emerged as a powerful tool to sustain the rule to govern more effectively and Gandhiji. Unlike many nationalist who denounced the media merely as a machine, machine of colonial propaganda, he made full use of this the press and he through his personal life through his prayers, through his simplicity, through his words and many of his activities.

He he mobilized the opinion of Indians and also the English man in England and he was very effectively communicating the unjust or the brutal or discriminatory practices of the British, British rule or British government, government in India and very effectively putting for the just or the ethical or the legitimate demands of Indians through the press and in through this press.

Also, he was engaging with many of his contemporary certainly through young India or Harijan or Navajivan or Indian opinion. He was shaping the public opinion expressing his own opinion reflecting upon his own thought and developing his response or philosophy about life or many other sides besides the political struggle or struggle for political freedom.

So, Gandhiji was involved in a number of number of concerns or challenges that India and world was facing and this he effectively communicated by exploiting the print or press. So, Gandhiji perhaps utilized this technology to his advantage very effectively throughout his life and he was also part of many association most significantly congress where he was the tallest leader from 1920s to 1947. Besides that, he was also associated with many organization such as all India a spinners association or all India village industries association.

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- He combined the moderate methods of protest with mobilization of the masses and he considered Gopal Krishna Gokhale as his political Guru.
 - Gandhi through his activities and message not only contained the growing cult of violence but also to a great extent helped in bringing about communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims.
 - His method and philosophy of life and politics was so unique and novel that it is difficult and almost impossible to put Gandhi into any 'frame' or 'ism'. He draw almost on every aspects of modern life and civilization.

Now, in his political techniques or tools he combined the methods of protest with moderate methods of protest with mobilization of masses. So, without the mobilization of masses or the force of masses this method of protest will make not much sense or will not be very effective and he himself followed many of the constitutional or the moderate methods of political protest or representing his concerned through media through pretension and through recommend through memorandums.

But, he equally emphasize on the role of mobilizing the masses and for him Gopal Krishna was his political guru. Gopal Krishna himself was a moderate and not a estimate thinkers like Bal Gangadhar Tilak or Bipin Chandra Pal and many others.

So, Gandhi then through his activities and message grounded in nonviolence and Satyagraha contained not only the growing cult of violence. So, violence as a tool for political struggle which was also acquiring more and more space or becoming more and more effective or inspiring a great many youth of India in different different parts, different parts of India Swaraj. Bhagat Singh Sukhdev Rajguru and similar many other revolutionaries and there believe in the use of violence for political liberation Gandhiji.

Somehow, through his techniques and political activities were able to contained the growing cult of violence in India, but also help in bringing about communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims. This can be debated whether how far he was successfully doing that because, India was partitioned on the basis of religion, but nonetheless the consciousness among the Hindus or the Muslims.

When any religion, religious related violence or rights occur the feeling of guilt or the outrage again such violence or riots is because of many of his methods or practices or teachings also.

So, Gandhiji contributed in a way of trimming or controlling the cult of violence, violence for him is not useful for those against whom it is perpetrated and the one who uses against it. So, Gandhiji has him psychological or moral response to the use of violence as a tool. So, he his himself said that for any cause I am willing to die, but for no cause I am willing to kill. So, this belief in sacrifice rather than harming others physical harming others or other kind of violence against the other was completely unacceptable for Gandhiji and somehow he was able to communicate this message of nonviolence to the large illiterate masses of India and involve them in the political struggle for freedom.

So, other thing about Gandhiji and his method is that his method and philosophy of life and politics was so unique and novel that it is very difficult and almost impossible to put Gandhiji in any frame or ism whether it is liberalism, socialism, Marxism, communism. Gandhiji and his method or philosophy may have the strands of all these ism. But,

Gandhiji and his method cannot be put in any particular frame of liberalism, socialism, Marxism or any other kind of isms or frame.

So, Gandhiji therefore, Gandhism is itself a kind of ism or a particular way of looking at world society politics. So, he draws almost on every aspect of modern life and civilization and not just for the political struggle.

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Major ideas

- **Non-violence and Satyagraha**
- Satyagraha consists of two words- satya and agraha which together implies the insistence on truth. It can be interpreted in- a) opposing violence by non-violence and b) the quest for truth. It is not only a way of opposing authority but also of using love and morality to strengthen the society.
- It opposes violence with non-violence. Therefore, it does not bring physical injury to others but may involve self-suffering of the satyagrahi. For Gandhi Satyagrahi must practice these four virtues for a stable character:
 1. Chastity (Brahmacharya)
 2. Truthfulness (Satya)
 3. Justice, or freedom from possessiveness, greed
 4. Fearlessness
- His insistence on non-violence can be understood from his equal emphasis on means and ends. For him, the ends are not enough to justify an action but the adoption of just means is equally important.

So, on major ideas in Gandhiji, first we can discuss about his views on non violence and Satyagraha for Gandhiji this Satyagraha consists of 2 words Satya and Agraaha which together implies the insistence on truth, truth is ultimate, truth is absolute. So, our experience of truth may vary, but one ultimately the truth (Refer Time: 39:51). So, that becomes the crucial word or (Refer Time: 39:55) in Indian tradition and (Refer Time: 39:57) from Mundaka Upanishad Satyameva Jayate.

So, the idea or the belief or conviction in the truth or the victory of truth was something which Gandhiji made the basis of his whole political programs and this insistence on truth or holding on the truth can be interpreted in a kind of opposing violence by non violence and the quest of truth.

So, the method for arriving or understanding Satya or truth is through nonviolence, but Satyagraha is not just using the non violence, but continuously searching for the truth.

So, it is not only a way of opposing authority, but also of using love and morality to strengthen the society.

So, the violence can do harm to those against whom it is perpetrated and the one who is perpetrating. But, the non-violence, the value of truth in Gandhiji's scheme of political program can harm no one and ultimately lead to a more compassionate society full of love and ethical life.

So, Satyagraha opposes violence with nonviolence and therefore, it does not bring physical injury to others, but may involve self-suffering of the satyagrahi. We will discuss this relationship between satyagrahi and many critiques of this satyagrahi as a passive resistance as a tool for the cowardice and not for the valor. But for Gandhiji, Satyagraha is the supreme form of valor; that means, sacrificing oneself for a cause one believes in is perhaps more powerful than the one who kills others and does physical harms to others for the sake of one's ideals.

So, for Gandhiji the distinction he makes between brute force or the soul force. So, soul force is the force based on Satya or truth willing to sacrifice for truth and not harming others. So, for Gandhi Gandhiji's satyagrahi involves self-suffering and which requires discipline or building a character which is steady or stable and it is not the weapon or the techniques of the weak as many critiques argue and for Gandhiji's satyagrahi must practice the 4 virtues for a stable character.

So, first is the chastity which is brahmacharya, second is the truthfulness Satya, the third is justice or freedom from possessiveness or greed and the 4th and more significantly the fearlessness. So, these 4 ideals are absolutely necessary for the satyagrahi to commit himself or herself in a political struggle.

So, his insistence on nonviolence can be understood from his equal emphasis on means and ends. Gandhiji's means remained as important as the ends, but many political pragmatic thinkers were arguing for means does not matter as long as it leads to desirable. And so, they justify violence or other amoral. So, the many conception of politics is that politics has its own morality, which may demand something which is not governed by the ordinary morality or ethics. So, politics as it is on morality and that kind of argument.

Gandhiji question such argument or perspective on politics and for him politics is for the ethical life of the individual and the ethical life for him is the happy life. So, the happy life divide of ethics or politics is simply irreconcilable thought in Gandhiji Gandhiji (Refer Time: 44:53). And therefore, he thought of nonviolence as something which can which should focus both on the purity of means as well as and ends.

So, for him the ends are not enough to justify an action, but the adoption of just means is equal importance. So, desirable you needs a political freedom, but political freedom to achieve it in somehow using some unacceptable techniques like killing or physical harm or some other techniques of politics or revolt or assistance.

So, as so many people may argue that as long as we achieve political freedom we should not worry the means. So, the ends that we achieve will justify the means, but for Gandhiji, then satyagrahi or the nonviolence scheme of political program is you cannot achieve this desirable and of political freedom unless the means, that is applied is equally pure.

So, that purity comes in his belief in the invincibility of Satya or non violence methods and techniques and this becomes effective and as we have seen in the first slide itself. A kind of inspiration for many contemporary social and political movements and during his the second decades of twentieth century in U S A Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela in South Africa.

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- He considered non-violence as the supreme duty and argued that taking care of just means will inevitably lead to a just end; sooner or later.
- The *satyagrahi* works not for his personal interest but for the common interests of the society.
- Although he was very critical of violence, but if one has to choose between violence and cowardice, he favoured violence. Because, "though violence is not lawful, when it is offered in self-defence or for the defence of the defenseless, it is an act of bravery far better than cowardly submission. The latter befits neither man nor woman. Under violence, there are many stages and varieties of bravery. Every man must judge this for himself."

So, he considered non violence as the supreme duty and argued that taking care of the just means will inevitably lead to just end sooner or later. So, that is a firm belief in the factiveness or invincibility of the truth and if we hold on to the truth then sooner or later the desire end or can be achieved.

So, the satyagrahi works not for his personal interest, but for the common interest that is a kind of voluntary act for creating a society which is a more ethical more ideal not just for the individual, but also for the collective self. So, although he was very critical of violence here he here he make a distinction between a satyagrahi or a coward cowardice. So, he says that, if one has to choose between violence and cowardice. So, satyagrahi one of the trades of a satyagrahi is the fearlessness. So, he says that, if one has to choose between violence and cowardice he favoured violence and not the coward this is for.

So, this is kind of responds to the critique that satyagrahi is a not an act of weak or the cowardice people. It is a supreme force or strength available to anyone. So, he goes on to explain that though violence is not lawful when it is offered in self-defense or for the defense of the defenseless it is an act of bravery for better than cowardly submission. So, submission to the unjust or unjust policies and practices of authority is an act of cowardice. So, to resist against the such operation or repression Gandhiji preferred violence over the cowardice submission to such oppressive activities or the practices.

So, the later benefits neither man or women under violence, there are many stages and varieties of bravery every man must just this for himself.

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Sarvodaya

- Sarvodaya means upliftment or progress of all. Drawing insights from “Unto This Last” by John Ruskin, Gandhi coined the term in 1908.
- Gandhi argued, “Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed.” In the society that practices Sarvodaya, people should not lead themselves to limitless acquisition of wealth but follow the motto of a simple and dignified living.
- If anyone has excess in property, he should treat it as a trust and work as a trustee towards the welfare of the underprivileged.

So, here he is basically making the contrast between the satyagraha, as the force or as the strength in comparison to this idea of cowardice or the weak weapons of those who are helpless or weak in somewhere for Gandhiji satyagrahi is someone who is fearless and ready to sacrifice his life rather than killing others for the sake of his or her ideals and that is how he define satyagrahi which is very different from the many alleged critique.

Now, the next views on Gandhiji is sarvodaya. Sarvodaya means, upliftment or progress of all and this he develop from drawing insights into unto this last by John Ruskin. He coined the terms Sarvodaya in 1908. So, he thought political freedom or political regeneration is possible when the masses or everyone not just few are many, but everyone is empowered or uplifted and progress for all is in. So, so that second of philosophical insights of Gandhiji and certainly in Amartya Sen development as freedom. So, here Gandhiji for him the task of political freedom is not just to uplift a few or many or majority of the population, but every member of that community.

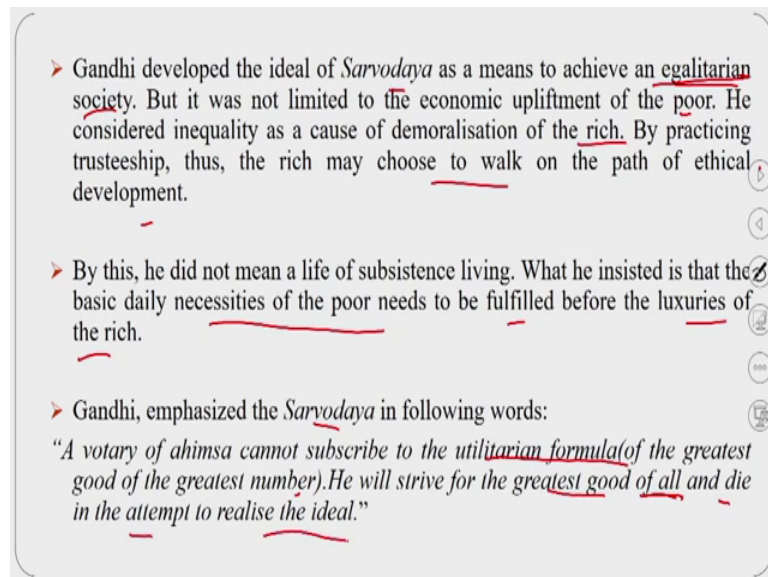
So, the sarvodaya is for everyone. So, Gandhi argued that earth provides enough to satisfy every man needs, but not every mans greed. So, his focus on ethical happy life is not possible only through physical or material material prosperity, but it has to health ethical or moral side of it.

So, sarvodaya Gandhiji rights that in the society that practices sarvodaya people should not lead themselves to limitless acquisition of wealth. But follow the motto of a simple

and dignified ethical moral living and he himself exemplifies some of these practices. His own life was a message to a simple and dignified life which is also a happy life also.

So, the happiness the way he defense is very different from the utilitarian understanding of happiness. So, and his idea of trusteeship those who acquire a lot of wealth and poses a lot of wealth this should consider themselves as a trustee of those who are not. So, privilege or notso, prosperous and they should help them in meeting their material or economical needs to create a more ethical society. So, if anyone has excess in property he should treat it as a trust and work as a trustee towards the welfare of the underprivileged or in other way everyone else.

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- Gandhi developed the ideal of *Sarvodaya* as a means to achieve an egalitarian society. But it was not limited to the economic upliftment of the poor. He considered inequality as a cause of demoralisation of the rich. By practicing trusteeship, thus, the rich may choose to walk on the path of ethical development.
- By this, he did not mean a life of subsistence living. What he insisted is that the basic daily necessities of the poor needs to be fulfilled before the luxuries of the rich.
- Gandhi, emphasized the *Sarvodaya* in following words:
"A votary of ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula(of the greatest good of the greatest number).He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realise the ideal."

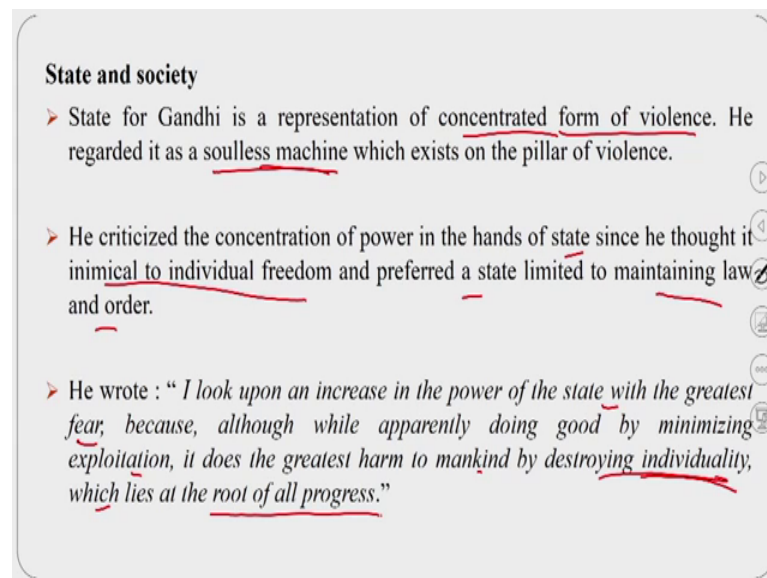
So, Gandhi developed the ideal of sarvodaya as a means to achieve an egalitarian. So, the tenets of socialism is also there, but it was not limited to the economic upliftment of the poor he considered inequality as a cause of demoralization of the rich also and by practicing trusteeship does the rich may choose to walk on the path of ethical development by this he did not mean a life of subsistence living what he insisted is that the basic daily necessities of the poor needs to be fulfilled before the luxuries of the rich.

So, in other words, Gandhi emphasized the sarvodaya. In this words, that a votary of ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula of the greatest good of the greatest number he will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize the ideal. So, the (Refer Time: 51:57) of upliftment or progress is not complete unless the

progress and upliftment of all and not few or many or the greatest number is achieved as argued in the utilitarian philosophy.

So, Gandhian ideal of swaraj remains a very powerful political or philosophical intervention in shaping many of the government practices and policy of post independent India. So now, if we discuss on Gandhiji's views on state and society.

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State and society

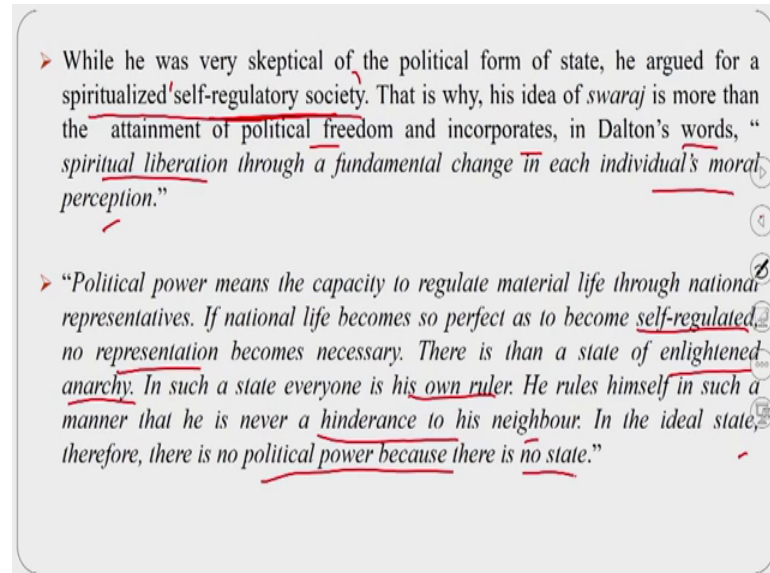
- State for Gandhi is a representation of concentrated form of violence. He regarded it as a soulless machine which exists on the pillar of violence.
- He criticized the concentration of power in the hands of state since he thought it inimical to individual freedom and preferred a state limited to maintaining law and order.
- He wrote : “ *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 root of all progress.*”

Gandhiji was very skeptical or critical of the powered or the violence that is accumulated Indian instrumental form of state or the political form of state divide of soul force. So, a state for Gandhiji is a representation of concentrated form of violence and he regarded it as a soulless machine which cruces which suppresses the individual autonomy or freedom to exercise his well or his convictions. So, he criticized the concentration of power in the hands of states since he thought it inimical to the individual freedom and preferred a sate limited to maintaining law and order.

So, minimalist state is what Gandhiji has argued and this comes as a kind of liberal strength in his in his thought and he wrote 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 the mankind by destroying individuality and individuality for Gandhiji is at the root of all progress. So, state and it is concentration of power in the state suppresses that individuality which is at the root of all human

progress. And therefore, Gandhiji was critical of a powerful instrumentalist state which accumulate a lot of violence or power of violence.

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So, while he was very skeptical of the political form of the state he argued for a spiritualized self-regulatory society. So, this comes with the self-regulation and the idea of *swaraj* is that is why more broader than merely a political freedom and that is why, his idea of *swaraj* is more than the attainment of political freedom and incorporates in Daltons world a spiritual liberation through a fundamental change in each individuals moral perception.

So, political power means, the capacity to regulate material life through national representatives if national life becomes. So, perfect as to become self-regulated no representation becomes necessary there is than a state of enlightened anarchy therefore, the Gandhi is also consider as an anarchist philosopher.

So, in such a state everyone his own ruler if one is governed by himself or herself. So, he rules himself in such a manner that is never a hindrance to his neighbour in the ideal state. Therefore, there is no political power because, there is no state Gandhiji conception of *swaraj* is so. So, broader which dismantle which makes the whole existence of a state un required or uncalled for self-regulation.

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- Rule by selfless individuals symbolizes the ideal state for Gandhi which comes out in his admiration of *Ramarajya*. In explaining the concept of *Ramarajya*, V.R.Mehta argues that it had political, economic and moral implications. Politically, it implied the removal of the control of British Army. Morally, it implied the absence of any armed force even the national Army. Economically, it meant freedom from both the British capitalists and their Indian counterparts.
- Gandhi was aware of the limitations in establishing the *Ramarajya* in the near future, so he argued for state that governs the least.
- Autonomous bodies of decentralized nature was the means for attaining such a state. Therefore, he was the ardent supporter of *Panchayati Raj* which is based on the idea of village republic.
- In this context, his glorification of villages and skepticism of urban life becomes very important because for him the villages represent a spontaneous cooperation while the urban spaces are the concentration of violence, coercion and exploitation.

So, rule by selfless individual symbolizes the ideal state for Gandhiji which comes out in his admiration for Ramarajya. And in explaining this, Ramrajya V R Mehta argued that it had both political economic and moral implication politically it implied the removal of the control of British army morally it implied the absence of any armed forces or brute forces even the national army and economically it mean freedom from both the British capitalist and their Indian counterparts.

So, Gandhian ideal of Ramraj is more than political it includes ethical and moral dimensions as well as well for the progress of each and all and not just few many and the greatest number. However, Gandhiji was very aware of the limitation in establishing the Ramarajya in near future. So, he argued for the state that governs the least and giving maximum power and autonomy to the individual to the village and from the bottom up rather than top down model of governance.

So, he argued for autonomous bodies of decentralized nature was the means of for attaining such a state. And therefore, he was the ardent supporter of Panchayati raj. So, Panchayati raj system that we have in constitution article 40 and also 73rd and 74th amendment act derive it is legitimacy from the Gandhian ideal of decentralized democracy or swaraj.

So, in this context his glorification of village and skepticism of urban lifes becomes very important because for him the village represents it is spontaneous cooperation while the

urban spaces are the concentration of violence coercion and exploitation. So, for Gandhiji India lives the soul of India lives in the villages and not in the urban spaces.

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- He emphasized on the importance of self-sustainability of villages. But he did not negate the need of integrity and cooperation among the villages.
- In a similar tune with Aurobindo, Gandhi holds that:
“In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever 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 centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of the villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circles of which they are integral units.”

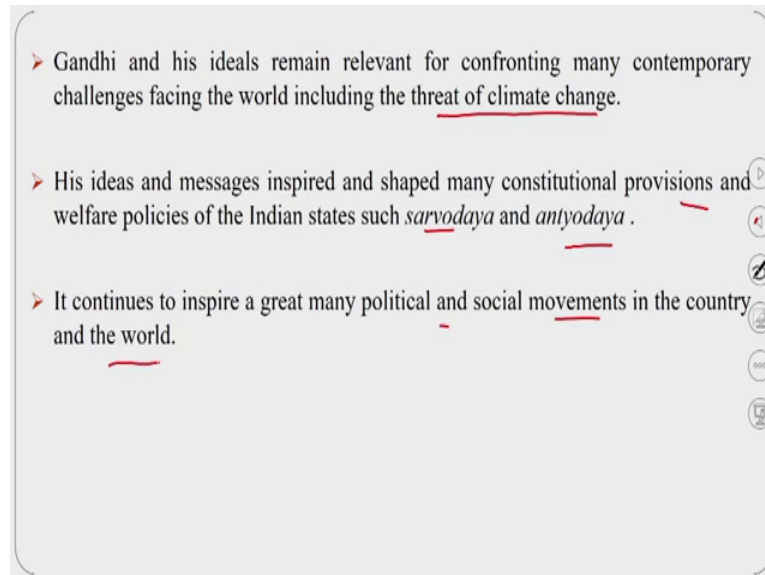
So, he emphasized on the importance of self-sustainability of the villages, but he did not negate the need of integrity and cooperation among the villages. So, this quotation in Gandhiji truly summarize his philosophy of individual community and the interrelationship between the 2 which is in tune with Aurobindos thought about individual and community as well.

So, the structure he is arguing about the Ramrajya are concentric circle. He said that the this structure composed of innumerable villages. There will be ever widening ever widening not vertical horizontal ever widening never ascending circles and life will not be a pyramid with apex sustained by the bottom, but it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the villages. The latter ready to perish for the circle of the villages till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble sharing the majesty of oceanic circles of which they are integral units.

So, he beautifully summarizes his philosophy of ethical moral life by this interconnection between individual and villages and villages with group of villages and group of villages again to the individual which becomes the integral part of this whole structure which is not supported by bottom and ruled by apex sitting at the top. But, something which is a

kind of ever widening oceanic circle based on the individual who is ever ready and humble and not arrogant in their approach and in their commitment or service to the other.

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Finally, if we come to summarize Gandhi and his ideals remain relevant for confronting many contemporary challenges facing the world, including the threat of climate change. So, nature has for everyone's need for not anyone's greed. So, that kind of philosophy help us in living in a sustainable wave with nature and natural resources also and his ideas and messages inspired and shaped many constitutional provisions and welfare policies of Indian states.

Such as many programs for sarvodaya and antyyodaya in post independent India and it continues to inspire a great many political and social movements in the country and the world such as many environmental movements like Narmada Bachao Andolan and similarly anti-corruption movements and many new ideals like Grama Sabha Mohalla Sabha and similar ideals or inspired by Gandhiji philosophy of philosophy of swaraj. So, on this lecture, you can refer to some of this books.

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Resources

1. *Gandhi: Hind Swaraj and other Writings* by Anthony J Parel, Cambridge University Press, 2010
2. *The Cambridge Companion to Gandhi*, edited by Judith M. Brown and Anthony Parel, Oxford University press, 2011
3. *Sources of Indian Traditions*, Vol.2, edited by Rachel Fell McDermott, Leonard A. Gordon, Ainslie T. Embree, Frances W. Pritchett and Dennis Dalton, Columbia University Press, 1988
4. *Political thought in modern India* by Thomas Pantham and K. L. Deutsch, Sage, 1986
5. *Makers of Modern India* by Ramchandra Guha, Penguin Books India, 2010
6. *Foundations of Indian political Thought* by V.R.Mehta, Manohar Publications, 2016

Like Gandhi Hind Swaraj and other writings by Anthony J Parel and also Cambridge, companion to Gandhi by Judith Brown and Anthony Parel and also from the sources of Indian tradition, there is a chapter on Gandhiji and his engagement and responses to Gandhiji ideas which you can see from these sources of tradition. And then other writings are political thought in modern India by Thomas Pantham and K L Deutsch, there are 2-3 chapters on Gandhiji and also from Ramchandra Guha makers of modern India and V R Mehta foundation of Indian political thought.

So, these are some of the sources which you can refer to understand some of the thoughts and ideas of Gandhiji which we have discuss in this lecture. So, thank you for listening and let us know what you think about this lecture. Express your opinion your queries and we will be happy to respond to it.

Thank you. Thank you for listening.