

GANDHI & JAINISM



SHUGAN C JAIN

G A N D H I
&
J A I N I S M

S H U G A N C J A I N



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Front Cover

Jain symbol: The raised hand means stop. The word in the center of the wheel is “Ahimsā”. Ahimsā means non-violence. Between these two, they remind us to stop for a minute and think twice before doing anything. This gives us a chance to scrutinize our activities to be sure that they will not hurt anyone by our words, thoughts, or actions. We are also not supposed to ask or encourage others to take part in any harmful activity. The wheel in the hand shows that if we are not careful and ignore these warnings and carry on violent activities, then just as the wheel goes round and round, we will go round and round through the cycles of birth and death.

CONTENTS

S. No	Item	Page No.
1	Preface	v
2	Abbreviations for reading material used	xxi
3	Chapter-I Sprouting the Roots (1869-1888)	3
4	Chapter-II Exploring routes (1888-1893) Preparation and beginning of an independent life	25
5	Chapter-III Selection of the route- <i>Satyagraha</i> (1893-1914)	41
6	Chapter-IV The Last Phase (1914-1948)	75
7	Chapter-V Roots and Routes – An Analysis	127
8	Appendix I: Jainism & Jain way of Life	227
9	Appendix II: Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta	271
10	Glossary of Hindi terms used	309
11	Select Bibliography	313

PREFACE

Gandhi is popularly known as *Bapu* and Father of the Nation (India). He accomplished the unique feat of freeing India from the mighty British Empire. He accomplished it with the use of soul-force but without the use of force, coercion or violence. He was able to arouse and mobilise the masses to join his *Satyagraha* or insistence for truth based on nonviolent resistance to liberate India from the British rule. This is very well summarised up in this popular song composed by poet Pradeep which is worded as ‘*Dedi hame azadi bina khadga bina dhal, Sabarmati ke sant tune kar diya kamal*’ (O! Saint from Sabarmati, You did wonder by giving us the freedom without the use of sword or the shield). How did he achieve such a feat? It stems from the basis of his philosophy and how he superimposed these spiritual values for social transformation which is the subject matter of this book?

Ever since Gandhi lived, he had been the subject of maximum research on his views, philosophy, and way of life. Recently all publications about Gandhi and by him were compiled on www.gandhiheritageportal.org and www.mkgandhi.org to enable their free access to all interested people globally. He claims himself as a Hindu and Hinduism as a confederation of all Indic religions. Having said that the question arises as to which member/s of Hindu confederation of religions had significant impact on his philosophy and how he used their impact on him to address the masses to bring them together to achieve liberation of India as well as his own objective of self-realization /seeing God face to face or attaining *Moksha*.

A number of Western academicians have tried to write about early influence and effects of Jainism on his philosophical interpretations and inferred that Jainism, as one of numerous

sources, was instrumental in his formulating the concepts, of *Ahimsa*, soul, God, Truth, fasting, celibacy, observance of vows and religious harmony. Their task, as well as of Indian academicians, became difficult perhaps due to the lack of English speaking Jain scholars and negligible availability of literature on Jainism in English. Vinoba Bhave did make an effort to motivate Jains to work together to compile a book like the *Gita* on Jainism. '*Saman Suttam*' was published by Sarva Seva Sangh Varanasi as a comprehensive compilation in four chapters of verses and stanzas extracted from Jain canonical and sacred literature. A number of Jains like Kumar Pal Desai, and a few PhD dissertations at University of Madras and Jain Vishwa Bharti did make attempts to analyze impact of Jainism and particularly of Rajchandra on Gandhi. In 2005, Professor Satish Sharma wrote an excellent book '*Gandhi's Teachers: Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta*' which was very helpful in this research.

Gandhi understood Jain principles very well, particularly those related to soul, *Ahimsa*, *Anekanta*, *Aparigraha*, fasting and *brahmacharya* primarily through his interactions with Rajchandra during 1881-1891 and many other sources in his childhood. He adopted these principles in his personal life as well as improvised them to apply in public life and for use by his followers. In this regard we may cite some examples of his own life such as his public declaration of taking the vow of *Brahmacharya* or taking the vow of *Kshetra-Sanyas* for one year during which he taught *The Gita* to *Ashramites* in Sabarmati *Ashram*. Similarly the statement given by him- 'I very much like this doctrine of the multiplicity of viewpoints / many-ness of reality' as it enabled me to judge a *Musalman* as well as a Christian from their viewpoints.' This Jain principle of *Anekantavada* played an important role in developing and implementing Gandhi's concept of religious harmony. Similarly

his acceptance of Rajchandra as his refuge in his moments of spiritual crises shows the impact of Jainism on him.

Gandhi must have interacted with several Jains. During our research, we came across notable Jains like Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, (described as friend, guide and benefactor by Gandhi), Raychandbhai, Virchand Gandhi and Ambalal Sarabhai etc. He acknowledged the role played by Dr. Mehta in advising to plan and start Salt Tax Removal and Hind Swaraj movements many years before Gandhi practised them. Dr. Mehta also supported him financially in setting up Phoenix and Sabarmati Ashrams and Gujarat Vidhyapeeth. Virchand Gandhi (lawyer and Jain philosopher) was involved in his establishing law practice after return from England. Rajchandra had profound impact on his life and was his refuge during moments of spiritual crisis. Similarly we find Sheth Ambalal Sarabhai, whom Gandhi opposed during Ahmedabad strike but admired Gandhi and later donated significantly when Gandhi started his movement to abolish untouchability (as other Hindu donors refused to support his movement financially); Ambalal's sister Anusuyabehn and daughter Mridula who were always there to support Gandhi's *Satyagraha*; Jain monks like Bechar Swami during his childhood and a regular visitor to Gandhi family and Mahasati Ujjawala during his month long sojourn in Birla House Bombay in 1944 indicate Jain impact on him. These are just a few names we have come across. Similarly we found many instances when Gandhi addressed Jains to become better Jains by practicing *Ahimsa* and *Aparigraha* as pronounced by Mahavira. Our research for other Jains was, however, constrained as most of the Jains in Western and Southern India do not write Jains as their surnames.

The variables identified for comparative analysis are primarily moral cum religious values which impact a person in his responses to the occurrences of an event, be it external i.e.

caused by others or internal i.e. self inflicted. The task gets complicated as almost all Indian religions believe in the doctrine of rebirth, soul, delusion and attachment as the causes of pain and sorrow. We will utilize the unique features of Jainism for these values and see their impact on Gandhi's thought first and then the events as they occurred in his journey from Mohan Das to Mahatma. Some unique features of Jainism are briefly mentioned below:

Definition of Sat: Reality / Truth is defined as an entity with origination-destruction and permanence i.e. with momentary/impermanent as well as permanent states of the same and as real / existent giving rise to the *Dvait* / duality of existents as reality.

Concept of God: God is Omnipresent-potent, the creator, benefactor and referred as *Sat-chit-ananda* in most of the Indian and theistic religions. In Jainism these are the attributes of independent pure soul residing in each living being but defiled due to karmic impurities. This implies Jains believe in infinite independent living beings, each with its own independent eternal soul and not just one God who is the source of all that exists. This leads to the Jain belief of self effort (*Shram*) through the activism of soul to achieve one's worldly and spiritual objectives even to attain the state of pure soul or unto Godhood. This implies spiritual or religious activism as well in Jainism asking us to develop an attitude of detachment (*Vitaragata*) from worldly objects and non-self thoughts. Another major aspect of ethics is the concept of i.e. confession or condemnation of wrong acts/thoughts (*Pratikraman*), and seeking punishment to rectify the wrongs (*prayashchitta*) and promising not to repeat them in future.

Doctrine of Karma: As you sow so shall you reap makes every living being responsible for their actions and the results thereof.

This makes *Ahimsa* or non-violence as the supreme religion or supreme spiritual value in Jainism and equating violence to sin.

Ethics: Right-Duty-Ought-Good cannot be separated i.e. one has to be vigilant / aware / awake / conscious of his acts keeping their righteousness and results in mind while performing any act. Based on this dictum, and the guiding principle known as *Moksha Marg* (Right faith-knowledge-conduct together leads to attainment of liberation /*Moksha*), Jain preceptors / *Acharyas* have laid down a regime of ethical practices based on the concept of minor vows (partial observation based on minimisation of violence) for lay persons with gradual upward movement and major vows for monks. For example for lay person, these consist of practices called as basic virtues, abstinences, six essential duties, vows and their enhancement with spiritual and worldly overtones for lay persons. For serious practitioners i.e. the monks, they made the same regime stricter and gave them the title of major vows. Jain ethics also stress the need for self improvement as the first and foremost goal rather than correcting others.

***Anekantavada* and *Syadvada*:** These are the two unique features of Jainism. *Anekantavada* (many-ness of reality as Gandhi put it) or doctrine of multiplicity of viewpoints is derived from the definition of *sat* by Jains. This doctrine accepts difficulty in knowing completely any entity as the states of its existent and permanent nature are changing continuously. So our knowledge is partial and perhaps biased by the knower's own limitations and objectives. It therefore requires us to value the views of others (opponents and with those with differing viewpoints) as well. The associated doctrine of *Syadvada* or conditional dialectic is the verbal expression of *Anekantavada*.

Gandhi always believed and practised Truth, *Ahimsa* and Self suffering himself. These were his biggest tools /weapons for self-realization. He then asked his followers to do the same to alleviate theirs as well as their fellow countrymen's suffering. It is interesting to see how he translated these three in his life.

- Truth metaphysically is God. God is the inner self without all tainted emotions. To practise truth in day to day life implies not to lie and say things as they are, neither less nor more without causing hurt/pain to anyone, including the speaker. As per logic, Truth is multifaceted (literally infinite) and the doctrine of *Anekantavada*/many-ness is very important to explore Truth.
- *Ahimsa* implies non-hurting/non-killing anyone, including you, the agent. Its practice in day to day life means nonviolence, love, equanimity, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, friendship, help, sharing and so on.
- Self-suffering implies developing an attitude of detachment (selflessness) and practically means to develop control on your sensual inclinations to limit your desires. In day to day interactions with others, it implies extending love to all and to perform *Tapa* / penance to cleanse your soul/thoughts. In Jainism, *tapa* involves series of fasts and control of palate.

Gandhi's objective in life was to see and experience God face to face by saying that God is our pure soul that is free from delusion and attachment/ sensual or worldly wants. On the social front, he saw God in every living being and hence made service of his countrymen to achieve freedom from bondage /pain and suffering as his life mission. This is in line with Jain doctrine of Living beings help each other. His famous recitation '*Vaishnava janto te ne kahiye je peed parai jane re*' or A godlike man is one, Who feels another's pain; Who shares another's sorrow, and pride does disdain; shows his sincere concern for the welfare of

the lowliest and all suffering human beings. This is the basis of compassion, one of the social applications of *Ahimsa* as expounded in Jainism.

Gandhi was brought up in an environment where all religions, be they various shades of Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, Christian, Zoroastrian were practised. He believed in religious harmony and validity of each religion to enable its practitioners to achieve peace and happiness. He claimed himself to be a Hindu but some religions have more impact on him than others, depending on his own beliefs, interactions with religious leaders and social experts, self-study and experiment to come to a conclusion. His prayer '*Raghupati Raghava Rajaram, patit pawan Sitaram; Ishwar Allah Tere naam, sabako sanmati de Bhagwan* i.e. God is supremely benevolent and is known by different names such as *Raghupati, Raghav, Ishwar, Allah*; may He bless everyone with true intellect' again shows his feeling for religious harmony and equanimity. He even said Hinduism is a confederation of all Indic religions like Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism primarily and accepted Abrahmic religions like Christianity and Islam originating in the deserts of Middle East even though these are foreign and separate from Hinduism.

A word about religions: All Indic religions believe in life after death, transmigration of soul, and karma doctrine etc. Each religions delve deeper in greater details some features and emphasize them more to give them a unique identity; for example in Jainism detachment, *Ahimsa* at the subtlest level, *Anekantavada*, celibacy, vows and fasting are emphasized most.

In this book, we have tried to give historical facts about the events in Gandhi's life based on his own works primarily. However, the second part of chapters I to IV and chapter V

completely have analysis where we have used secondary sources, research by other scholars and our own views also.

This book is divided in five chapters followed by two long appendices.

Chapter I: Sprouting of the Roots. This chapter analyzes the impact of the geography and demography of the place where he was born, his parents and experiences in the school. The geography and demography exhibits strong presence of Jainism in the peninsula of Porbandar in Kathiawad Gujarat where Gandhi was born. Jains particularly outnumbered Hindus in the *Modh-bania* community to which he belonged. His mother particularly was very religious displaying strong influences of Jainism; examples are fasting, his respect for even the minute form of living beings and *Ahimsa*, fasting and serving Jain monks like Becharji Swami and insistence on Gandhi to seek permission from Becharji Swami to go to England for studies. Some scholars, like Romain Ronald, even mentioned that his mother was a Jain even though Gandhi claims her to belong to Pranamik sect of Vaishnavas. Gandhi's father was an able administrator, religious, organising and attending religious pilgrimages as Porbandar was the gateway to *Chardham* (four abode) pilgrimage. Like his wife, he (Gandhi's father) was also an ardent practitioner of *Ahimsa* which is visible in his shedding tears on his sick bed reading the confession of stealing by Gandhi. Even others in the household, like his elder brother who was very affectionate and caring and the maid (Rambha) who taught the efficacy of repetitions of the name of God filled the domestic environment with religiosity. Similarly Jain values of *pratikraman* (confession and seek repentance/ punishment for the wrongs committed) and re-initiation after fall are visible all through his childhood where he experiments with bad habits but returns to the family and to spiritual values. Gandhi did not

subscribe to superstitions based religious practices. Gandhi was married in childhood. To become self reliant, he decided to go to England to experience life there as well as earn a legal diploma to make decent livelihood on return.

Chapter II: Strengthening of the Roots: Gandhi went to England in 1888 for three years to study law. There also, he experimented with British way of life but returned to his life to pass law examination and achieve his ultimate objective of self realization based on insistence of truth. Accordingly he adopted a simple lifestyle based on selfless effort to pass the examination and be admitted to the bar, continued dietetic experiments based on vegetarian diet by choice, celibacy, understanding other religions to get deeper insight. He returned to India after qualifying the examination and admittance to the bar to start practice. However his return to India was not a pleasant experience as he was declared outcast by his community for travelling overseas and his mother's death kept as a secret though with good intentions. Similarly his experiences to start legal practice was a non starter due to his insistence on not taking cases based on falsification or where he had to give commission to get the case. The last experience of meeting the British agent in Rajkot made him realize that he could not exist in dirty environment and stick to his spiritual values. He looked for the first opportunity and left for South Africa for a year's assignment. However his stay in India was extremely important as he had the opportunity to meet and spend lot of time observing and discussing philosophy with Rajchandra, a young Vaishnav Jain jeweller of the same age and family background and place as Gandhi. Gandhi started his company with Rajchandra as a friend but later Rajchandra became his spiritual guide and refuge. It was Rajchandra who had the greatest spiritual impact on Gandhi in his future years.

Chapter III: Selection of the Route: *Satyagraha*. Gandhi arrived in Natal Durban in May 1893. His journey by boat was a demanding experience to continue adhering to his dietetic habits and vow of celibacy. However his earlier travel to England had equipped him with tools to manage the journey better. His first week in Durban gave him the experience of extreme discrimination against Indians, who were brought there as indentured labourers supported by own experiences in train journey from Dublin to Pretoria. He decided to stay in South Africa and experiment his philosophy of truth, *Ahimsa* and dietetics to minimize the suffering of Indians as well as gain legal experience and earn money. He successfully completed the first legal case and kept the principle of *Ahimsa* and *Anekant* (Jain doctrine of multiplicity of viewpoints) in mind by bringing both warring Indian businessmen to arbitration and having an amicable resolution. While planning a return to India, he read about the new bill to restrict movement and trade of Indians. He was always vocal to print his ideas in press as well as writing to authorities for social injustice but restrained them for personal grievances. He decided to stay back in South Africa after the Indians, impressed by his success and commitment to uplift their cause, gave him a year's retainer also. He decided and told that he will offer his services for social cause free. He mobilised public support to organise them as an ongoing association, educate them about their rights and duties and resolved some of the problems like Balasundrama, abolition of 3 Pound tax being levied on ex indentured Indians, set up Natal Indian Education Association to teach children of Indians born in South Africa, love for their mother land by acquainting them with its culture.

He was in touch with religious leaders to gain insight to different religions as the Christians there tried their best to have him convert to Christianity. He was also in regular touch with Rajchandra on such matters as well. It was Rajchandra who

pacified him. Rajchandra's philosophy had deep impact on Gandhi as will be seen in most of his responses for personal and to even social issues from now onwards. Rajchandra died in 1901. After three years in South Africa, Gandhi went back to India where he met important leaders and newspapers to seek their support for his movement in South Africa. He returned to South Africa with his family to prepare for the Natal parliament session in January 1897. He developed the concept of *Satyagraha* for his ceaseless effort to get justice for his fellow Indians. He was equitable towards Indian in trying to have them get rid of their insanitary and unhygienic habits as well as to support British in Boer's war, Zulu rebellion and the plague.

He also read *Unto This Last* by Ruskin which became the basis of his philosophy of *Sarvodaya* and Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is within you*. These texts formed the basis of his setting up Phoenix *Ashrama* in Durban and Tolstoy Farm in Johannesburg respectively. Both Settlements were communities which had all shades of people regardless of their race and occupation. He developed a regime of vows to be practices by the dwellers of both *Ashramas* as well as participants of *Satyagraha*. He declared his life's mission as self realization or seeing God face to face. His lifestyle comprising *Ahimsa*, *Aparigraha*, truth, vows, fasting, celibacy and religious harmony are analyzed during his stay in South Africa, with particular reference to relevance to Jain practices. Jain doctrine of *Anekantvada* allowed Gandhi to conceive the ultimate reality pluralistically, in both personal theistic and impersonal *Advaitic* terms. He was thus able to exercise not only tolerance but empathy for the position of those with whom he disagreed.

After gaining acceptance of all his recommendations including abolition of need of permit to stay in South Africa by the government, he sailed for India on July 18th 1914. During his

stay in South Africa, he moved higher in his spiritual pursuits also by advancing from an ordinary/casual householder to a serious holder by strict adherence to the vows. He referred to *The Gita* several times in his autobiography. His interpretation of *The Gita* and the eleven vows will be discussed in Chapter V.

Chapter IV: Fruits of Satyagraha: Freedom to India and assassination of Gandhi 1914-1948. Immediately on arrival in India, Gandhi toured the country as an ordinary poor Indian to experience their plight. He set up Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad as his headquarter for *Satyagraha*. He kept the same eleven vows to be observed by inmates of the ashram. To demonstrate efficacy of *Satyagraha*, he participated successfully in three movements, namely Champaran struggle, Kheda dispute, and Mill-owners dispute in Ahmedabad. He became actively involved in Indian National Congress to gain political involvement in his movement. He opposed the British repressions and their Rowlatt Bill simultaneously supporting them in World War I also. He joined Muslims in their *Khilafat* movement to gain their involvement as well. He also involved untouchables in his movement as he wanted an all inclusive struggle to end the discrimination between upper caste and lower caste Hindus and present a united front against the British rulers. Afterwards he started several movement, termed them as *Satyagrahas*, such as Non Cooperation movement, Dandi March for abolition of salt tax, Civil disobedience, *Swadeshi*, *Swaraj* and finally Quit India movement. India became independent on August 15th, 1947. He was assassinated on January 30th 1948 by a hardcore Hindu.

All through his struggle, he became stronger in his philosophical ideals like observance of vows, dietetic habits, celibacy, equality, *Ahimsa* and truth. These are again analyzed with Jain perspective in this chapter. He published *Yerawada Mandir* as handbook of

eleven vows, taught *The Gita* and wrote a detailed translation cum interpretation of the same. These two items will be discussed in details in Chapter V to show Jain imprint on his philosophy.

Chapter V: Roots & Routes, An Analysis: Gandhi claimed himself to be Vaishnava Hindu and later an untouchable. He also talks of Rajchandra and his profound influence on his spirituality and religious inclinations. He talked of *The Gita* as his solace in times of difficulty. In this chapter, an analysis is made to show Jain influence on his interpretation/translation of *The Gita* and the eleven vows which form the basis of his ethics.

Two appendices are added to the five chapters. The first appendix is on Jainism and Jain way of life to make the reader more familiar with the same. Jainism is a little known religion even though it is one of the oldest Indian religious traditions and Jains today account for less than 0.4% of India's population. Jain community is by and large non-violent, religious, peace loving, highly educated, prosperous and socially conscious community of India. Appendix II details Rajchandra who was a Jain householder votary and spiritualist simultaneously. He had a tremendous impact on Gandhi. Gandhi personally interacted and observed him as well as kept in touch with him through a series of letters. The particular letter containing 27 questions which Gandhi asked him to develop clarity in his thinking and philosophy. Later on, we have added Gandhi's own thoughts on Rajchandra. It was also felt that these two separate appendices on Jainism and Rajchandra will help in avoiding repetition in different chapters and to keep the flow of reading smooth.

The research methodology for this book delves around the classic theories of personality which generally hold the perspective that most personality development occurs in

childhood, and that personality is stable by the end of adolescence. Further personality traits are like open systems that can be influenced by the environment at any age. This interactional model of development emphasizes the relationships between an individual and her/his environment throughout the life span. Large-scale longitudinal studies have demonstrated that the most active period of personality development appears to be between the ages of 20-40. Although change is less likely later in life, individuals retain the potential for change from infancy to old age. This pattern is influenced by genetic, environmental, transactional, and unpredictable random factors.

As per the Jain philosophy propagated by its tirthankaras, status of a person is determined not by the family in which one is born but by his/her actions. Jain history is full of non Jains, who understood Jain principles very well, practiced them and became exemplary Jain preceptors. Based on this, even though Gandhi might not have been born in a Jain family, yet his understanding Jain doctrine and practice of the same makes him an exemplary Jain.

I am greatly indebted to Late Shri Bhavarlal H. Jain, Chairman Gandhi Research Foundation, Jalgaon for his initiating the research on Gandhi and Jainism and part funding the same. The present book draws heavily on this research.

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As the author of this book, I take full responsibility for errors, omissions of references or acknowledgement which were unintentional. I have tried to express my gratitude and acknowledged the reference to the works of other scholars I have utilised. Still there is likelihood that I may have inadvertently missed in acknowledging some works. I seek forgiveness from them. Please let me know of any lapses in this regard. I invite comments from the readers and experts so that same can be analysed and used for updating the next edition of the book.

May 10th, 2017
Buddha Purnima

Shugan C Jain

ABBREVIATIONS FOR READING MATERIAL USED

- My. Ex.** – M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Navjivan Publishing House Ahmedabad
- My.Ex.1** – M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth* Fingerprint classic
- BPST** – Benudhar Pradhan, *The Socialist Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, GDK Publication, New Delhi, 1980
- CIP** – B.K. Lal, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, Motilal Banarasidas, New Delhi
- CWVG** – M. K. Gandhi, *The Collected works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1958-1994
- DGTM** – D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Publication Division, Government of India, New Delhi, 1961
- DKS** – *Dasavaikalika Sutra*
- DM** – *Dravyasangraha* by Nemi Chandra Sidhantacharya
- Gita** – Mahadev Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi*, Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 2010
- GSW** – Homer A. Jack, *The Gandhi Reader: A Source Book of His Life and Writings*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1956

- GTJ** – Satish Sharma; *Gandhi's Teachers: John Ruskin*, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, 2011
- GTR** – Satish Sharma, *Gandhi's Teacher's: Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta*, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, 2005
- HS** – M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*, ed. Anthony J. Parel, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997
- MGKR** – Govardhandas, Brahmachari, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji: Question Answered*, Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1989
- MGP** – H. S. L. Polak, *Mahatma Gandhi*, Odhams Press Limited, Long Acre, London, 1949
- MGRR** – Romain Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, Translated By Catherine D. Groth, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 2004
- PS** – Acharya Amrit Chandra, *Purushartha Siddhyupaya*
- RKS** – Samant Bhadra, *Ratna Karanda Shravakachar*, Hindi translation by S.Jain
- Satya** – M. K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1950
- TS** – *Tattvarthasutra*, English translation, *Jainism, key to reality* by Shugan Jain
- YI** – M. K. Gandhi, *Young India*
- YM** – *From the Yeravda Mandir* by M K Gandhi Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1935

CHAPTER – I
SPROUTING THE ROOTS
(1869-1888)



CHAPTER I

SPROUTING THE ROOTS (1869-1888)

‘The education of the child begins at its conception. The physical and mental states of the parents at the moment of conception are transmitted to the baby. During pregnancy, the baby continues to be affected by the mother’s desires, moods, temperament, as well as her lifestyle. After birth, the child imitates its parents, and for a considerable number of years entirely depends on them for its growth.’¹

The dominant view in the field of personality psychology today holds that most personality development occurs in childhood, and that an individual’s personality stabilises by the end of adolescence but continues to change in meaningful ways throughout life. Individual differences, disposition and behaviour appear early in life and impact traits like neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. This pattern is influenced by many factors including genetic, environmental, and transactional ones.

In this chapter, we will look at the impact of factors like geographical location, family, and education on Gandhi’s personality during the early part of his life (1869-1888).

Childhood Location, its geography and demography

Chandragupta Maurya (4th century BC)² conquered a number of earlier states to form what is now Gujarat. Gujarat was open both for trade and commerce as well as to religious currents and thought from many sources like Arabs, Persians, Muslims, Sindhis and their intermingling with local traditions like Hindus and Jains. Such people were welcome by the ruler as they all brought prosperity to the area.³ Kathiawad peninsula was the

abode of holy pilgrim places of both Hindus (*Chardham*) and Jains (Palitana and Mount Girnar).

Jainism had a strong foothold in Gujarat from pre-historic time as can be seen from the following occurrences of Jain spiritual leaders and important preceptors:

1st *Tirthankara* Adinath performed austerities and attained omniscience at Palitana (Kathiawad)

22nd *Tirthankara* Aristnemi of Mahabharat era, performed austerities and attained omniscience and liberation at Mount Girnar in Kathiawad

Leading preceptors like Dharsen (1st century BC), Devardhigani (6th century AD), Hari Bhadra (8th century AD),⁴ Hemchandra (12th century AD)⁵ and householder and spiritual mentor of Gandhi Rajchandra (19th century AD)⁶ hail from Gujarat in general and Kathiawad in particular. Further Hemchandra and Rajchandra are both from the *Modh Bania* community to which Gandhi belonged. They have greatly influenced religion in the region as a result of which the impact of Jainism is still visible today in the state.

Gandhi was born in Porbandar, a part of the Kathiawad peninsula of Gujarat, in a *Modh⁷ Bania Vaishnava* family. Porbandar was not only a gateway to religious pilgrimage but also a commercial port for traders. *Bania* is a community of merchants, bankers, money-lenders, traders and numerous commercial activities. *Modh-Bania*, a sub grouping of *Bania* community, comprises primarily Jains and Vaishnavas. The influence of Jainism in general in *Modh Baniyas* and outsiders who engaged in trade and commerce in this area was profound.⁸ *Bombay Gazetteer* of 1884 showed Jain *Baniyas* outnumbering Vaishanava *Baniyas* by a ratio of 3:2, both in Kathiawad (96,150-63,400) and in Gujarat (334,000-213,000) as a whole. *The Gazetteer* tells us that these two sections of the *Bania*

community are knit together by social ties. In North Gujarat, Kutch and Kathiawad, they even ate together and intermarried. The two traditions were so intermixed that one could not easily identify the differences between them unless carefully observed.

Thus Jainism was a dominant religion amongst the *Modh-bania* community in which Gandhi was born. Further the Vaishnavas were also open to develop their own hybrid spiritual values as can be seen by the existence of Vallabhacharya sect of his father's family (dominant amongst Hindu *baniyas*), which practised devotional philosophy, and the Pranami sect of his mother's family ("deriving the best of both the Quran and *The Gita*, in search of one goal - God.")⁹. Both these sects are home grown versions of Vaishnavism. Such hybrid sub groups continue to develop amongst Vaishnava *baniyas* even today like Dada Bhagwan.¹⁰

Thus the area where Gandhi was born and grew up was inhabited by people practising almost all Indic religions and Islam, even though Jainism and Vaishnavism were the dominant religions practised by *Modh-baniyas*. This multi-faith environment exposed him to their ways of life and their practices from his childhood itself.¹¹ This fact has been confirmed even by Gandhi himself¹².

Family Roots and Parents' Lifestyle

Gandhi was the youngest child of Karamchand (1822-1885) and his fourth wife, Putlibai (1839-1891). Karamchand had two daughters from his earlier marriages and three sons and a daughter from Putlibai. He was born on October 2, 1869. Karamchand, also known as Kaba Gandhi, and his grandfather, Uttamchand, served as chiefs (*Diwans*) of the states they lived in. They were known for upholding their moral values even when it caused personal hardship. His father served and excelled as Chief Minister of Porbandar State and *Diwan* of Rajkot and

Wakaner. He was kind and generous. Karamchand did not have any formal education. He learned from experience, by watching his father work and by attending religious ceremonies. There were some areas, however, in which he never gained much knowledge, such as geography and history. In spite of his success in his job, he did not accumulate much wealth. The money he brought in just covered the household expenses.

Karamchand managed all the facilities for travellers who embarked on the *Char Dham* (literally “four abodes”) pilgrimage in Porbandar, consisting of four locations considered sacred to Hindus. Gandhi’s family would always attend the religious sermons during these periods of pilgrimage. In Indian culture, it is considered a great fortune to be born into a devout family.

Gandhi’s mother was a deeply religious woman. Gandhi’s autobiography talks of her as belonging to Pranamik Vaishnav family, while some scholars tend to believe that she came from a Jain family. She regularly invited Jain monks such as Becharji Swami (a *Modh-Bania* converted to Jainism) to come to their home to receive meals and to deliver religious sermons despite the fact that the family worshipped the Hindu deities Krishna and Rama. She used to visit temples and observed series of fasts regularly. Even though all Indian religious traditions prescribe fasting, yet Jainism stresses it heavily as a path of spiritual purification, like fasting is observed on the 8th and 14th day of each lunar calendar month, longer fasts during *Chaturmas*¹³ (a typical four months long rainy season halts of Jain monks. It is also considered as a holy period during which frequent and fairly long fasts are kept and where religious sermons are given by Jain monks), refraining from eating even green vegetables on certain days of month. Her hybrid devotion was reflective of the Kathiawad area in general, where both Vaishnavas and Jains thrived together. Thus his mother’s observance of fasting and her

prayers for self-purification, as well as her commitment to religious vows as a method of self-discipline, left a lasting impression on Gandhi's tender, young mind.

So much so was Gandhi influenced by his parents that he even learned practical *Ahimsa* from them. The following two incidences quoted below exemplify and crystallise this point perfectly.

One day Gandhi saw an insect biting his mother's foot. He shouted and the mother asked him to keep quiet and with a slight jerk to her foot allowed the insect to go away. On seeing this, Gandhi asked his mother as to why she did not kill it. The mother replied, 'Son! It also has the right to live.'¹⁴

Gandhi made a clean confession of stealing in writing to his bedridden father. Gandhi did not dare to face his father and so peeped through the door to see his father's reaction. He summarised this incidence as, 'He (father) read it through and pearl drops trickled down his cheeks wetting the paper. For a moment he closed his eyes in thought and then tore up the note. He had sat up to read it. He again lay down. I also cried and could see my father's agony.....For me this was an object lesson in *Ahimsa* (nonviolence). This I could read in it nothing more than a father's love, but today I know that it was pure *Ahimsa*'.¹⁵

Gandhi's parents used to interact with Jain monks frequently on religious and mundane matters¹⁶. He was allowed to listen into his father's conversation with Jain monks. He also often accompanied his mother on social and religious events. He thus acquired knowledge of religion through discussions his parents had with other community members, saints and family members. Such discussions and his mother's religious practises, coupled with his family background, planted the seeds of *Ahimsa* (non-violence), Truth and *Anekantavada* (multiplicity of viewpoints) which grew in Gandhi's young

mind. He himself believed that the child acquires significant values and education from his parents during early years of its life.¹⁷

Schooling and Child Marriage

Gandhi was not born a genius and did not exhibit any extraordinary faculty in early life. He had no mystic visions or talents like those Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Shankar or Vivekanand are said to have. He was just an ordinary and shy child, the traits which continued with him for a long time. He said, 'I was coward; I used to be haunted by the fear of thieves, ghosts and serpents. I did not dare to stir out of doors at night. Darkness was a terror to me. It was almost impossible for me to sleep in the dark, as I would imagine ghosts coming from one direction, thieves from another and serpents from a third. I could not therefore bear to sleep without a light in the room.'¹⁸

Some of the key events and influences from his childhood, derived mostly from his work *An Autobiography - The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, are listed to understand Gandhi's growing value system and to be of use in our analysis later.

- Gandhi was influenced by the truthfulness of the hero of the play *Harishchandra* whose truthfulness he tried to emulate throughout his life, even under unfavourable situations.
- Gandhi also read with intense interest *Shravana Pitribhakti Natak*. This book coupled with a village *drama* (bioscope with pictorial slides) showing Shravana carrying his blind parents on two seats fitted on slings on his shoulders, on a pilgrimage. Such acts left an indelible impression on his mind about devotion to parents.
- Gandhi was an ordinary student in school with a Zoroastrian headmaster. Once a British school inspector came to examine the boys and set a spelling test. Mohandas made a

mistake which the class teacher noticed. The latter motioned to him to copy the correct spelling from his neighbour's slate. Mohandas refused to obey his teacher's illicit instructions for which he was later chided for what the teacher called his "stupidity".¹⁹

- “At school I was taught all sorts of things except religion. I may say that I failed to get from teachers what they could have easily given me without any effort on their part. And yet I kept on picking things here and there from my surroundings. The term religion I am using in the broadest sense, meaning thereby self-realization or knowledge of self”
- Even though physical exercises and cricket were compulsory for the upper standards, Gandhi did not participate in these due to his shyness and dislike. These dislikes were further strengthened by his reading books about the benefits of long walks in the open air, a habit he kept later on. Also escape from physical exercise and sports periods gave him time to nurse his father.²⁰
- Gandhi began to steal coppers from the servant's pocket money in order to purchase *Bidis* (Indian cigarettes) to smoke. After a few experiments with smoking, he realized that smoking is an unhealthy and harmful habit, besides compelling him to steal. So he quit it shortly afterwards.²¹
- He did not relish the visit to Haveli, the temple his mother frequented daily due to the glitter and pomp and several immoral practices rumoured to be associated with it. This implied that he was averse to religious rituals based on blind faith. Instead he relished reading and reciting the *Ramacharita-manasa* of Tulsidas as he founds charm in it that he missed in the *Mahabharata* and even in *Valmiki's Ramayana*. Similarly he learnt from Rambha, his nurse at home, the practice of ‘*Ramanama*’- the repetition of name of

God as a remedy against the fear of ghosts and spirits and used the same even at time of his death.²²

- Gandhi also once went to a brothel in the company of a friend and recalls that he was saved only by God's grace. He admits that although he did not commit any actual sin; but the carnal desire was there and hence moral lapse had occurred.
- Gandhi had two close friends. One of them forsook him which Gandhi considered as a tragedy. The other namely Sheikh Mehtab was originally his elder brother's friend. He ignored warnings from his mother, elder brother and his wife about Mehtab of being poor company and kept him as a friend. Mehtab convinced him that the British would rule India because they ate meat which gave them the necessary strength. So Gandhi, even coming from an orthodox vegetarian family background, decided to try eating meat for purely patriotic reasons. However, when he swallowed a piece of meat, he felt that a live goat was bleating inside him. He later stopped eating meat in order to avoid lying to his parents as well. He never went back again to it again.²³
- While he was still in high school, he got married at the age of thirteen to Kasturbai who was also of the same age. He learned about married life through loose pamphlets floating around which misled him to treat the wife arrogantly. However his interactions with the wife gave him lessons in treating his partner with dignity. Such interactions helped him later on to appreciate his wife. He also felt the impact of sex which he described with admirable candour in his autobiography.
- Gandhi was giving a massage to his bedridden father. He also nursed him as well. He prepared and administered *Ayurvedic* medicines to his father and remained there until he slept. Once, his uncle offered to relieve Gandhi which he accepted and went straight to the bedroom. Five minutes

later, the servant knocked at his door to tell him that his father was no more. Gandhi felt deeply ashamed and miserable. Gandhi wrote, 'if animal passion had not blinded me, I should have been spared the torture of separation from my father during his last moments.'

- At the age of nineteen he went to England to complete his study of Law at the University College London. The elders in his community were strongly opposed to his travels to England on religious grounds. However he needed his mother's permission and blessings. For this, his mother made him take and observe three abstinences (abstention from wine, meat and sexual relations with a woman) administered by Jain monk Becharji Swami.²⁴ Thus Gandhi pursued the aim of realizing his mission. After complying, he sailed for England from Bombay on September 9, 1888.

We shall now analyse these events in view of the impact of geography and demography of the place of his childhood, his family and education in the development of Gandhi's roots / values.

Analysis

Porbandar and Rajkot in Kathiawad peninsula provided Gandhi an opportunity to interact and learn from individuals of different religions. This was possible because of the coastal nature of Porbandar which had a constant inflow of Arab traders, Hindu and Jain pilgrims. Rajkot was the largest urban centre of Kathiawad. The Christian rulers of India, the Zoroastrian headmaster at school and friendship with people of different religions all indicate the existence of other religious influences in the area. Thus in Rajkot, he got an early grounding in toleration for all branches of Hinduism and sister religions.²⁵ Mahadev's notes on the English translation of *The Gita's* interpretation by Gandhi supports this fact:

Man's nature is determined by pre-natal conditions (including past actions and heredity) and post natal conditions including physical and cultural environment. Part of this make up is inevitable and cannot be suppressed, but quite a large part can be controlled. Man has to be strive by self-examination to find out the inevitable part and the amendable part, or, to use Epictetus' language, 'the things in his power' and 'the things not in his power'.²⁶

Modhbania community in Gujarat as a whole and Kathiawad in particular shows that Jainism was a prominent faith in the community.²⁷ Hybrid religious practices were common here even during and after Gandhi, like the sect of Dadabhagwana (see ref 10) with heavy influence of Jainism. Gandhi himself said:

"The area had heavy dominance of Jainism and Vaishnavas. Jainism was strong in Gujarat, and its influence was felt everywhere and on all occasions. The opposition to and abhorrence of meat-eating that existed in Gujarat among the Jains and Vaishnavas were to be seen nowhere else in India or outside [the nation] in such strength."²⁸

Although Gandhi grew up surrounded by so many religious influences, his own family was orthodox and he followed suit. As mentioned earlier, his father was a religious man devoted to his family, as well as an able administrator to have held the position of chief of the province. His mother was a very pious woman, always observing fasts for spiritual purification, practiced minutest form of *Ahimsa*; praying and consulting Jain monks. It seems that the Gandhi's family lived in a colony of Porbandar which was like a Jain quarter (similar to Green Park and Veer Nagar in Delhi or Jewish quarter in New York City) asserting greater Jain influence on inhabitants belonging to religious faiths other than the dominant one. Thus, even his family background of religious life was influenced by Jainism, as they practised *Ahimsa*, followed a vegetarian diet, the regime of

vows, and kept fasts. This fact is also supported by a number of world-renowned scholars' who inferred that Gandhi had strong imprints of Jainism.

'His parents were followers of Jain school of Hinduism, which regards *Ahimsa*, the doctrine of non-injury to any form of life, as one of its basic principles. This was the doctrine that Gandhi was to proclaim victoriously throughout the world. The Jains believe that the principle of love, not intelligence, is the road that leads to God.²⁹

You Gandhiji; you and your Jain ancestors, long ago, left their chanting, singing and telling of beads. He is there where the tiller tills the hard ground. He is with them in sun and shower, and his garments are dirty'.³⁰ Tagore

The influence of religious principles in the family can be seen even on the household help, Rambha. She taught Gandhi the benefit of chanting (use of Ramanama) to allay fear. Being the youngest child in the family, he got fatherly love from his elder brother as well. Similarly, he learnt the meaning of *Ahimsa* when his father absorbed the pain of Gandhi's theft and when his mother explained that we should respect all life-forms, even that of an insect. Gandhi's family were thus instrumental in predisposing him to traits or behaviours such as self-sacrifice, *Ahimsa*, fasting, serving, love and devotion, which were considered virtuous.

Jains are firm believers of activism of soul and karma doctrine (see Appendix I). His own earlier karmic imprints seem to be virtuous as he developed excellent skills of observation, experimented in different areas of his life but always returned to the values practised by his family through corrective actions.

His social interactions and attendance in school not only help him acquire formal education but also strengthened the family values that transformed them as his personal and social habits to interact with the external world. Some of these are: devotion to parents, importance of speaking the truth, ability to differentiate teachers³¹ and friends³² and treating wife as equal³³. He felt lack of teaching of religion in the school to help his quest for truth/self realization, and moral values as he had to learn the same elsewhere by experience.

However his family background, area he lived in, his spiritual power and results of past meritorious karmas made him quit all bad habits.

Thus Gandhi inherited three traits, namely; a successful negotiator and a good head for business; the art of public administration and familiarity with the problems of the state both from his father; and the spiritual practices with deep imprint of Jainism like *shram* (strenuous effort including fasting and self restraint) for self-realization, *Ahimsa* (nonviolence), *Anekanta* (non-absolutism), *Aparigraha* (non possession) from his mother primarily. He also learnt significance of the of three abstinences (not eating meat, not consuming alcohol and abstaining from sex with other women) essential in Jainism for a householder before leaving for England. (Appendices I for details)

More influential than is generally known, however, were the ideas and the living examples of the members of Jain faith whom Gandhi came to know as a boy and young man.³⁴ The seeds of *nivrtti* (i.e. abstaining from worldly pleasures to lead ascetic life) rather than *pravrtti* (engagement) and *shram*/self effort were sown in the fertile mind of young Gandhi which will come handy to him to complete his education in England and self-realization later.

These roots helped Gandhi later to develop the concept of “soul-force” and its dominant component *Ahimsa* or non-violence. With these developments and his quest for self-realization in all aspects; he went to England for higher studies. In later chapters we shall see how he used these for social uplift as well as his personal search for the Truth, which he called “God”. Although Gandhi’s inner strength and commitment to the cause of liberation, personal and social, that involved great suffering but he repeatedly found his quest/insistence (soul force) to persevere on his chosen mission.

This account of the place where he was born, family, childhood and education at school shows his excellent observation skills, spiritual values like self-effort, *Ahimsa*, truthfulness and courage to experiment based on interactions with the people he met and interacted at school, friends, and people at home. He learned from such interactions and came back to the family values he observed and inherited by performing repentance as seen from his self-denials and return to moral values and accepting beginner’s vows of Jainism from Jain monk before leaving for England for higher studies³⁵.

Conclusion

Gandhi was neither a born genius nor did he possess any remarkable skills during his childhood and adolescence. On the contrary, he was frail, ordinary, and shy. However, influence of Jain values inherited from his parents, his upbringing in Kathiawad and dominance of Jainism in *Modh Bania* community, as well as his own karmic imprints deeply ingrained in him the values of self-effort and self-sacrifice to achieve self-realisation, *Ahimsa*, efficacy of truth and vows. His personality development thus had the influence of these values. Such values, although latent, emerged throughout his life to provide a

foundation by which he could evaluate his actions and identify the corrective measures needed to adhere to a path of self-care and internal focus even amid great external strain.³⁶

Gandhi himself beautifully summarised his early life as, “One thing took deep root in me – the conviction that morality the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality. Truth became my sole objective. It began growing in magnitude every day and my definition of it also has been ever widening.”³⁷

Among the underpinnings mentioned, nothing is probably more important than the Jain influence identifiable in his mindset. He managed to graft several Jain concepts on to his own interpretation of Hinduism, so much so that no less a person than Tilak³⁸ once mentioned that he had always taken Gandhi to be a Jain.³⁹

Gandhi proved that inadequacies like his slight in stature and fragile and coming from a small town are not hindrances in self-realisation and can be overcome. Later this young boy grew to be hailed as *Mahatma* which signifies “Great Soul” and “Father of the Nation,” titles bestowed on him respectively by the great Bengal poet and educational reformer Rabindranath Tagore⁴⁰ and Indian independence leader Subhash Chandra Bose⁴¹.

Notes & References

¹ *My.Ex.1* page 189

² First emperor who unified India and renounced his empire to become a Jain monk

³ Gujarat was one of the main centres of the Indus Valley Civilization (oldest recorded civilization of India and perhaps of the world 3,500BC). The ancient history of Gujarat was clearly enriched by the commercial activities of its inhabitants with

historical evidence of trade and commerce ties with Egypt and Persian Gulf countries during the time period of 1000 to 750 BC. It is also the home of Lord Krishna with his capital in Dwarka and his cousin Aristnemi (22nd *Tirthankara of Jains*) who renounced the worldly life and attained liberation at Mount Girnar in Kathiawad peninsula.

⁴ Haribhadra (born Brahmin in 7th century AD) known for his harmonizing activities like reconciling the eight fold meditation of Patanjali with 14 stages of Spiritual purification of Jains and the *Shadadarshan-samuchchay* text. He did exemplary service in bringing religious harmony and eradicates Jainism of its overtly materialistic

⁵ Hemchandra (12th century AD born in Dhanduhuka 100 KM south west of Ahmedabad) of the *Modh* lineage became the advisor of Chalukya kings Siddharaj and then Kumarapal. He made Kumarapal declare Jainism as the state religion and built several temples. He did exemplary services to write Jain literature as well as lead Vaishnava prayers in temples. He is of the same caste lineage as Gandhi

⁶ Satish Sharma, *Gandhi's Teachers: RajchandraRavjibhai Mehta* (Ahmedabad: Gujarat Vidyapeeth, 2005), p. 51

⁷ *Modh* are the followers of Moḍheśvarī Mā (also known as Mātaṅgī Mā), a form of Pārvatī Mā with eighteen hands. They originally lived in a town called Moḍhera in Patan District in the northern part of Gujarat. The name of the town Moḍhera was adopted by the community living around the temple of Moḍheśvarī Mātā.

10th century onwards, the predominant community of Moḍhera consisted of the Brahmins and the Banias. The residents of Moḍhera migrated to other parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, Varanasi etc. states to towns such as Surat, Bular, Navsari, Mandvi, Bharuch, Ankaleshwar, Bardoli, Billimora, Chikhli, Gandevi, Dharampur, Bombay, and Varanasi etc. Hence, the descendants who originated from the township of Moḍhera whether they are Brahmins, Vanias, Kshatriyas or Harijans are all referred to as *Moḍhas*.

It is believed that the *Moḍhas* are further divided into Dasha and Visha like any other Gujarati nyat (community). The residents of

satellite townships of Moḍhera like Mandal, Adalaj, Gobha also prefix their town name like MandaliyaMoḍha, AdaljaMoḍha, GobhvaMoḍha. The residents who lived on right (dakshinbhag) of townships are called Dasha and those living on left flank (*Vāmabhāga*) are called Visha. While Dasha Moḍhas are essentially in business. A sub-sect of Visha Moḍhas is called as "GOWBHUA". Reference is made in Rāmāyaṇa that during fight between Viswamitra and Vashishta muni - On Order of Vashishta muni Sabala cow created an army from her arms to defend herself & *Ashram* of Vashishta muni and the descendents of these soldiers are also referred to as 'Gowbhuj'. Visha Moḍhas are in Land & Jewellery Business.

In the past century, many folks from the *Moḍha* community have migrated to countries such as East Africa, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, Fiji and the gulf countries. While most *Moḍhas* remained Śiva/Mātāupāsaka, some of them became Vaishnava Hindus and remaining Jains.

⁸ Margeret Chatterjee, *Gandhi and the Challenges of Religious Plurality* (New Delhi, Chicago:Promilla& Co Publishers, 2005), p.19. "Those who converted to Jainism, a *Sramana* tradition in which, in respecting all forms of all, could not for that reason, engage in agriculture, were all committed to a critique of caste and dislike brahmanical ways, those who engaged in trading tended to be attracted to Jainism, and Gandhi was of this community, Vaishyas."

⁹ Nagindas Sanghavi, *The Agony of Arrival: Gandhi, the South Africa years*; Rupa & Co Delhi 2006

Dada Bhagwan (November 7, 1908 – January 2, 1988), born Ambalal Muljibhai Patel was a spiritual leader and the founder of the AkramVignan movement was born in Tarsali, Gujarat India; and raised in the Gujarati village of Bhadran by Vaishnav parents Muljibhai and Javerba Patel. A.M. Patel credited his mother for instilling within him an early appreciation of the values of nonviolence, empathy, self-less generosity, and spiritual penance. He was also influenced by the writings of Shrimad Rajchandra (spiritual guru Mahatma Gandhi and a Jain). He married a local village girl named Hiraba and was a contractor by profession. He

claimed to have attained Self-realisation in June, 1958 at Surat railway station while sitting on a bench at platform number 3. However this was not revealed initially by him. After A.M. Patel's Self-realization experience, a close relative began to address him by the spiritual name of Dada (a Gujarati term for "Revered Grandfather") Bhagwan (Lord) became his spiritual name. DadaBhagwan formed a movement which he termed AkramVignan. Unlike the step-by-step purification according to Jain principles, AkramVignan promises instant salvation through the grace of Lord Simandhar Swami (Jain tirthnkara now present in MahaVideha region), for whom Dada Bhagwan serves as a medium. His movement is regarded to be a form of Jain-Vaishnava syncretism, a development analogous to the Mahayana in Buddhism.(Peter flugel)

¹¹ Ibid; in Rajkot, however, I got an early grounding in toleration for all branches of Hinduism and sister religions.”

¹² *My.Ex.* p. 31

Jain monks would also pay frequent visits to my father, and would even go out of the way to accept food from us non-Jains. They would have talks with my father on subjects religious and mundane.

¹³ Ibid,p.4

As far as my memory can go back, I do not remember her having ever missed the *Chaturmas*. She would take the hardest vows and keep them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them. To keep two or three consecutive fasts was nothing to her. Living on one meal a day during *Chaturmas* was a habit with her. Not content she would fast every alternate day during one *Chaturmas*....

¹⁴ Manorama , *Śāntidūta Gāndhī*(Government of India: Publications Division, 1997), p. 1

¹⁵ Ibid page 38

¹⁶ *My.Ex.* , op.cit., p.31

“Jain monks would pay frequent visits to my father, and would even go out of way to accept food from us-non Jains. They would have talks with my father on subjects religious and mundane.”

¹⁷ Ibid, p.188

“..the child learns in after what it does in its first five years, The education of the child begins with conception. The physical and mental states of the parents at the moment of conception are reproduced in the baby. Then during pregnancy it continues to be affected by the mother’s moods, desires, and temperaments, as also by her way of life. After birth the child imitates the parents, and for a considerable number of years entirely depends on them for its growth”

¹⁸ Ibid, page 33

¹⁹ Ibid, page 42

²⁰ Ibid, page 28

²¹ Ibid, page 39 “A clean confession, combined with a promise never to commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is a purest type of repentance”

²² M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 17-8-1934, p.213, cited in R. K. Prabhu & U. R. Rao, *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Mudranalaya, 1966, in soft copy), p.88

²³ Ibid, page 35-36

²⁴ a Jain monk coming from *Modh* community and spiritual advisor of Gandhi’s family

²⁵ Ibid, page 44

²⁶ *Gita*, p.187, verse III.33

²⁷ Gujarat population”, in *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, vol.9, part-1 (Printed at the Govt. Central Press, 1884), p.70; “Kathiawara population”, *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, vol.8, (Printed at the Govt. Central Press, 1884), p.147; also in Stephen N. Hay, “Jain Influences on Gandhi’s Early Thought”, in S. N. Ray, ed., *Gandhi India and The World* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1970), p.30 “By the twelfth century A.D. Jainism had become the dominant faith in the commercially oriented region of Gujarat. From the sixteenth century onwards, the bhakti movement of Vallabhacharya won many converts in Gujarat, but Jainism remained the prominent faith in the *Baniya* community. Thus, the very detailed *Bombay Gazetteer* of 1884 showed Jain *Baniyas* outnumbering Vaishnava ones by a ratio of three to two, both in Gujarat as a whole (334,000 to 213,000) and in Kathiawar (96,150 to 63,400). As of the 1880’s, the gazetteer tells us, these two

‘sections of the *Baniya* community are knit together by social ties and in north Gujarat, Kutch and Kathiawar they generally eat together and sometimes intermarry.’

²⁸ *My.Ex. op.cit.*, p.20

²⁹ *MGRR* p.3

³⁰ Dr. Ramesh S Betai, *Gita and Gandhi*(New Delhi:Gyan Publishing House, 2002), p.145

³¹ A good teacher cares for his students like the Sanskrit teacher who spent convincing and helping Gandhi; bad teacher who rebuked him for not lying during inspection; and headmaster, a disciplinarian and so on as shown in earlier part of the chapter.

³² To differentiate friends: Influence of bad company resulting in his eating meat due to the influence of his Muslim friend, smoking, stealing and visiting brothel etc as discusses earlier in the chapter.

³³ He got married at the tender age of thirteen, on which he reflects, ‘I learnt of married life from pamphlets going around. I tried to impose authority on her by putting restrictions on her movements which she did not agree. These made me realize that she also has equal rights. I was very fond of her which became a problem in my school studies. I also developed a feeling of guilt at the time of my father’s death due to my lust for her. I was truthful to her as she was to me.’ Later in his life, he did disagree with child marriage. Discussed earlier in the chapter.

³⁴ Stephen N. Hay, “Jain influences on early Gandhi thoughts”, in SN Ray,*Gandhi India and the world*,ed. (Philadelphia USA:Temple University Press, 1970),p. 30

³⁵ See Appendix I Jainism (Page 16 Conclusions)

³⁶ Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi* (Ahmadabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 2010), p.187

³⁷ *My.Ex.* pp 45

³⁸ Bal Gangadhar Tilak (23 July 1856 – 1 August 1920), was an Indian nationalist, teacher, social reformer, lawyer and an independence activist. He was the first leader of the Indian Independence Movement. The British colonial authorities called him "Father of the Indian unrest." He was also conferred with the title of "Lokmanya", which means "accepted by the people (as

their leader)".He was also a renowned Sanskrit scholar and interpreter of The Gita.

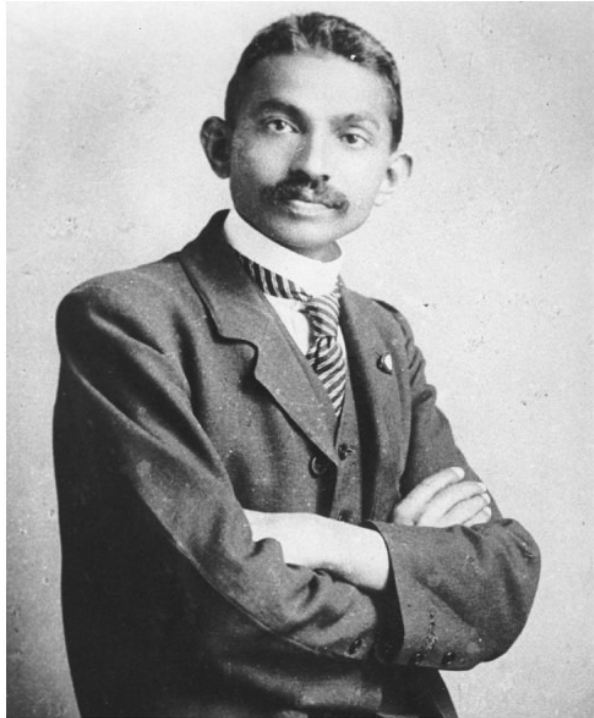
³⁹ Margeret Chatterjee, *Gandhi and the Challenges of ReligiousPlurality*, op.cit., p.33 ; and the quote by Tilak from ‘footage of a film covering his visit to and from England on the occasion of the 1931 Round Table Conference.’

⁴⁰ Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941), known as Gurudev was a Bengali polymath who reshaped Bengali literature and music, as well as Indian art with Contextual Modernism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Popular poem: *Gitanjali* , the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 Tagore's poetry was viewed as spiritual and mercurial.

⁴¹ Subhas Chandra Bose (23 January 1897 – 18 August 1945), was an Indian nationalist whose defiant patriotism made him a hero in India, but whose attempt during World War II to rid India of British rule with the help of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan left a troubled legacy. Bose had been a leader of the younger, radical, wing of the Indian National Congress in the late 1920s and 1930s, rising to become Congress President in 1938 and 1939. However, he was ousted from Congress leadership positions in 1939 following differences with Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress high command.

CHAPTER – II

EXPLORING ROUTES (1888 – 1893) PREPARATION AND BEGINING OF AN INDEPENDENT LIFE



CHAPTER II

EXPLORING ROUTES 1888- 1893 PREPARATION AND BEGINNING OF AN INDEPENDENT LIFE

At the age of nineteen, Gandhi relocated to England to complete his study of law at University College London. There he continued his experimentation to evaluate the values inherited in his childhood and prepare for life ahead. He completed his education there and returned to India to practice as a lawyer. His experience in India and meetings with Dr. Mehta on arrival, Virchand Gandhi¹ and Raychandbhai later gave him a deeper insight in his understanding of the life in general and the meaning and process of self-realization simultaneously.

Preparing for England

After passing high school in 1887, he went to Samal Das College in Bhavanagar primarily for reasons of economy and good quality of education. He found it tough to pursue the studies there due to high academic standard of the teachers. Mr Mavji Dave (aka Joshiji), a learned Brahmin and family adviser persuaded his family to send him to England for getting a Law degree so that he could prepare himself to succeed his father's *Gaddi (Diwanship)*, a position traditionally held by family. Gandhi got disappointments to undertake this mission from family on socio-religious grounds as well as from the British administrator of the state (Gandhi was advised first to get a BA degree) seeking financial support. Finally he managed finances with the help of his elder brother. Before leaving India his mother asked him to seek permission of her spiritual guide, Jain monk Becharji Swami.² Becharji Swami did bless Gandhi after administering the three vows of abstinence from wine, meat and sexual relations. Gandhi sailed from Bombay on 9th September 1888 for England with tight finances (family funds), three vows, little experience of life away from Porbandar and Rajkot.

Education in London (1888-91)

The experience on boat to England was the precursor of life ahead. His vows to be vegetarian and abstinence from alcohol

had started putting him in hard spot as he was told of almost impossibility of living in England without eating meat. His shyness rubbed salt to his pain. All such incidences made him a loner.³

Arrival in Southampton was also a nightmare. His wearing white flannels, he preserved for use in England, became an object of ridicule as well as his being turned away from the first hotel he went to stay.

The initial hotel where Gandhi stayed was not only expensive but the vegetarian food there inedible also. His meeting Dr. Pranjivan Mehta⁴ (a family acquaintance from India) gave him the first lessons of way of life in England as well as introduction to a friend to share room with and balance the budget etc.⁵ This friend was kind and caring and tried to change his eating habit but in vain (practice of *Ramanama* he learnt earlier came in handy to gather courage to resist). His house was in Richmond and he could hardly go to London even once a week. He stayed there for the first month.

Dr. Pranjivan Mehta then arranged another family guest house run by a widow in South Kensington. The land lady did suggest some vegetarian restaurants for which he used to walk a lot to find one suitable for food. On one such walk he found the book Salt's *Plea for Vegetarianism* displayed in the window of a vegetarian restaurant. He purchased the book and went straight to their dining room to have his first hearty meal in England. Prior to this, his own vegetarian practice was due to the promise he made to his mother, but Salt's text allowed him to formulate his own intellectual understanding such that he developed his own personal commitment to the diet. As a result, he began sharing his newly oriented perspective with others, advocating the nutrition, health, hygiene, and economic benefits to friends and colleagues. Later, Gandhi also came to understand vegetarianism as an essential aspect of spiritual purification and ultimate salvation. He read many more such books on dietetics to be better informed and convinced.

Gandhi spent the first few months and much of his money trying to become an 'Englishman'. He bought fashionable clothes, including a silk hat, and spent much time before a mirror arranging his tie and parting his hair. He took lessons in music, dancing, French, and elocution. In order to cultivate an ear for western music, he bought a violin and took lessons as well, but soon abandoned his efforts in this direction. He started keeping a diary and record every pence he spent before going to bed to exercise strict control on his budget. This habit gave him methods to cut down on wasteful expenses (like travel by bus, living with a family involved weekly bills, courtesy outings etc) and develop simpler life style for the better⁶. He tried out several lower-cost rooms, began cooking his meals at home and also started walking rather than using public transportation. He decided to focus his time and energy on the legal examination, the very objective for which he came to England. "If my character made a gentleman of me," he reported, "so much the better. Otherwise I should forego the ambition."⁷

Gandhi kept much of his Indian life secret, fearful that it might draw criticism. He told no one about his child marriage as children in England had to first complete their education before considering marriage. Only after one of his female friends tried to set him up on a date did he feel compelled to tell her that he was already a husband and father, a fact that both the women accepted graciously. From that time onward, he never hesitated to talk of his married status whenever necessary.⁸

During Gandhi's second year in England, two Theosophists brothers expressed interest in reading *The Song Celestial*, English translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* and invited Gandhi to read the book with them. He realized the beauty of the *Bhagavad Gita* for the first time. Later Gandhi also read Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*, Helena Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy*, Mrs. Besant's *How I Became a Theosophist*, and Thomas Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*. In addition to reading the Old and New Testament of the Bible, he also read other religious books and started exploring Theism, Hinduism, and other religions more seriously.⁹

In 1891, Gandhi passed his law examination and was called to the bar on 10th of June, and enrolled in the High Court on the 11th. On 12th he sailed for home.¹⁰ He had achieved the goal he had set out for, but also much more. Gandhi grew personally, spiritually, and intellectually during his stay in England. He learned useful lessons about British social and political customs, and the way of life of the English people, and gradually developed a deeper understanding of his own Indian heritage which he took with him back to India.

Return to India (1891-1893). Beginning of his life as a householder?

After the successful completion of his law degree, Gandhi returned to India in order to establish his legal practice. On arrival he was greeted by Dr Pranjivan Mehta whom he had met earlier in England. But his return was conflicting. He learned, only after his arrival in India, that his mother had died and that this news had been withheld from him. There was more trouble to confront because he had been already declared outcaste by a section of his *Modh-baniya* community of his origin for crossing the ocean. He did neither resist ex-communication nor did any retaliation to avoid any unnecessary storm. However a smaller section of community was of much help. His elder brother was generous and well connected. He tried to set up several appointments for him to take up their legal cases. He could not get any case due to his exorbitant fee expectations. He tried to impart education to his wife though unsuccessfully due to his lust coming on the way. However he had some success in teaching his four years old son. Expenses were mounting. Finally he decided to go to Bombay to practice law.

In Bombay, he had to first set up home without wife and training a Brahmin cook to run the household. He began study of Indian law on one hand and on the other conducted experiments in dietetics. In both these, Mr Virchand Gandhi¹¹, a friend joined him. Virchand Gandhi was studying for solicitor's examination and used to tell him all sorts of stories about barrister and *vakils*.¹² In spite of these challenges, Gandhi began practising

law at the High Court of Bombay. Unfortunately, he was not successful in legal practice because he refused to accept or defend cases in which there was some falsehood or impropriety or payment of commission. His inherited values conflicted with the status quo of the court system of the time.

Although his tenure as a lawyer was off to a rocky start, Gandhi's stay in India was fruitful for other reasons. He made many meaningful relationships during this time. Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, whom Gandhi had known in England, introduced him to Rajchandra¹³, a man only one year older than Gandhi. Rajchandra was the son-in-law of the brother of Dr Pranjivan Mehta, a Jain from Morvi. Rajchandra came from the same community and area as Gandhi. Rajchandra was known as *Kavi*, meaning "poet," and *Shatavadhani*, referring to the ability to remember a hundred things simultaneously. Rajchandra, a man of great character, having knowledge both of scriptures and business, was in search of his true Self. Gandhi interacted with him and closely observed his lifestyle. Besides observing Rajchandra, Gandhi also confronted him several times to learn the depth of his knowledge and commitment. Rajchandra remained a spiritual guide for Gandhi till Rajchandra's death in 1901. Gandhi always addressed him as Raychandbhai. A brief note on Raychandbhai is placed at Appendix II.

Another meaningful relation came through Parsee Dadabhai (whom Gandhi had already met once in England), founder of the Indian Nationalist Movement, sometimes called the "Uncrowned King of Bombay," as well as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, an Indian statesman credited with introducing educational reforms in India. Both men combined the highest wisdom and learning with the utmost simplicity and gentleness.¹⁴

Disappointed by his professional experience in Bombay, he returned to Rajkot and set up his office there in partnership of a friend of his brother. He started getting petty jobs of making applications for poor customers. His brother asked him to approach the British agent there with whom he had some acquaintance in England. He unwillingly approached the agent

and got strong rebuke by him to the extent of being thrown out of the office. This was a big lesson for Gandhi to not abuse acquaintance for favour. He resolved:

‘Never again shall I place myself in such a false position, never again shall I try to exploit friendship in this way, and since then I have never been guilty of a breach of that determination. This shock changed the course of my life’¹⁵.

In the mean time his brother’s acquaintance, a Meman firm from Porbandar (Dada Abdullah and Company) offered Gandhi a job in South Africa for one year so that he might assist in bringing a drawn-out legal case to completion. Without hesitation or haggling for a higher fee, Gandhi accepted the offer and sailed for South Africa.

Analysis

One wonders as to why a shy, fearful small town boy from a middle class religious family; who had been rarely away from his home town suddenly deciding to go to England for higher studies. Was it his urge to explore new world or move forward to achieve life mission¹⁶ or his friendship with Sheikh Mahtab to experience how one becomes stronger (British were stronger because they ate meat) or his desire to occupy his father’s position as chief minister /*Diwan* of Porbandar. Whatever the reason, his urge to go to England was so strong that he overcame all hurdles like fear of being outcast by his community, mother’s insistence to accept observance of three strict vows and finally being turned down by the British administrator Mr Lely for financial support. Perhaps it was a mix of all these as indicated by Gandhi himself later:

I was fond of novel experiences. I loved to see fresh fields and pastures new. It is disgusting to have to give commission to those who brought me work. The atmosphere in Saurashtra was choking to me.¹⁷

We now analyze some personality development factors showing his growing up / maturing during his stay in England and return to India.

Strengthen the roots: His stay in England was full of hardships due to his adherence to his roots and values. He faced hostilities from the moment he boarded the ship to England. He had serious problems in finding vegetarian food on the ship, ignorance of using knife and spoons to eat and above all his shyness. Such traits forced him to be alone on deck till Mr. Majumdar came to help. On arrival in England, he faced embarrassment of being turned away by the first hotel due to his dress, high cost and non availability of suitable food at the hotel he went. Such experiences might have forced someone else either to change or go back home.

Dr. Pranjivan Mehta¹⁸ appeared as a saviour to him. He helped Gandhi to get adjusted while adhering to his values. Gandhi kept on finding a suitable and economical place to stay, experimented with food at different places and finally cooking at home, walking instead of using public transport etc. He kept a diary and recorded each and every expense, no matter how small, so that he could cut the wasteful expenses. All such experiments through self adjustment or self restraint /suffering adhere to family values of simple and economic life style and vegetarian diet show his firm belief in their efficacy to achieve his mission. In England, he established the efficacy of values inherited in hostile situations. Earlier in India, he practised such values out of faith but now he did so by choice and became their proponent.

Becoming one with the environment in which one exists i.e. belief in co-existence: Gandhi experimented with English dresses, music, dancing, elocution etc to be one of them as he felt their essentiality in learning their way of life and legal system and education. Narayan Hemchandra, whom he met, made a profound impact on him by his own life style and irrelevance of local customs to achieve one's mission. He said, "You civilized fellows are all cowards. Great men never look at a person's exterior. They think of his heart"¹⁹ He decided to focus his time and energy on the legal examination, the very objective for which he came to England.

“If my character made a gentleman of me,” he reported, “so much the better. Otherwise I should forego the ambition.”²⁰

He thus selected a simple economic life style commensurate with vows and tight budget to complete his education.

Staying in the religion in which one is born: He studied The *Gita* for the first time in England with his British friends. Similarly he studied Old and New Testaments and other books by prominent authors of the day. He did some comparisons of verses in The *Gita* and The Sermon on the Mount to find commonality treating the evil/violence. Beyond this he did not go further due to paucity of time and prepare for his examinations.

Adherence to the institution of vows: He became an enthusiastic promoter of the beauty of these vows as a lifestyle and their essentiality for self realization. He took the three vows of abstinences from meat, wine and women before departure. He practised these accordingly but experimented with life style changes, searching for alternatives, conscious self suffering like starving, feeling shame and getting reprimand etc.

Vegetarianism: His persistent refusals with people like Majumdar on board the ship, friend in Richmond with whom he shared the room and then long walks to get food in a vegetarian restaurant show his resolve to adhere to the vows that were administered to him prior to leaving for England. His friends tried hard to convince him to take meat in England as he had taken it in India already where it was not necessary. However such arguments did not deter him to adhere to the vow. He bought Salt's book and read it thoroughly. Reading books like *The Ethics of Diet* by Howard Williams, he found that all philosophers from Pythagoras to Jesus Christ down to those of present time were vegetarian; Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford's book *The Perfect Way in Diet* and Dr. Allison's treatments based on vegetarian diet all made the dietetic experiments an important activity of his life.²¹ He was coaxed by his friends to take eggs as they were not meat but the definition of vegetarian by his mother who administered the vow prevailed and he did not take eggs as

well.²² Finally for economic considerations as well as to observe his vow stringently, he started cooking at home. All these developments show his strong commitment to the vow of neither eating meat nor taking wine. Indeed he spent lot of time and effort to stay vegetarian and ultimately became its greatest proponent by becoming an active member of Vegetarian Society.

Celibacy: The English custom involved students to be unmarried. The students were allowed freely to intermix with girls socially and have conversations, food, walk etc together. He used to feel a loner due to his shyness and hesitated to go on date. The old widow who helped him in the French restaurant in Brighton find vegetarian dishes invited her at her London home. They became friends and had Sunday lunches together. This lady tried to arrange dates for Gandhi, like a well wisher, so that Gandhi can find some suitable partner. Feeling such ambitions of the lady, he told the old lady that he is already married and has a son. They both laughed and continued to be friends. Such incidences demonstrate his strong will to honour the vow of no sexual relations with other women. As he observed them, he also educated himself about their efficacy to make these life style practices by choice. So Gandhi adhered to the family values and the vows he was administered as a prerequisite for permission to go to England and achieved his mission.

Emerging personality of Gandhi: Return to India was a different experience. Gandhi was shaken to know of the death of his mother while he was in England. Similarly the community declared him as an outcast. Costs of settling him down according to English tradition by his brother were mounting and the need of bribing to get cases for legal practice made him uneasy as these did not match with his values practised so far. So he decided to locate himself to Bombay for better professional opportunities. However things did not go the way he desired in Bombay either. His experience of making a compromise with his values by approaching the British agent in Rajkot for favour, giving commission to agents who brought him business, superstitions and his experiences in England thereof

strengthened his conviction of the efficacy of the vows and value of truthfulness.

Perhaps his life mission of adhering to the value system he cherished so far and move on brought him in contact with people like Dr. Pranjivan Mehta who kept on guiding him and later created an urge in him for Hind *Swaraj*; Virchand Gandhi in dietary experiments and legal profession; Gokhale for educational and social reforms; and above all Rajchandra for spirituality and way of life. Rajchandra was almost his age, came from his town and community developed living contacts and admired most. All these people led simple life while pursuing their professions.

A word about Rajchandra: Gandhi spent a lot of time observing and interacting with Rajchandra (Appendix II) whom he called as Raychandbhai. Raychandbhai was a jeweller who was more spiritually inclined but was a successful jeweller and family man as well. He practiced spiritually and gave it the highest place in his life. Gandhi started considering him as a friend which soon changed to being a spiritual mentor. Gandhi himself said:

‘I found his talks of absorbing interest... His words went straight home to me. His intellect compelled as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness... In my moments of spiritual crisis, therefore he was my refuge’.²³

Accordingly he chose the first opportunity to leave India and go to South Africa for earning a livelihood and pursue his life mission. He continued his interactions with Rajchandra from South Africa through a series of letters to seek insight in spiritual and way of life matters.

Conclusion

Gandhi respected the vows taken before leaving for England. However he experimented, gained more knowledge and enforced his convictions based on experience and logic rather than blind faith in the vows. He was a great practitioner of truth and did so even at the cost of loosing professional opportunities and earned

reprimand simultaneously. Thus he practised even self mortification/sacrifice (by cutting down his expenses by cooking and walking for long distance to save money and later discovered as beneficial for his health also) rather than be allured by worldly gains to achieve his immediate (qualify as a lawyer and then make money) and long term objectives (self realization and search for truth). Similarly he became acquainted with all religions by reading *The Gita*, *The Bible* and other Christian books. He enjoyed company of virtuous people and detested in supporting wrong practices like misrepresentation in legal cases, bribing to get the legal cases etc.

Rajchandra particularly strengthened his roots to select the route of leading a life of self realization based on *Ahimsa*, vegetarianism, celibacy and self sacrifice rather than become a part of the prevailing system. Gradually he became a mentor for Gandhi's religious beliefs and setting self realization (*Atmadarshan* or experience God face to face) as the driving force of his life. Rajchandra was definitely the person whose way of life impacted Gandhi so much that he made Rajchandra's (or Jain) way of life as his own. He credits Raychandbhai for his learning of spirituality and way of life as seen from the following statement by Gandhi himself:

“I believe in the Hindu theory of Guru and his importance in spiritual realization. I think there is great deal of truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without Guru. An imperfect teacher may be tolerable in mundane matters, but not in spiritual matters. ... Though I could not place Raychandbhai on the throne of my heart as a Guru, we shall see how on many occasions, was my guide and helper later. Three moderns have left a deep impression on my life and captivated me. Raychandbhai by his living contact, Tolstoy by his book *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, and Ruskin by his book *Unto This Last*. But more of these later.”²⁴

Notes and References

- ¹ Stephen N. Hay, *Gandhi India and the world*, Univ of California, p. 32: Virchand was one of the few Jains of his generation to receive a Western style education, he had graduated in 1884 from Bombay's front-ranking Elphinstone College. Soon after he was made the secretary of newly formed Jain Association of India and took up the study of law. By the time Gandhi met him, Virchand had successfully represented the Jain community in legal disputes in Kathiawad and Bengal. Gandhi invited Virchand to share his experimental vegetarian meals, and Virchand reciprocated by telling Gandhi unnerving stories about the difficulties of making a go of the law in Bombay, and teaching him the principles of truth-finding embedded in the British Indian law of evidences". By the time Gandhi left for South Africa in 1893, Virchand found himself as the official representative of the Jain-faith at the first parliament of World religions at Chicago along with Vivekanand for Hinduism, He won enough admirers in USA and stayed there for two year even organizing his followers to the short lived Gandhi Philosophical Association. Perhaps Jain logic with *Anekantavada* was impressed on Gandhi by Virchand.
- ² *My.Ex.* p.39 Becharji Swami was originally a *Modha Bania*, but had now become a Jain monk. He was a spiritual advisor of Gandhi's family.
- ³ *My.Ex.* 1 pp 52-54
- ⁴ S.R.Mehrotra, *The Mahatma & The Doctor*, Vakils, Feffer & Simons. Dr Pranjivan Mehta 1864-1932 Pillar of support to Gandhi, first at Rajkot college, then England settlement, return to India, stay in England during 1909 at Hotel West minister, guide to plan Swaraj (Gandhi dedicated his book Hind Swaraj to him), offered money for his ashram and to set up Gujarat Vidhyapeeth . He came from a prosperous Jain family in Morvi Gujarat. Rajchandra was his younger brother's son in law.
- ⁵ *My.Ex.I*, pp 53-54. Dr Mehta (I was given an introduction letter to him in India), to whom I had wired from Southampton, called. He invited me to his home in the evening. I got my first lesson in mannerism in England from him (like not calling Sir, not touching anything, not asking questions in the first meeting, not talking

loudly and high cost of living in a hotel). He introduced me to a friend to share room in a family guest house.”

⁶ *My.Ex.1* page 63. “Let not the reader think that this living made my life by any means a dreary affair. On the contrary the change harmonized my inward and outward life. It was also more in keeping with the means of my family. My life was certainly more truthful and my soul knew no bounds of joy”

⁷ *My.Ex.1*, p.48

⁸ *My.Ex.*, pp.59-62

⁹ *My.Ex.*, pp.62-65

¹⁰ *My.Ex.*, p.75

¹¹ Virchand Gandhi was like Rajchandra, a *Modha bania* and Jain. He also went to England for study of law and developed greater inclination for Jainism. He became preacher / promoter of Jainism and spoke at The parliament of World Religions on Jainism where Swami Vivekanand spoke on Hinduism.

¹² *My.Ex.1* page 94

¹³ Appendix II for details on Rajchandra

¹⁴ M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, as quoted from Romain Rolland, *MGRR*, translated by Catherine D. Groth (Government of India: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2004), p.5

These two men, precursors, have suffered from the ingratitude and forgetfulness of younger generations. Their political ideal having been surpassed, their efforts in paving the way have been deprecated. Gandhi, however, always realized their contribution to the cause and remained true to them, particularly to Gokhale, for whom he felt a deep and almost religious affection. He frequently speaks of Gokhale and Dadabhai as men whom young India should venerate.

¹⁵ *My.Ex.1*. pp 99-100

¹⁶ *My.Ex.1*. pp 13“Self realization- seeing God face to face to attain *Moksha*”

¹⁷ *Satya* page 38

¹⁸ A Jain from the prosperous Jain family from Morvi and an acquaintance of Gandhi’s family

¹⁹ *My.Ex.* p 80

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- ²⁰ *My.Ex.1*, p.48,
²¹ *My.Ex.1* p 58
²² *My.Ex.1*. pp 65
²³ *My.Ex.*, p. 113, cited in Stephen N. Hay, op. cit., p. 31:
²⁴ *My.Ex.1*. pp 90

CHAPTER – III

SELECTION OF THE ROUTE - *SATYAGRAHA* (1893 – 1914)



CHAPTER III

CHOOSING THE ROUTE - *SATYAGRAHA* (1893-1914)

The world rests on the bedrock of *satya* or truth. *Asatya* meaning untruth also means non-existent and *satya* means 'that which is'. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of question. And truth being 'that which is', can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of *Satyagraha* in a nutshell.¹

The humiliation Gandhi faced at the office of the political agent with whom he had small acquaintance in England coupled with his observations of the intricacies of doing business firmed his mind to find a job beyond Rajkot. So he accepted the opportunity offered by Meman firm of Porbandar to go to South Africa for a year.

Now Gandhi was better equipped for travel due to his visit to England earlier. So he managed the boat journey better, like insisting agent for a first class berth on the boat and the captain to share his cabin instead of staying on the deck and outing with him at intermediate halt in Zanzibar to visit a brothel that he regretted though.²

Towards the end of May 1893, he arrived in Durban/ Port Natal. His first week in Durban gave him the first taste of prevalent deepest levels of discrimination against Indians. Natal had a relatively large Indian population. Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsees were engaged primarily in agriculture and coal mines as labourers (indentured (*girmitiya*) and free), in hotels as waiters and in trade as owners and clerks. Indians were further divided as Tamil, Telugu and North Indians. They were called 'coolies', '*sammies*' as per their job and place of origin in India.³

His employer, Abdulla Sheth helped him adjust and took him to meet different people including the district magistrate who asked Gandhi to take off his Bengali hat in the court. This was his first taste of insult. Abdulla Sheth explained to him the prevailing practices and requested him to observe accordingly to carry out the mission he has come for. He sent a paper to the local newspaper about this incidence to arouse interest of Indians. Unfortunately, the opposite happened and the press responded by describing Gandhi as an “unwelcome visitor”.⁴ Gandhi perceived this negative sentiment positively, saying that “the incident gave me an unexpected advertisement in South Africa within a few days of my arrival there. . . My turban stayed with me practically until the end of my stay in South Africa.”⁵ He used this art of writing and venting his displeasure publicly all through successfully. Gandhi used his stay in Durban to learn about Indians and also the book keeping (accounting) from Christian clerks there so that he was better equipped to do the job he came for.

Gandhi was required to go to Pretoria to help present the legal case in the courts there. Abdulla Sheth made all the arrangements. However his journey from Durban was full of hardship as he was first thrown out of first class compartment at Martizburg where he spent the night shivering and freezing at the station; then taking the train to Charlestown in first class (after writing to the Station master) and finally taking the coach from Charlestown to Johannesburg⁶ in which he was required to sit at the driver’s seat or at the footboard even though he had the ticket to travel in the coach itself. He travelled first class from Johannesburg to Pretoria due to the acceptance by the only white co-passenger travelling in spite of the ticket checker insisting that he move to third class. By now Gandhi was debating whether to go back to India or pocket these insults and complete

the assignment he came for? He decided to stay back considering the hardships as superficial.

Throughout the journey, Gandhi always made written complaints about his troubles to the respective authority and got some relief. At each halt during the journey, Indian acquaintances of Abdulla Sheth were there to meet him and share their similar gory experiences. His first day in Pretoria also had shocks for him as no one came to meet him and he had to make alternate arrangement himself. Even first meeting with attorney, Mr. Baker, was disappointing as he told Gandhi that he would just collect data to assist another English lawyer hired.

Gandhi's personal experience of violence thus took place against the backdrop of systemic discrimination throughout South Africa. He learned about "Transvaal Grondwet," (or the constitution 1862, Fundamental Law), that stated that no equality, either in the Church or State, could exist between white and coloured people.

Through Sheth Tyabji, he started making contacts with Indians. He had his first public meeting with Indians and tried to organize an association to get some of their problems resolved. There was some success. This offered him an excellent opportunity to know about the living conditions of Indians and their plight. He did try successfully to get some facilities for them, like facility to travel first and second class provided they were dressed properly.⁷ Thus he used his time to make a deep study of social economic and political conditions of Indians in Transvaal and The Orange Free State also but concentrated on his legal work for his client.

He worked hard to collect data to work on the case for Abdulla Sheth as he had no knowledge of book keeping earlier. He did it not only for Abdulla Sheth but of his opponent in the case Tyabji

Sheth. Both were Indian, friends, well established and from the same place in India. His deep study of the case indicated that Abdulla will win as Truth was on his side and Tyabji will incur a huge loss from defeat. So he tried successfully to bring both for arbitration to close the case and have Tyabji pay the fines in friendly instalments over a long period. He was overjoyed and said that the true job of a lawyer was to unite fighting parties riven asunder.⁸ This became a large part of his legal practice of twenty years to bring the fighting parties together.

Simultaneously he was also deeply involved in firming up his religious leanings. His stay involved frequent meetings with more Christians referred by Mr Baker on social and religious matters. They tried hard to convert him to Christianity.⁹ They took him to several religious meetings where he was given welcome, several books glorifying Christianity and its doctrine. He also contacted several religious leaders in India. However his correspondence with his earlier acquaintance Raychandbhai (Appendix II) who gave responses to a series of 27 questions deeply pacified him with the following advice:

“...to be patient and to study Hinduism more deeply....On a dispassionate view of the question I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of soul, or its charity”¹⁰

His correspondence and personal contact with Raychandbhai continued till his untimely death in 1901.

He planned to return to India as his contract was complete. In Natal, while attending the farewell party hosted by Abdulla Sheth, he learned about the new Franchise Bill to be presented before the Natal Legislature that would deprive Indians of their rights to elect assembly members. Based on his own experience of discrimination and strong desire of Abdulla Sheth and others,

he postponed his departure by a month to make preparations to oppose the bill. He sent telegrams to the Speaker as well as the Premier Sir John Robinson requesting postponement of further discussion of the Bill, pending the presentation of a widely signed petition of protest. The bill was however passed.

The Indians in Natal desired that Gandhi follow up the bill further. So he mobilised involvement of all categories of Indians in opposing the bill. They decided to send a monster representation signed by 10000 Indians to Lord Ripen, secretary of State for colonies. He prepared the representation, got ten thousand copies made and sent to prominent people and newspapers in South Africa, England and India. Times of India and London Times supported his claim. So a ray of hope emerged amongst local Indians forcing him to postpone his departure to India.

To live in South Africa, he estimated the need of Pound 300 per year earned through practice as a lawyer. Gandhi did not wish to charge legal fee for social work. So, twenty Indian merchants gave him retainers for their legal work. Thus the big turn in his life came i.e. to work for the betterment of Indians as well while increasing his practice of law. Gandhi applied for admission as an advocate to the Supreme Court Natal. In spite of objections from the Law Society based on Gandhi's race and colour, the Chief Justice ordered Gandhi's admission.¹¹

He set up his independent home in Durban which was an experience itself concerning mentality of Indians there, and his own shortcomings of evaluating people. He decided to organize a permanent association to fight for the rights of Indians and other coloured people. So Natal Indian Congress was formed on May 22 1894. He mobilised membership of as many Indians as possible who paid annual subscription and rich Indians as donors

to support its functioning. Initial successes of this movement were propaganda and arousing interests amongst majority of Indians about their rights, finding a new employer for indentured labourer Balasundaram, and abolition of Pound 3 tax from ex-indentured Indians. He also set up Natal Indian Education Association to teach children of Indians born in South Africa love for their mother land by acquainting them with its culture.

After three years of stay in South Africa, he decided to visit India to bring his family as well as to arouse interest for his ongoing fight for Indians in South Africa. On June 6, 1896, Gandhi left Durban for India. Meanwhile, the Natal Franchise Bill was passed and gazetted on August 3, 1896.

Immediately on arrival in India he started the work, published articles in newspapers and received good response. He met leading Indian social figures like Sir Pherojshah Mehta, Tilak, Gokhale, Prof. Bhandarkar, Subramaniam of The Hindu and several others to learn and gain their support. He experienced the spread of plague and poor hygiene habits of Indians and their shutting eyes on disposal of human excreta. While planning a public meeting in Calcutta, he learned of the opening of Durban Parliament in January 1897. Thus he had to sail immediately for South Africa. On the way to South Africa, he taught some English mannerism to his wife and children. His journey was again filled with natural problems like the heavy sea-storm, quarantine on arrival in Natal and going clandestinely from boat to the town with family in January 1897. Here again he stuck to his earlier decision never to prosecute the assailant and did not initiate any legal action against the mischief mongers in India as they were retaliating for their misreporting about his writings to say that he made derogatory remarks against whites in South Africa. He resolved these misunderstandings by showing them his writings in India. Instructions from Mr Chamberlain

(secretary for Colony) to Natal administration to prosecute Gandhi's assailants helped. He was asked to identify the assailants which he refused understanding their plight as well.¹²

His popularity increased as well as the funds for Natal Indian Congress. He experienced accumulation of funds attracting undesirable people to manage the same. He thus resolved that a public service body should collect money enough to meet its day to day expenses and hence exist as long as it is useful to the people it serves.

To pursue his struggle for his country folks, he addressed not only Natal administration and Indians there but leaders and press in India as well as the Committee in England. In all such dealings he did try to involve his opponents in politics as well as in the committees dealing with the case. Besides his successful legal practice as well as serving people at political level, he was even involved personally in serving sick (brought leper at home for care and worked for two hours daily as nurse in a hospital) and imparted education to his children rather than to send them to White's only or Missionary schools.

Based on his life mission as Quest for Truth which he termed as *Satyagraha* later, he offered his and the Indian community's services successfully to the British government during the Boer War¹³ in The Orange State and Transvaal to transport and serve wounded war victims (Indian Ambulance Corps). As a result the Indians developed a sense of oneness even with their prejudices as well as earn British admiration. His efforts to have fellow Indians adopt better hygiene and keep their homes and surroundings cleaner, as right and duty go hand in hand,¹⁴ also raised his esteem in the eyes of British administrators. Similarly he tried successfully to raise dedication of Indian settlers to their

motherland who contributed to famine affected people in 1897 and 1899.

At the end of Boer War (1901), he felt compelled to return to India as he had set up Natal Indian Congress to look after the public and social work and to avoid the routine of just making money in South Africa. This urge to return was further enforced by calls from friends and family in India. His friends and supporters agreed to his return to India provided he would return when there was a need for him. He also learnt that without infinite patience, it was impossible to get any work done.¹⁵ He was given lavish and expensive gifts at the farewell function which he returned (even after strong persuasion of wife to keep them) to be kept as a trust and used for the social welfare of Indians. So he sailed for India towards the end of 1901.

In India he attended the Indian National Congress's convention in Calcutta where he stayed with Gokhale, met Dr. PC Roy and others to observe the working of the congress closely and had his first resolution adopted as well. As always he used the time to meet religious leaders, Sister Nivedita and visit Kali temple to be acquainted with religious practices. As per the advice by Gokhale, he travelled third class from Calcutta back home in Rajkot. He stopped at Varanasi, Agra, Jaipur and Palanpur en route. His stay in Calcutta and train journey gave him the first hand experience of the discrimination against Indians, life style of Congress leaders and their working, insanitary and dirty habits of Indians and their religious practices, and life of religious leaders. After setting up his successful practice in Rajkot, he left for Bombay to practice as a barrister in the High Court. He settled in Bombay (Revashankar Jagjivan Mehta's help) soon as a successful barrister when his second son Manilal aged ten got seriously sick. Sticking to his own faith of vegetarian diet and

hydropathy, he treated him to be the healthiest child in the family.

As always, he was not deemed to settle down as he got a call from South Africa to return as Mr. Chamberlain was meeting Indians. So he left for South Africa taking along four more youth and Maganlal Gandhi¹⁶ and leaving wife and children behind in the bungalow in Santa Cruz he hired earlier as he felt he would return in 4 to 6 months.

On arrival in Durban, he learnt of worse conditions for Indians as per the Law #3 of 1885 in Transvaal and Orange country that required them to obtain permits to enter. His meeting with Mr. Chamberlain in Durban was disappointing and brought home the rule that might is right or the law of sword. He decided to go to Transvaal to present the case again to Mr. Chamberlain for Indians there. The process of getting permits to visit and stay in Transvaal taught him that Indian officers working in Asiatic department were no different than English officers. Even Mr. Chamberlain did not want to meet him to represent the petition drafted by him. Strengthened by such insults, he decided to shift his office from Durban to Transvaal and carry the fight against oppression of Indians. To his dismay, he found the Asiatic department in Johannesburg (Transvaal), manned by Indians primarily, was a bigger problem than the Law itself. This also made Gandhi realize that he could no longer contemplate an early return to India.

In the meantime, black plague spread in Transvaal affecting badly the Coolies colony inhabited thickly by indentured and Independent labours from India. He volunteered to help the victims with active support of municipality and got them moved to a separate camp where the Indians gained health.

He had to leave for Durban to attend to some professional work. Mr. Polak¹⁷ gave him the book *Unto The Last* by Ruskin to read while travelling from Transvaal to Durban. He read it deeply during his 24 hour train journey and decided to translate it in Gujarati and titled it as *Sarvodaya*. It became his guiding spirit to uplift Indian masses from their miseries.

He set up Indian Opinion as his mouth piece newspaper that carried his daily views on items of interest to Indians. On June 6, 1903, he released the first copy of newsletter *Indian Opinion*. It became very successful in mobilising involvement of Indians, Europeans and the ruling class. He funded any deficit incurred in running the paper. Further he along with his friends decided to set up a cooperative Farm community and shift Indian Opinion offices there. As a result, Phoenix Settlement (*Phoenix Ashram*) was set up in 1904 as a large agriculture community on 100 acre land near Phoenix railway station. His old friend and benefactor Dr. Pranjivan Mehta supported him financially in this venture. Here people lived, earned same wages and attended to Indian Opinion work in spare time. Most of the work was done manually (self reliance principle) including running the press and grinding wheat as flour for bread. Each settler was given a 3 acre land for cultivation. Soon Indians with their families as well as a few whites like Polak and West also started living in Phoenix. Thus Phoenix became a village community which adopted Gandhi's philosophy and way of life including food habits and imparting education to children with emphasis on spiritual training and avoiding corporeal punishment.

He returned to Johannesburg to continue his practice. While everything was going on well in Johannesburg, he heard of the Zulu rebellion in Natal. He offered his services to the Governor. He was inducted as leader of a contingent of 20 Indians to look after wounded Zulus. This work went on for one month. He got

telegrams from Transvaal to come immediately to address the Ordinance published in Transvaal Government Gazette of 22nd August 1906.¹⁸ He went there and studied deeply the problems and mentality of Indians. He therefore mobilized deep support from Indians by explaining all the minute details and asked them to take a pledge / Oath¹⁹ successfully to oppose and even die for the Law and the functioning of the department. He thus got quickly redressed the need of registration by women.

By now (1906) the political struggle had shifted to the Transvaal. He made Johannesburg his headquarter. Finally, in order to work more effectively for his persecuted Indian compatriots in Africa, Gandhi decided to become one of them. Even though he had a lucrative clientele in Johannesburg, he gave it up to espouse poverty and live the life of his fellow Indians and to share their trials. He ennobled them thereby, for he taught them the doctrine of nonviolent resistance or *Satyagraha*, a movement which he launched in the historical meeting in Johannesburg on 11th September 1906 and referred even today as Nine Eleven of Nonviolence.

His acquaintance, Mr. Kallenbach, a rich German architect got influenced by him and left his expensive lifestyle to live with him at a fraction of the earlier budget. Both Kallenbach and Gandhi also read Tolstoy's books, particularly *The Kingdom of God is Within You* which influenced their thinking tremendously. Mr. Kallenbach donated 1000 acre land near Johannesburg to Gandhi to set up Tolstoy Farm on similar lines as Phoenix Settlement and experiment his philosophy of simple living and social work.

Events here were shaping up fast so that spiritual purification became a primary concern to Gandhi. Tolstoy Farm was set up

on 30th May 1910. Gandhi stayed there till his departure for India on July 18th 1914.

It is at this Farm that Gandhi felt the urge to experiment deeper in simplifying his life style, dietary reforms, vow of *brhmacharya*, relative and absolute truth and developed a code of conduct for the inhabitants of the Farm. This guide on code of conduct was firmed up by him later in India at Sabarmati Ashram where he published them as eleven vows in a book titled *Yerawada Mandir*. We shall talk about his experiments on the personal front later.

Tolstoy Farm became the headquarters for his *Satyagraha* in South Africa to win social and political reforms for Indians there.

He mobilised selfless engagement of all shades of Indians regardless of their cast, religion, gender and occupation to become volunteers in *Satyagraha*. Object of *Satyagraha* was to fight against discriminative and oppressive acts/behaviour of the British and European ruling elite for enacting the laws and Indian administrators in Asiatic section enforcing laws such as The Pound 3 tax, Marriage act that derecognised marriage of Indians according to social customs, travel and trade restrictions in the four colonies zealously.

Along with Indian men living in the four colonies, he involved successfully Indian women and liberal Europeans. He also involved top leaders in India to participate in *Satyagraha* and espouse their cause in England and India. He invited Gokhale to visit South Africa. His colleagues at Tolstoy Farm as well as volunteers in *Satyagraha* followed the simple (renunciation / hermit) life based on self denial, face the toughest hardships to the extent of going to jail, liquidating their business (Kachhalia,

Kallenbach to name a few), survive on lentil-bread/rice meals and undertake all types of physical work including scavenging to keep the Farm clean. Indian women along with men joined him. They left their homes, walked several miles, crossed borders considered illegal at that time and filled jails to support *Satyagraha*. The volunteers were trained not to use force against the oppressors, instead enhance their soul force based on Gandhi's dictum for *Satyagraha* 'There is no place for love in passive resistance and there is no place for hate in *Satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* can be launched even against the near and dear ones'. All such actions compelled the rulers to accede to the demands.

The force of Gandhi's nonviolent resistance slowly overcame the violence of the South African state. "Soul Force," as Gandhi called it, replaced the separatist and oppressive force of the state. Even General Smuts, one of the men most bitterly opposed to the Indians—who had said in 1909 that he would never remove all prejudicial measures against Indians—confessed, five years later in 1914, that he was glad to do away with it.²⁰ Later an imperial commission backed Gandhi upon almost every point.

In 1914 an act abolished the three-pound poll-tax, while Natal was opened to all Indians desirous of settling there as free workers. After twenty years of sacrifice nonviolent resistance was triumphant, The Indian Reform bill was gazetted. In his letter of June 30th 1914, Smuts repealed pound 3 tax, legalized marriages performed according to Hindu and Muslim rites, accepted papers with thumb impressions and said other grievances will be looked after soon positively²¹. During *Satyagraha*, its veterans like Kacchalia, Sorabji, Naidoo, Rustomji and others died.

Gandhi said '*Satyagraha* is a priceless and matchless weapon and those who wield it are strangers to disappointments or discomfort'²²

Gandhi sailed for India on July 18th 1914 via England to meet Gokhale for advice on implementing his philosophy of *Satyagraha* in India.

Analysis

The shock Gandhi had from his meeting with the political agent in Rajkot, subsequent advices of Sir Pherojshah Mehta, his brother as well as his experience of the way in which legal practice was conducted in India i.e. the atmosphere appeared poisonous to him. How to remain unscathed was a perpetual problem to him.²³ This type of violence²⁴ was the basis of changing the future course of his life. He took the first opportunity to leave this environment (India) to go to South Africa rather than go along the corrupt practices.

In South Africa, in the first few weeks of his arrival, he also experienced extremes of violence meted to Indians and him; for example categorization of Indians as coolies, sammies, indentured and free labourers, traders and so on resulting in discrimination in jobs, travel, dress, mannerism, and moment in specified areas etc.

He started feeling suffocated again but decided to stay and resolve these issues of violence against himself as well as other Indians, rather than return to India.

He called the way of life he adopted in South Africa as *Satyagraha* or insistence on truth. He further decided that *Satyagraha* will be based on the use of soul force rather than the brute force or physical force against the oppressors. *Satyagraha*

(a term coined by Gandhi in 1906 for his nonviolent action) will be based on values he inherited from his upbringing and enforced by his interactions with Raychandbhai comprising personal interactions and observations while in Bombay and through letters when Gandhi was in South Africa, from 1891-1901 i.e. till Raychandbhai's death.

Based on the above sequence of events in South Africa, philosophy of *Satyagraha* and its constituent principles /values like truth and its realization, *Ahimsa*, observance of vows, Vegetarianism including fasting, and self sacrifice-restraint, non possession / *aparigraha* etc are analyzed. *Satyagraha* motivated him find his way, involve masses in *Satyagraha* and ultimately bring around the mighty British to free Indians from discrimination in South Africa.

We shall analyze the values Gandhi practised and the basis of *Satyagraha*. We have seen in Chapter II earlier the impact of his friend Rajchandra on his personality development. This impact was so profound that he continued contact with Rajchandra even in South Africa until his death (Rajchandra) even though Gandhi was in South Africa as can be seen from the following analysis.

Truth / Satya: Gandhi held that Truth is nothing but God. And whatever we understand by God is implied in Truth. He asserted:

“Truth is God nothing else, nothing less.... The nearest word answering to Truth in Sanskrit is *Sat*, *Sat* means ‘being’. God alone is *Sat*. He alone is; nothing and no one else is.”²⁵

Further speaking of Truth, Gandhi said that for humans it is a relative term. He also said that a writer always presents one aspect of a case, whereas every case is to be seen from no less than seven points of view all of which are correct by themselves

but not correct at the same time and in the same circumstances.²⁶
During his *Satyagraha* moment, he observed

I have deliberately discussed this question with much minuteness as I wish the reader to understand different viewpoints in order that the reader, who has not so far done so, may acquire the habit of appreciating and respecting the varieties of viewpoints. Such large mindedness and patience are essential to the understanding of *Satyagraha* and its practice and principle.²⁷

Gandhi's inspiration for the definition of truth is similar to the doctrine of Multiplicity of viewpoints *Anekantavada* of Jains which states:

Anekantavada is based on the definition of Truth/ reality i.e. reality is with origination-decay-permanence simultaneously implying that an entity is continuously changing and so is the knowledge about it. Since permanence is directly opposite of origination-decay; *Anekanta* says that the opposite attributes co-exist simultaneously. An important feature of *Anekanta* is that our knowledge is relative to our own intentions or level of knowledge. The three pillars of *Anekanta* doctrine are relativity, simultaneous existence of opposites and reconciliation. *Anekanta* imparts impartiality, non rigidness or openness and collaborative aspects in our thought process.²⁸

Incidences which demonstrate Gandhi applying this doctrine are: His handling of the first case for Dada Abdulla is a shining example in which he brought both warring parties together for arbitration so that none is hurt. It became the hallmark of his legal practice.

Though Gandhi was fighting for Indians against British Government, yet in case of external threat to the latter he suspended the non-participation of the Indian population in public services and offered his assistance to them. He was

against the evil and not against the evil person/authority as exemplified by his assistance to British during Boer War, the plague and Zulu's rebellion. Gandhi was frequently arrested and imprisoned.²⁹ On the contrary, his faith grew stronger for his trials. His only reply to the violence meted out to him in South Africa was documented later in the famous little book, *Hind Swaraj*, written first in 1909 but first published in *Indian Opinion* 1910. Similarly he was loath to hide or connive at the weak points of the community or to the press for its rights without having purged of its blemishes like discrimination amongst themselves due to religion region or trade, their bad sanitation and hygiene practices. He did so even at home front where he generally suggested rather than impose his views on his wife and children.

He read and interacted wherever possible with reputed religious writers to develop a deeper understanding of each religion.³⁰ Rajchandra was the one who impacted him most. Similarly he read and contacted famous social and political writers like Ruskin, Tolstoy, Thoreau and Gokhale for social uplift. He interacted and observed them closely whenever possible and experimented with their doctrine before deciding his own course of action. Stay in South Africa thus continued to transform Gandhi's legal interests beyond his pursuit of financial stability to the possibility of using law to address social injustices.

Satyagraha: Etymologically *satya* means truth and *agraha* means insistence i.e. insistence on Truth. The term *Sadagraha* was coined by Maganlal Gandhi after advertising in *The Indian Opinion* carrying a prize for the best suggestion for names for his movement to end the plight of Indians in South Africa that was earlier called passive resistance by others. Gandhi liked the suggestion but changed it to *Satyagraha* and explained it thus, 'Truth (*satya*) implies love, and firmness (*agraha*) engenders

and therefore serves as a synonym for force i.e. the force which is born out of Truth and Love or non violence.³¹ In contradicting Mr. Hosken's observation³² Gandhi said 'I defined our passive resistance as soul-force..... Brute force has no place in Indian movement in any circumstance... Fostering the idea of strength, we grow stronger and stronger ever day.'³³ It became the very purpose of Gandhi's life. Later Gandhi called '*Satyagraha* as a matchless weapon and those who wield it are strangers to disappointment'.

Thus *Satyagraha* implies self effort through self suffering, like observing austerities */tapa* to annihilate bondage of karmas or purify the soul of its impurities through its own effort to attain the highest objective of life.³⁴ Thus the term *Satyagraha* is all inclusive of *Ahimsa*, vows, self restraint, and fasting all in one.

Unlike passive resistance, he mobilised people to peacefully oppose oppression/discrimination like asking the women going to jail, leaving their home and crossing borders illegally, staying at Tolstoy Farm and so on for *Satyagraha*. Jains also say that tolerating violence is also violence and their path of spiritual purification called *Moksamarga*³⁵ as practised by householders is similar to *Satyagraha*.

Ahimsa: He practiced *Ahimsa* to the extreme as it was the principal means of *Satyagraha* to eliminate the suffering of the oppressed. He considered discrimination, inequality, hurting or killing, and use of force, as violence.

During his first journey from Dublin to Pretoria, he experienced extremes of violence but always maintained nonviolent attitude. Yes, he did write to officials to insist on his rights (nonviolent opposition) as tolerating violence is also violence.

He lived the life of self denial and self effort himself (e.g. cleaning the pots, Farm etc) even though he could have easily afforded a luxurious life. His entire struggle was based on the doctrine of *Ahimsa*. He never used brute/physical force to oppose the oppressor and always invoked his soul force by exercising self restraint. So doing he became stronger and tolerated the oppression patiently as truth prevails ultimately. Given below is an example is his reaction after pocketing insult from a meeting with Chamberlain:

‘He (Chamberlain) had brought home to us on a gentle way the rule of might is right or the law of the sword. But sword we had none. We scarcely had the nerve and the muscle even to receive the sword cuts.’³⁶

As a result, he became free from fear and became a greater proponent of *Satyagraha* as seen from his remarks in India later:

‘I have no doubt that British government is a powerful government but I have no doubt that *Satyagraha* is a powerful sovereign remedy’³⁷

He was quick to seek forgiveness for his violent behaviour (ex: he insisted that his wife also help her to clean the pots of foreign friends which she denied. Gandhi acted violently against her but finally apologised when she presented her pitiable condition).

He was always transparent in his efforts to mobilize public support for his movement. He forewarned the people about the dangers that lay ahead and to resist oppression/ hardships peacefully without retaliating or using brute force. He always experienced sufferings of oppressed himself by being one of them. His stay at Phoenix Settlement and Tolstoy Farm and travel by third class and on deck in ships are examples to this effect.

The above discussions of *Ahimsa* are in line with definition of *Ahimsa* by Mahavira, the current ruling deity of Jains some 2500 years ago:

....none of the living beings ought to be killed or deprived of life, ought to be ordered or ruled, ought to be enslaved or possessed, ought to be distressed or afflicted and ought to be put to unrest or disquiet. He then conclusively pronounces that after understanding the importance of kindness to beings, the enlightened person should preach, disseminate and applaud it at all places in East-West and North-South directions.³⁸

Mahavira designated social *Ahimsa* by sixty synonyms³⁹ like tolerance, forgiveness, love, service, liberation, equanimity etc. He further said, 'It is love that sustains the earth. Life without love is death. *Ahimsa* is nothing but universal love or absence of attachment to someone. *Ahimsa* teaches that we have to behave with others as we would like to be treated by others. This is the essence of Mahavira's teachings.'⁴⁰

So Gandhi started applying *Ahimsa* in both professional i.e. legal practices for livelihood as well as to offer social service at no cost simultaneously.

Food habits: He followed strict vegetarian diet that gradually excluded even cow's milk⁴¹ and spicy or stimulating food etc as well. He started eating less (skip breakfast). He even stopped using salt, taking tea, and ate before sunset.⁴² He even bailed out a failing vegetarian restaurant by giving money kept in his trust by an Indian indentured labour (Badri) who took active part in *Satyagraha* movement. He later published a book on vegetarianism (Gujarati articles in Indian opinion and published in a book *Guide to Health* later). An example on his dietary reforms, 'His wife became seriously ill and the doctor strongly

recommended eggs and chicken soup. This advice was also supported by a visiting swami on religious grounds but his wife and he denied. She later on became well.’

Fasting: He observed first penitential fast (October 1913) when two people at his Phoenix Farm had a moral fall, one of them being his son.⁴³ Subsequently he started observing fasts to help him enhance self restraint and observe *brhmacharya* that are good for soul as well. Jainism propagates fasting and dietary restrictions as the first four external austerities to invoke soul force by supporting annihilation of the bonded karmas and purification of the soul of its impurities.

Lifestyle: He accepted a life of poverty as a constant companion throughout life. He decided not to take any occupation which would prevent him or make him shirk from undertaking the lowliest of duties or largest roles.⁴⁴ He laid greater stress on the training of self-discipline which in his view assisted the individual in his spiritual and moral growth. He became a firm believer of Naturopathy and Hydropathy and developed habits like eating less (avoid breakfast) and use natural treatments like mud therapy as better alternatives than to take medicines. Accordingly he treated persisting pleurisy by dietetic changes rather than use of external medicines.⁴⁵ He simplified his life style by washing and ironing his own clothes, cutting his own hair as solutions to be self reliant and avoid the problems of delays by washer-man and white barber’s refusal to cut his black hair.⁴⁶ He also decided not to take action against the offender, having made a rule not to go to court for any personal grievance.⁴⁷

Celibacy: In the process of his social engagements for the uplift of Indians, he made serious attempts to be a selfless servant of the people. He thought that to devote himself to the service of

community, he must relinquish the desire for children and wealth and live a life of *Vanprastha*. Hence, he resolved to observe celibacy. His earlier two attempts to practise celibacy failed, because the motive that actuated this effort was none the highest. His main object then was to escape having more children and allow his wife to recuperate. He also wanted to enhance his self-control and restraint (*Sanyam*). He had explored the possibility of celibacy for the last six years. During the long marches of the rebellion also, he became fully convinced about the necessity of practising celibacy for public service. He and his wife began to sleep in separate beds. Later, on religious grounds, based on long discussion with Raychandbhai, he set about trying to develop love without lust in order to use his energies more constructively. After full discussion and mature deliberation with his wife⁴⁸, and with her consent, he took the solemn vow of celibacy, or *Brhmacharya* in 1906.³³ Gandhi said:

Life without *brhmacharya* appears to me to be insipid and animal like. The brute by nature knows no self-restraint. Man is man because he is capable of and only in so far as he exercises self-restraint. What formerly appeared to me to be extravagant praise of *brhmacharya* in our religious books seems now, with increasing clearness, to be absolutely proper and founded on experience?⁴⁹

Jain ethics for votary / householders also lays significant importance on *Brhamcharya*. Lust is also considered as a psychical possession and cause of tainting the pure nature of soul. The vow of celibacy in Jainism for a householder is called *Svadarasantoshpariman* that limits the sexual relations to one's religiously wedded spouse only and gradually enhanced to complete abstinence.

Non possession (*Aparigraha*): His persuading his wife and children to return the expensive gifts given to him on his return journey in India to a trust to be used for benefit of the needy,

even against religious validation by a *swami*. Similarly he did not accept legal fee for cases involving social cause. He travelled third class and lived as poor to demonstrate his commitment to the doctrine of non possession. Another instant is his disbanding collecting permanent funds for making buildings and staff for the Congress. He thought that the congress should earn to survive and prove its usefulness. For the funds already collected, he advised the management to consider themselves as trustees of public funds and not as the owners for personal use. However he followed the advice from another friend not to use personal or borrowed money to help victims of political events else he (Gandhi) will become a beggar and become unable to do missionary work. Gandhi found this advice in line with *The Gita*'s message 'Do the act without thinking of the reward'.

Rajchandra lived the life of a detached person and was a living example of non possession to Gandhi. It seems through him, concept of equality and equanimity of Jainism, reading religious and philosophical texts of Jains and others and his own observations of the sufferings of both rich (want more) and poor (have nothing) influenced Gandhi in this regard.

Vows: He was a strict believer in vows/oath/pledge and their practice. He did perform experiments to ensure their validity first. For example, before administering the famous oath on September 11th 1906 at The Empire Theatre of Transvaal, he explained the minute details of the oath as well as the repercussions of not obeying the oath to everyone, like:

When an intelligent person makes a resolution deliberately he never swerves from it by a hair's breadth. With him the resolution carries as much weight as a declaration made with God as a witness..... a man who violates an oath administered to him is not only ashamed of himself but is also looked upon by the society as a sinner.⁵⁰

Thus he was able to mobilise mass support of the people that was followed in letter and spirit by all. He never accepted money for his legal services rendered for social cause. Similarly during his dietary experimentation, he even staked his own life and that of the family (son and at other time of wife) to stay with vegetarian diet and die rather than take chicken soup or eggs.

He established a set of eleven vows, called *Ekadash Vrata* for observance by all *Ashramites* who were also known as *Satyagrahis*. These vows were firmed up later in India and published as a handbook called *Yerawada Mandir* as it was completed during his stay in jail in Yerawada. These shall be discussed in later Chapters.

Jains are referred as *Shramanas* (believers of self sacrifice/effort) and *Vartya* in ancient religious texts of India. *Vartya* means one who observes vows as lifestyle and as the means for spiritual purification.

Respect for religion: He was religious (primarily implying spiritual). He did not believe in superstitions and wanted to experience it (religion). He said that he wanted to see God face to face through selfless service of masses. He interacted with all religions with open heart, held discussions with their practitioners and leaders. Finally he accepted the advice of Raychandbhai (Appendix II) i.e. Raychandbhai as Gandhi referred him in his Autobiography. Accordingly Hindus, Muslim, Parsis, Christians, Indians and Europeans all joined him in *Satyagraha* and even accepted his way of life to live with him at his home, Phoenix Settlement and Tolstoy Farm. As an example, he did not force vegetarianism on Muslims Parsis Christians living in Tolstoy Farm but they accepted it on their own. Gandhi read books of different religions and observed

religious practices. However, *The Gita* and Raychandbhai influenced him most to firm up his spiritual roots and their practice. J.T.F. Jordens in his paper⁵¹ talks of the impact of Rajchandra on Gandhi in the following words:

Raychand's answers pacified him. It is in these answers that we find fundamental ideas that are very similar to those that we found to be the basic principles of Gandhi's conception of scriptures and religion and of *The Gita*-interpretation.⁵²

The parallelism between Raychand's ideas as expressed in that letter of 1894 and those of Gandhi, are so pertinent and striking that one had to conclude that Raychand's influence on Gandhi's ideas was decisive.

Thus Jainism had profound impact on Gandhi. Not surprisingly, Bal Gangadhar Tilak once mentioned that he had always taken Gandhi to be a Jain.⁵³

Gandhi said 'The seeds had been long sown. It only needed watering to take root, to flower and fructify, and the watering came in the appropriate time'. His mission was to root out the evil.

We shall continue this analysis in chapter V.

Conclusion

South Africa provided Gandhi the soil-force for his spiritual inclinations to take deep roots and start fructifying in his professional and social activities. It is here that that he realized his life mission as Self realization i.e. see God face-to-face or attain *moksa*. He considered service to oppressed beings as service to God. He also firmed his views on God and interpreted it as Truth or Truth is God. He firmed up his doctrine that Truth

is God and *Ahimsa* is the means to achieve Truth. He was a keen observer, hard worker who experienced the plight of sufferers and suffering. Thus he became one of them to experience the plight of downtrodden himself before taking up their case for improvement.

Highlights of his life were Self-sacrifice, look at opponent's view point also and at times sided with opponents as well, use of spirituality for mass movement as against for self movement only, *svadhyaya* (read and seek clarifications from credible sources, contemplate, teach, experience), transparency (document, keep record of accounts and events), stickler of righteous and simpler life, not a believer of superstitions or blind faith in religious rituals or people, respected and practised vows, involved affected people in decision making, firm believer in self and karma doctrine, not tolerating discrimination, *aparigraha* (little possessions), non violent life including practicing extremes of vegetarianism, help victims personally and siding with truth. These appear to be derived from his discussions with Raychandbhai.

He moved up the ladder for spiritual purification of a Jain householder from an ordinary believer to a serious practitioner by accepting vows and advancing further to be termed as *sadhak* and Mahatma later.⁵⁴ His life in South Africa can be beautifully summed up in his own words as:

The seeds had been long sown. It only needed watering to take root to flower and to fructify and the watering came in due course⁵⁵

Notes & References

- ¹ *Satya*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org, p 413
- ² *My.Ex. I* p 104
- ³ *My.Ex. I*, p 105-108
- ⁴ *My.Ex.*, op.cit, p.101
- ⁵ *Ibid*, p. 108
- ⁶ *Ibid*, p.105
- ⁷ *Ibid* , p 122-124
- ⁸ *Ibid*, p 129
- ⁹ *My.Ex.*, pp 110-114
- ¹⁰ *My.Ex.* p 132
- ¹¹ *My.Ex.*, pp.135-6
- ¹² *Satya*, MK Gandhi portal p 102 ‘It is a religious question with me, and I believe with you that I shall serve my community as well as myself by this act of self restraint.’
- ¹³ In 1899, during the Boer War, he organized an Indian Red Cross, which was twice cited for bravery under fire. When the plague broke out in Johannesburg in 1904, Gandhi organized a hospital. In 1906 the natives in Natal revolted. Gandhi organized and served at the head of crops of *Brancardiers*, and the Government of Natal tendered him public thanks.
- ¹⁴ *Satya*, pp 200, ‘I have always been loath to hide and connive at weak points of the community or press for its rights without having purged of its blemishes’
- ¹⁵ *Satya*, p 200
- ¹⁶ *Satya*, p 229 ‘I believe that enterprising youths who could not find an opportunity in the country should emigrate to other lands. ’
- ¹⁷ Mr. Polak was a vegetarian who used to meet Gandhi at the Vegetarian restaurant every day in Transvaal. He later became a close associate of Gandhi and editor of *The Indian Opinion* at a fraction of his salary.
- ¹⁸ In the 1890s, legislation passed that restricted Indian’s freedoms amidst growing anti-Indian sentiment. The Immigration Law Amendment Bill of 1895 stated Indians had to return to India at the end of their five-year indenture period, or they would have to be re-indentured for two more years. Anyone who refused would be charged an annual tax of £3. Additionally, the Franchise

Amendment Bill of 1894 limited Indians political representation. In August 1906, the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance was signed into law in the Transvaal. It was a humiliating and discriminating law forcing Indians in the Transvaal to register with the 'registrar of Asiatics,' submit to physical examinations, provide fingerprints, and carry a registration certificate at all times. Otherwise, Indians and other 'Asiatics,' as they were called could be fined, imprisoned, or deported. It became known as the 'Black Act'.

¹⁹ *Satya*, P 163-165; '.. to die but not to submit to the law..'

²⁰ Gandhi referred to this in an article "Neither a saint nor a politician" in *YI*, dated May 12, 1920; See Romain Rolland, *MGRR*, op.cit., p.10

²¹ *Satya*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org, p507-509

²² *Satya*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org, p511

²³ *My.Ex.1*, pp 100

²⁴ See Appendix I. Inequality, exploitation, discrimination, hurting, causing pain, hate, intolerance, revengefulness are manifestations of violence.

²⁵ Shriman Narayan (ed.), *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol.6 (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1997), p.97

²⁶ *My.Ex.1*, page 245-246

²⁷ *Satya*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org, Pp 146-47

²⁸ Appendix I for details

²⁹ Gandhi himself tells in his quite humorous way of his experiences in prison in a curious article printed in, M. K. Gandhi, *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, (Madras: G A Natesan and company, 1933), pp.152-178; See, Romain Rolland, *MGRR*, op.cit, p.8

³⁰ CWMG 32:1-13, Preface to "Shrimad Rajchandra", 5 Nov. 1926, "I entered into correspondence with every person in India in whom I had some trust, Raychandbhai being the chief among them. [*Vide* "Gandhiji's Q.s to Rajchandra and his Replies", CW 32:593-602, letter accompanying Rajchandra's replies is dt. 20.10.1894.] I had already been introduced to him and a close bond had grown between us. I had respect for him, and so I decided to get from him everything he could give. The result was that I gained peace of

mind. I felt reassured that Hinduism could give me what I needed. The reader will have some idea of how much my respect for Raychandbhai must have increased because of his being responsible for this result.....”

³¹ *Satya*, page 103

³² *Satya*, page 104: Mr. Hosken, a leading Johannesburg magnate, desired to hear Gandhi’s views. He expressed “ The Transvaal Indians have had recourse to passive resistance when all other means of securing redress proved to be of no They do not enjoy the franchise as they are numerically only a few. They are weak and have no arms. Therefore they have taken to passive resistance which is a weapon of the week.”

³³ *Satya*, Navjivan, page 104-106

³⁴ Appendix I Jainism Page 5: *Nirjara* (Dissociation/annihilation of bonded karmas) is affected by observing twelve types of *Tapa* (austerities) along with stoppage.

³⁵ Appendix I

³⁶ *My.Ex.1*, page 232

³⁷ *My.Ex.1*, page 339

³⁸ Ref *Acārāṅga* Translated by H Jacobi and Max Mueller Sacred Texts of India LPP 3332 Part 1-Fourth lecture titled ‘Righteousness’. “The *Arhats* and *Bhagvats* of the past, present, and future, all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, explain thus: all breathing, existing, living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away, This is the pure unchangeable, eternal law, which declared: among the zealous and not so zealous, among the faithful and not so faithful, among the cruel and not so cruel, among those who have worldly weakness and those who do not have, among those who like social bonds and those who do not; ‘that is the truth, that is so, that is proclaimed in this creed. Having adopted the law, one should not hide it, nor forsake it. Correctly understanding the law, one should arrive at indifference for the impressions of the senses, ’and not act on the motives of the world’. He who is not of this mind, how should he come to the other. What has been said here, has been seen (by the omniscient beings), heard (by the believers), acknowledged (by the faithful) and thoroughly understood by

them. Those who acquiesce and indulge (in worldly pleasures) are born again and again. ‘Day and night exerting thyself, steadfast’, always having ready wisdom, perceive that the careless (stand) outside liberation; if careful, thou wilt always conquer. Thus I say.’”

³⁹ Sixty names of Ahimsā bhagavaī- *Praśnavyākaraṇa*, Samvaradvāra, 107, op. cit, pp.161-62

Tattha paḍhamam ahimsā jā sā sadevamaṇuyāsuraṣṣa loyassa bhavai dīvo tāṇam saraṇam gaī paiṭṭhā 1. ṇivvāṇam 2. ṇivvū 3. Samāhī 4. Sattī 5. Kittī 6. Kanṭī 7. Raī ya 8. Virāī ya 9. Suyāṅga 10. Tittī 11. Dayā 12. Vimuttī 13. Khantī 14. Sammattārāhaṇā 15. Mahantī 16. Bohī 17. Buddhī 18. Dhū 19. Samiddhī 20. Riddhī 21. Viddhī 22. Ṭhī 23. Puṭṭhī 24. Nandā 25. Bhaddā 26. Visuddhī 27. Laddhī 28. Visiṭṭhadiṭṭhī 29. Kallāṇam 30. Maṅgala 31. Pamoo 32. Vibhū 33. Rakkhā 34. Siddhāvāso 35. Aṇāsavo 36. Kevalīṇa thāṇam 37. sivaṇ 38. Samī 39. Sīlam 40. Sañjamotī ya 41. Sīlaparigharo 42. saṇvaro ya 43. Gittī 44. Vavasāo 45. Ussao 46. Jaṇṇo 47. Āyayaṇam 48. Jayaṇam 49. Appamāo 50. Assāso 51. Vīsāso 52. Abhao 53. Savvassa vi amāghāo 54. Cokkha 55. Pavittā 56. Sū 57. Pūyā 58. Vimala 59. Pabhāsā ya 60. Nimmalayara tti evamāṇi ṇiyayaguṇaṇimmiyāiṇ pajjayaṇāmāṇi honti ahimsāe bhagavaīe.

⁴⁰ *BB*, 3rd Uddeshak, 4584, Chatur Vijay/Punyavijay, ed. (Bhavanagar: Shri Atmanand Jain Sabha, 1933)

Jam ichhasiappanto, Jam cha naichhasiappanto, tam ichhaparassa vi, ettiyagamjinasasanayam.

⁴¹ *My.Ex.1*, p 295 as per the advice of Raychandbhai earlier. However later on in India he started taking goat’s milk

⁴² *My.Ex.1* p 291

⁴³ www.swarajyamag.com/politics/gandhi-and-his-fasts. Two people at his Phoenix Farm had had a ‘moral fall’, he was told, one of them being his son. Gandhi was jolted into declaring he must atone for the sins of his Ashram’s inmates and proceeded to fast for an entire week; thereafter, for the next 20 weeks, he ate only once a day. His experiment must have given Gandhi an idea of how much his body could endure because later that year, to mourn the striking indentured labourers killed by the South African police, Gandhi

declared he'd eat only once a day for a while. He also asked the other ashram inmates to follow his example. Both these fasts, undertaken admittedly as atonement and mourning, did not lead to significant professional mileage for Gandhi but the next one, which was in India, did.

⁴⁴ *Satya*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org p 153

⁴⁵ *My.Ex.1*, p 320

⁴⁶ *My.Ex.1*, p 197

⁴⁷ *My.Ex.1*, pp.120-121

Asiatic were subject to general Laws affecting Africans and other coloured people, such as prohibition of the use of public footpaths and of remaining out of doors after 9 p.m. A few Indian traders were accepted as a matter of special privilege.

⁴⁸ *My.Ex.1*, p 192 "... but only consulted her at the time of taking the vow. She had no objection."

³³ *My.Ex.*, op.cit., p.192

⁴⁹ *My.Ex.1*, page 285

⁵⁰ *Satya*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org P 163-165; '.. to die but not to submit to the law..'

⁵¹ J.T.F. Jordens, "Gandhi and the Bhagavadgita", in Robert N. Minor, *Modern Indian Interpreters of the Bhagavad Gita* Ed. (New York: State University of New York, 1991), pp.107-8

⁵² *Ibid*, p.107

⁵³ Margeret Chatterjee, *Gandhi and the Challenges of Religious Plurality*, op.cit., p.33 ; and the quote by Tilak from 'footage of a film covering his visit to and from England on the occasion of the 1931 Round Table Conference.'

⁵⁴ Appendix I for Jain way of life.

⁵⁵ *My.Ex.1*, page 197

CHAPTER – IV
THE LAST PHASE
(1914 – 1948)



CHAPTER IV

THE LAST PHASE (1914-48)

Gandhi returned to India from South Africa to work to unite his fellow countrymen and have them join his *Satyagraha* to free India from the slavery of British Empire. He enhanced his self suffering and worked relentlessly to achieve his mission. India became free from British rule on August 14th 1947 but as a divided nation i.e. India and Pakistan (constituted from Muslims majority provinces, whole or partitioned). He was assassinated on January 30th 1948. His last words were *Hey Rama* or Oh! God

Gandhi returned to India via London as per Gokhale's advice¹ He reached London on August 6, 1914 only to discover Europe entangled in the First World War declared on August 4th. Gandhi offered his service to help the British to nurse the wounded British soldiers in the First World War.² After seeing the Ambulance Corps became operational, he was in a shock when he started his trip from London to India and noticed the condescending attitudes of British officers who behaved as masters treating Indians as inferiors.³

He went to Poona to meet Gokhale who promised support and guidance and urged him to participate in the Indian freedom struggle by first becoming familiar with the plight of Indians. So Gandhi travelled throughout India like an ordinary poor Indian in third class railway compartment. After finishing his travels, Gandhi joined the Indian freedom struggle.

He started his Indian activities in May 1915. He chose Ahmedabad as his work centre as it was an ancient centre of handloom weaving and most suited for the revival of the cottage industry of hand-spinning. He established *Satyagraha Ashram* at Kocharab in Ahmedabad to acquaint India with *Satyagraha* and

test its efficacy in India to resolve its social problems.⁴ In the first year itself plague broke out in Kochharab forcing Gandhi to relocate *Satyagraha Ashram* to an area of thirty-six acres on the banks of the river Sabarmati. It came to be known as the *Sabarmati Ashram* sited between a jail and a crematorium, as he believed that a *satyagrahi* has invariably to go to either place.⁵ Some rules and regulations were written and adopted for practice by all inhabitants of the *Ashram*. These included undertaking physical activities (like spinning, farming, cleaning etc), wearing simple uniform clothing, common kitchen and vegetarian food, observance of vows of truth, *Ahimsa*, celibacy, non-stealing, non-possession, abolition of untouchability, practice *Swadeshi* and control of the palate etc.⁶

Gaining trust of Indians for the efficacy of *Satyagraha*: 1914-1918

During this period, with the support of people like Madan Mohan Malaviya, he worked hard against the British government to stop emigration of indentured labour to South Africa successfully. The bill to this effect was passed on 3rd July 1917.

He started experimenting *Satyagraha* on a local scale by leading movements in Champaran, Ahmedabad, and Kheda.

Champaran *Satyagraha*: The *Tinkathiya* system in Bihar required tenants (farmers) to plant indigo in three out of every twenty parts of the land causing extreme financial hardship to the tenants.⁷ At the invitation of Rajkumar Shukla, a tenant, Gandhi visited many villages and cross-examined thousands of the cultivators and recorded their statements in the presence of the C.I.D. officer to have a deeper understanding of their grievance and the causes underlying them. He worked closely with Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Prof. Kripalani and others. Realizing that the ignorance of the cultivators was one of the main reasons for the

European landlords to repress them, he set up voluntary organizations to open schools and teach them ways to improve their economic, educational and sanitation conditions.⁸ He invited eminent teachers from all over India to teach and have a common kitchen with vegetarian simple food, even though most of them were non vegetarians. He asked his friend, Dr Pranjivan Mehta, who offered all monetary help that Gandhi wanted.⁹ Gandhi says, 'Champaran inquiry was a bold experiment with *Ahimsa* and Truth'.¹⁰ He emphasized observance of *Satyagraha*, or insistence for the Truth against unfair laws while respecting the fair laws and to direct the struggle against tyranny and not against the tyrant, to win government functionaries.

On November 2, 1917 the Champaran Agrarian Bill was passed in accordance with the recommendations of the committee of which he was also a member. The government accepted the Law in March of 1918.¹¹ It gave great relief to the cultivators and land tenants.

Mill Dispute: In 1918, Gandhi advised the mill workers in Ahmedabad to go on strike to demand a thirty-five percent increase in wages against the mill owners who were his good acquaintances and well wishers. The strike was planned as a *Satyagraha*. It lasted 21 days. He explained to the workers and their leaders pre-requisites for a successful strike¹², namely: never to resort to violence, never to molest blacklegs, never to depend upon alms, and to remain firm no matter how long the strike continued, and to earn bread during the strike by any other honest labour. So he asked them to stay firm to their oath. "Starve but keep your vow" as he also fasted against the weakening of strikers. Gandhi explained that he did not fast for coercing neither the workers nor the mill owners.¹³ Finally the workers achieved their demands of a thirty-five percent increase

as the mill-owners and arbitrators all agreed that it was a fair and reasonable demand.

Kheda Satyagraha: In 1918, a famine struck the Kheda district causing havoc with the agrarian economy there. The villagers requested authorities to suspend revenue collection but to no avail.¹⁴ After talking with the villagers, Gandhi advised them to resort to *Satyagraha*.

In Gujarat, Gandhi was the spiritual head of the struggle. He insisted to keep it a purely Khedian struggle.¹⁵ Gandhi set up his headquarters at Nadiad *Anathashram*, Nadiad. He organized a detailed study and survey of the villages, accounting for the atrocities and terrible episodes of sufferings on the farmers. Gandhi initiated a signature campaign where peasants pledged non-payment of revenue even under the threat of confiscation of land. Gandhi worked hard to win public support for the agitation across the country.¹⁶ His chief lieutenant, Vallabhbhai Patel and a close coterie of devoted Gandhians toured the countryside, organized the villagers, to provide them political leadership. People of all castes/communities and religious affiliations rallied around them. The peasants of Kheda signed a petition calling for the termination of that year's annual tax in the wake of the famine. The *satyagraha* continued till finally the government suspended the tax for the current year and next year and all that was confiscated was returned.¹⁷

These three movements helped Gandhi to gain traction, learn of strengths and weaknesses of Indian masses, and earn trust among them by studying their problems while living among them.

While Kheda movement was in progress, there were disturbances in Europe. Gandhi was invited to Delhi to attend a conference by Government to seek recruitment of Indians for

their war effort. Letters from Maulana Mahmood Ali from jails to support *Khilafat* movement¹⁸ posed the biggest challenge to his concept of *Ahimsa* as he had to develop Hindu-Muslim fraternity and to win involvement of Muslims in *Satyagraha*. Similarly in Delhi, Hindu leaders were raising doubts about sincerity of British to solve their problems. Still Gandhi accepted British request, after they promised for Home rule. He started the campaign to recruit and convince people about the unique opportunity for them to learn use of weapons legally by participating in the war. He actively participated in convincing people to support until he got sick due to prolonged diet of groundnut butter and lemon and was near death. Ambalal Sheth took the sick Gandhi to his villa in Matheran where Gandhi recuperated. There he read in the newspapers about Rowlatt committee.¹⁹ He felt that no self respecting person could submit to it. British government used excessive violence against Indians to implement Rowlatt Bills.

Use of violence by the British to suppress *Satyagraha*

In February 1919 Gandhi organized a revolt against the Rowlatt Committee recommendation by becoming president of the *Satyagraha Sabha*. A general strike was planned for March 30, 1919, but was postponed to April 6 after police fired on a crowd in Delhi killing eight people. Gandhi called for self-purification by prayer and fasting. He was not allowed to enter Punjab and was sent to Bombay where the crowd was angry over his arrest. The crowd was charged upon by mounted police who trampled over several agitators in Bombay. Additional disturbances in Ahmadabad resulted in violence between protestors and police. On April 14, Gandhi denounced such violence and expressed his disinterest in getting released from prison. Admitting Himalayan miscalculation²⁰, he suspended the campaign and went on a penitential fast for three days. Gandhi emphasized the constructive program.

Gandhi was very much shaken by the massacre in Jallianwala Bagh.²¹ Gandhi was pressed to proceed to the Punjab immediately in disregard of consequences. But finally he decided not to proceed to the Punjab, because Gandhi did not see around him the kind of peaceful atmosphere that he wanted. As he wrote in his autobiography, “I therefore decided not to proceed to the Punjab in spite of the suggestion of friends.”²²

The Non-Cooperation Movement²³ 1920 - 22

The Non-Cooperation Movement was a significant phase of the Indian struggle for freedom from British rule started by Gandhi and supported by the Indian National Congress.²⁴ The ideals of *Ahimsa*, or nonviolence, and Gandhi’s ability to rally hundreds of thousands of common citizens towards the cause of Indian independence, were first seen on a large scale in this movement through summer 1920 and the British feared that the movement might lead to mass violence.

Gandhi called for Non cooperation movement due to colonial oppression exemplified in the Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala Bagh massacre, economic hardships to the common citizenry as a significant portion of Indian wealth was exported to Britain, along with jobs of Indian artisans as British factory-made goods replaced handmade goods. Also there was a popular resentment over Indian soldiers dying during World War I while fighting as part of the British Army in battles that otherwise had nothing to do with India.

The Non-Cooperation Movement aimed to resist British occupation in India through nonviolent means. Protestors refused to buy British goods and opted for local handicrafts instead. The movement targeted liquor as well as foreign cloth shops with the aim of upholding Indian values of honour and integrity.

Several political leaders such as Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a Congress extremist, called for home rule. Their efforts led to petitions and major public meetings, but they never resulted in disorder or obstruction of government services. Partly due to that, the British did not take them very seriously. The Non-Cooperation Movement aimed to ensure that the colonial economic and power structure would be seriously challenged, and British authorities would be forced to take notice of the people's demands. Many revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh and Chandra Shekhar Azad supported this movement but were very dissatisfied by the way Gandhi dismissed their efforts.

Gandhi considered *The Khilafat movement* as an opportunity to prove that the Musalman was the brother of Hindu. He was chosen to preside at a *Khilafat* conference in October, 1919 at Delhi. On 19th January, 1920, he joined a deputation of Muslim leaders which laid the demands of the *Khilafat* movement before the Viceroy.

In its special session at Calcutta (September 1920), Congress agreed to the non-cooperation campaign and termed it as *Swadeshi Movement*. They surrendered titles and honours, refused to attend Government functions, withdrew their children from Government schools, disavowed the authority of British courts, refused to serve in the military, withdrew candidates from elections to councils, and boycotted foreign goods. Congress also urged people to spin yarn and weave at home.²⁵ Gandhi himself started wearing a single piece of cloth after learning of the plight of women who had only one article of clothing and hence could not bathe in the village ponds or rivers. Gandhi promised that non-cooperation would bring about self-government in one year.²⁶ Gandhi persuaded the Congress not to participate in the

November elections in which only about one-third of those eligible voted.

On November 17, 1921 Prince of Wales came to Bombay. He was greeted from one end of India to the other with a *Hartal* (strike) of protest and mourning that brought all organizational activity to a full stop. It was a startling demonstration of the new spirit of the nation, and every where it was nonviolent, except in Bombay where a large number of nonviolent spectators unexpectedly turned into rioting mobs.²⁷ Gandhi tried to restore peace but failed and imposed a five day fast upon him. He succeeded on fourth day in bringing the riots to an end.

In December 1921, Gandhi was invested with full dictatorial powers by congressional session at Ahmedabad. Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy on February 1, 1922 that the 87,000 people in Bardoli were ready for civil disobedience by refusing to pay land taxes.²⁸ He gave the Viceroy seven days. Violence also erupted 800 miles away at Chauri Chaura²⁹ He asked the government to release the nonviolent prisoners, free the press, and stop interfering in nonviolent activities. Gandhi once again cancelled the campaign, this time on the day it was to begin; instead, he fasted for five days in penance. He met with the Congress Working Committee at Delhi, and they decided to suspend the non-cooperation campaign in order to concentrate on the constructive programs.³⁰

The British took this opportunity to arrest Gandhi on March 10, 1922 and they put him on trial on March 18. He did not apologize for the non-cooperation movement. Instead, he invited the court to give him the highest penalty afforded by law for the deliberate crime of what appeared to him to be the highest duty of a citizen.³¹ He explained, "In my humble opinion, non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as is cooperation with

good.”³² He was sentenced to six years imprisonment and was released after twenty-two months when he had an appendectomy.

Around the time of Gandhi’s arrest, the non-cooperation by the *Khilafat* movement also subsided. However Hindu–Muslim unity got misdirected into large scale attacks by members of one community on the other.³³ Gandhi was so upset that he went on a fast for twenty-one days.³⁴

In 1928, Gandhi announced a *Satyagraha* campaign led by Vallabhbhai Patel in Bardoli against a twenty-two percent increase in British-imposed taxes. Finally the Government agreed to increase the assessments by five percent instead of twenty two percent, release all the prisoners, and return confiscated land and property.³⁵

On October 31, 1929, Viceroy Irwin announced the goal of dominion status. This declaration was criticized in the British press, and both the Conservative and Liberal parties opposed it in Parliament. Viceroy Irwin could not promise dominion status to Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Vithalbhai Patel, Jinnah, and Tej Bahadur Sapru on December 23, 1929. The Congress passed a resolution for *Sampoorna Swaraj* on 31 December 1929 at Lahore session and Gandhi was asked to decide regarding the civil disobedience movement to be taken up towards this objective.

Salt Tax³⁶ /Dandi March: 1930- 1931

After proclaiming the Declaration of Independence of India on January 26, 1930, Gandhi came to an impasse in his political career focused on freeing India from British rule. A new anti-government campaign was imperative for achieving the *Sampoorna Swaraj* of India for its people. It remained unclear to

Gandhi as to the form most appropriate for this campaign to take. During the period that followed in which he could find “no light at the end of the tunnel,” it became apparent to Gandhi that nonviolent civil disobedience would form the basis for any ensuing protest.³⁷ Dr. Pranjivan Mehta’s discussions in 1920 in England and FICCI’s reports also played crucial role in his finalizing the strategy for non-cooperation action.

On March 2, 1930, in an effort to amend the Salt Tax without breaking the law, Gandhi wrote to Viceroy Irwin, saying, “But if my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the eleventh day of this month I shall proceed with such co-workers of the *Ashram* as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the Salt Law. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man’s standpoint. As the Independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil.”³⁸

On March 12, 1930, Gandhi and eighty male *Satyagrahis* set out on foot for the coastal village of Dandi, some 240 miles from their starting point in Sabarmati Ashram, a journey which was to last twenty-three days. Virtually every resident of each and every city and village along this journey watched the great procession, which grew to over two miles in length.³⁹ On April 6, Gandhi picked up a lump of mud containing salt (some say just a pinch) and boiled it in seawater to make the commodity which no Indian could legally produce, called the salt.

He implored thousands of his followers to begin to make salt everywhere, along the seashore, “as was most convenient and comfortable” to them. A “war” on the salt tax was to be continued during the National Week, that is, up to April 13th, 1930. There were also simultaneous boycotts of foreign cloth and liquor. Salt was sold illegally all over the seacoast of India. A pinch of salt from Gandhi himself sold for 1,600 rupees,

perhaps \$750 dollars at the time. In reaction to this, the British government had incarcerated over sixty thousand people by the end of the month.⁴⁰ On the night of May 4, 1930, Gandhi was sleeping on a cot under a mango tree, at a village near Dandi. Several *Ashramites* slept near him. Soon after midnight, the District Magistrate of Surat drove up with two Indian officers and thirty heavily-armed constables. He woke Gandhi by shining a torch in his face, and arrested him under a regulation of 1827.

The effects of the Salt march were felt across India. Thousands of people made salt, or bought illegally-produced salt.

This period of *Dandi March* is considered as the apex of Gandhi's political appeal, as the March mobilized many new followers from entire Indian society. Thus Dandi March came to the attention of the world. After his release from prison, he continued to work towards Indian independence.

Fear of a Divided India: Hindus, Muslims and Untouchables: 1931-41

On September 12, 1931, Gandhi went to London for a round table conference on caste and social politics in India. After returning from London, Gandhi met a highly educated man, Bhim Rao Ambedkar (1892-1956)⁴¹ in Bombay. The meeting did not end cordially. However, Gandhi later explained to his secretary, "I did not know he was a *Harijan* (a word he coined for *Shudras*). I thought he was some Brahmin who took deep interest in *Harijans* and therefore talked intemperately."⁴² Gandhi only later realized that Ambedkar was from the untouchable class and was deeply motivated for political change out of his own experience.

On August 17, 1932, the British Prime Minister declared the separate electorate for the schedule castes in India. Gandhi thought that separate electorate for the scheduled castes would create a situation similar to the Hindu-Muslim situation on a greater scale due to dispersal of *Harijans* throughout India.⁴³ To protest the formation of a separate state, Gandhi started a fast unto death on September 20, 1932.⁴⁴ He was more concerned about the ethical aspect of separate electorates. He was afraid that the introduction of a separate electorate would destroy the untouchables. To aggravate the matter further, Delhi's throne was occupied by a Viceroy who was totally hostile to Gandhi. Gandhi had decided to put his life at stake to prevent untouchability being given a permanent place in the Indian Constitution.

On the first day of his fast he dictated several letters to P. N. Rajbhoj, a leader of the untouchables.⁴⁵ This resulted in a discussion amongst various leaders with Ambedkar and an intense discussion between Gandhi, Ambedkar and other leaders from both sides until a solution was found to keep Harijans in the main stream Hindu population and prevent any trace of dividing the country amongst Hindu-Muslim and Harijans.⁴⁶ He discussed the letter with his colleagues and sent to Ambedkar for his support, which he did. The vow of the fast unto death ended with due ceremony.

On February 11, 1933, Gandhi started a new weekly paper called *Harijan*, which provided a forum for Gandhi's projects and ideas throughout the rest of his life. In the same month, the organization "*Harijan Sevak Sangh*" was founded, which soon became a powerful national organization devoted to the uplift of the outcastes. Gandhi, distressed by the lack of commitment among his followers in combating untouchability, started a self-purification fast of twenty-one days on May 8, 1933. He felt

peace throughout the fast, which he described as “an uninterrupted twenty-one days’ prayer.”⁴⁷

Gandhi, who was released on the first day of this fast lest the Government should be blamed for his possible death, inspired new actions of mass civil disobedience in the following months. He now felt that it was incumbent upon him to lead in individual disobedience. After giving the *Sabarmati Ashram* to the Harijans to serve as a technical school, Gandhi was about to set out with several *Ashram* members to the village of Ras where he and his companions were arrested on August 1. They were released three days later on August 4, with the orders to immediately leave Yeravda village and reside in Poona. Gandhi disobeyed this order and was summarily re-arrested, this time sentenced to one year imprisonment. The facilities that had been granted to him for his campaign against untouchability were subsequently withdrawn. Faced with these obstacles to his intended goals, Gandhi started a hunger strike on August 16. As his life was thought to be in danger, he was released unconditionally on August 23. Nearly three months later, on November 7, 1933, he set out on a propagandist tour on behalf of the *Harijans*, which lasted ten months and covered the major part of India.⁴⁸

On September 17, 1934, Gandhi announced his decision to retire from the primary membership of Congress party from 1st October, in order to engage himself in the development of village industries, *Harijan* service, and education through basic crafts. Gandhi resigned not only his leadership, but also his membership of Congress at its annual session in Bombay during October, 1934.⁴⁹ Even so, his leadership role, including that of major political decisions and movements taken under the Congress party continued to function as before. He remained involved as much in the policy issues including those concerning

the Congress ministries in 1937, which finally led to his leading 'The Quit India' movement in 1942.

Throughout that year, Gandhi also focused his attention on rural economic reconstruction. The All India Village Industries Association was established on October 26, 1934. This event was the culmination of Gandhi's rural development program that he had begun a decade prior. The aim of Gandhi's development model, mirrored in the All India Village Industries Association, was that a country like India—where the vast majority of citizens live in villages—must start its development process from the bottom-up. The most famous symbol of this approach was the spinning wheel (*Charkha*), and the most famous product of rural development was home-spun cloth (*Khadi*). Gandhi was not opposed to industrialization but he wanted industrialization in the form of small scale industries that benefited rural populations first and the rest of the country second. On April 30, 1936, he settled down at Sevagram, a village eleven miles from Wardha and made it his headquarter for all his activities. While there, Gandhi presided over a major educational conference at Wardha and outlined his scheme of education through basic crafts on October 22, 1937.

Gandhi continued to work unsuccessfully to bring Muslims and untouchable communities into the wider mainstream struggle for a unified India. These issues remained unresolved throughout various waves of Indian nationalism until Gandhi's death in 1948.

Quit India Movement August 8, 1942 - August 15th 1947

With World war⁵⁰ in progress, in March 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet, was sent by the British Government to settle the matter of dominion state to India. But Gandhi rejected Cripps's proposal out right when he saw it for

the first time because he did not want to compromise on matter of principle. Gandhi became more firmly convinced than ever that the British had no intention of voluntarily giving freedom to India, and that they must be induced under pressure to concede it. Finally, in August 1942, Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement (*Bharat Chhoro Andolan*). A resolution was passed on August 8, 1942 in Bombay by the All India Congress Committee, declaring its demand for an immediate end of British rule. The Congress decided to organize a mass nonviolent protest on the widest possible scale.⁵¹ Gandhi's slogan of "*Karengē ya Marengē*" ("Do or Die") inspired the nation. Every man, woman and child began dreaming of a free India.

The government's response to the movement was quick. The Congress was banned and most of its leaders were arrested before they could start mobilizing the people. The people, however, were unstoppable. There were *Hartals* (strikes) and demonstrations all over the country. People attacked all symbols of the British government such as railway stations, courts, and police stations. Railway lines were damaged and telegraph lines were cut.

The British responded with swift brutality. The army was called out to assist the police. There were *Lathi-charges* (stick pelting) and police fired at unarmed demonstrators. Protestors were arrested and tortured. During the first half of 1943, over thirty six thousand people had been jailed, including the convicted and those detained without trial on security grounds. The few leaders who escaped arrest went into hiding and tried to guide the mass movement from underground. Among them were Jai Prakash Narayan, S. M. Joshi, Aruna Asaf Ali, Ram Manohar Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan and Sucheta Kripalani.

By the end of the Second World War, Britain's place in the world had changed dramatically and the demand for independence could no longer be ignored.⁵² Gandhi, along with his wife Kasturba and his secretary Mahadeva Desai were kept in detention from August 9, 1942 to May 6, 1944. His secretary died while in detention in 1942 and his wife died in 1944. The Quit India movement, more than anything, united the Indian people against British rule. Although most demonstrations were suppressed by the time that Gandhi was released from prison in 1944.

Meanwhile, Hindu-Muslim relations progressively deteriorated. In 1940, M. A. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, demanded a separate state for Muslims. His basic argument was that Hinduism and Islam were not so much religions in the strict sense of the term, but two distinct social orders. To put two such social orders under the same state would only result in their slow destruction. India, therefore, had to be divided along religious lines. Based on this logic, the door to the partition of India was opened. This logic was contrary to all that Gandhi had stood for. He wanted India to be a multi-religious nation where the state would be neutral towards all religions and respectful to all the legitimate requirements of religions. This did not satisfy Jinnah and his negotiations with Gandhi completely broke down in 1944. Religious riots broke out in many parts of India, notably in Calcutta. From November 1946 to January 1947, in a last ditch effort to reconcile Hindus and Muslims, Gandhi, now aged seventy-seven, undertook another long march—the third of his career—this time in the worst affected areas of Bengal, visiting forty-seven villages, walking barefoot, covering large distances.

All this came to nothing when on August 15, 1947, India was freed from British rule but it was divided along religious lines into two nations, namely the secular Republic of India and the

Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Several millions of people were affected. Many lost their lives, their homes, their property, and their neighbours. The multi-cultural story of India was severely disrupted in the mass-migration of peoples that followed. Even the partition of India did not solve the Hindu-Muslim tensions. Radical Pathan tribes invaded Kashmir, forcing India to take military steps to prevent loss.

All through his struggle in India, Gandhi was jailed several times. He used to read and write a lot during these sojourns. Similarly he observed series of fasts for self purification as well as for bringing the violent followers to stop their acts and stay with the principle of *Satyagraha*. He did achieve his worldly objective of freeing India from British rule. Radical Hindus, on the other hand, found Gandhi as being too accommodating to the Muslims. One of their members, Nathuram Godse, assassinated the Mahatma on January 30, 1948, in New Delhi. He had barely reached the podium to conduct his usual evening prayer meeting, when the fatal attack occurred.

Analysis

Unlike his going to South Africa, Gandhi returned to India as a triumphant. He followed his experiments with *Satyagraha* in India but with greater enthusiasm, stricter discipline on himself as far as the definitions of his philosophical attributes, namely Truth, *Ahimsa*, *Aparigraha*, *Brhmacharya*, dietetic experiments including fasting, detailing eleven vows in Yerawada Mandir and writing a commentary, Gospel of Selfless action of *The Gita*. Besides fighting the British, his bigger problem was to develop harmony amongst Muslims, Hindu upper cast and Untouchable (*Shudra*) called as *Harijan* by him. Here we will try to build on his practice of *Satyagraha* and supporting spiritual values initially developed in South Africa and firmed up in India to gain freedom from the mighty British.

Gandhi's definition of the term *Satyagraha* is all inclusive of *Ahimsa*, adherence to vows, self restraint, and fasting i.e. all in one to continue insistence on Truth till realized. *Satyagraha* implies self effort through self suffering. Thus *Satyagraha* is like observing austerities / *tapa* to annihilate bondage of karmas or purify the soul of its impurities through its own effort to attain the highest objective of life.⁵³

He had practised it successfully in South Africa and wished to test it in India to the extent of its applicability in India. He worked harder to use it as a potent weapon based on truth-force/soul-force/love-force/*Ahimsa*. To encourage fellow countrymen to join his movement '*Satyagraha*' for freedom of India, he said:

"I have no doubt that British government is a powerful government, but I have no doubt also that *Satyagraha* is a powerful sovereign remedy."⁵⁴ *Satyagraha* is a matchless weapon and those who wield it are strangers to disappointment.

He said 'Experience had taught me that civility is the most difficult part of *Satyagraha*. Civility does not mean here the mere outward gentleness of speech cultivated for the occasion, but an inborn gentleness and desire to do the opponent good. These should show themselves in every act of a *Satygrahi*.'⁵⁵ He further explained the following four conditions for a successful strike

- i. Never to resort to violence
- ii. Never to molest blacklegs
- iii. Never to depend on alms
- iv. To remain firm, no matter how long the strike continued, and to earn bread, during the strike, by any other honest manner.

These conditions were amply demonstrated in the beginning of his career in India during the strike against mill-owners, when volunteers from strikers to fill sand in *Ashram* were sought. Anasuyabehn led the way with a basket on her head and soon stream of striking labourers carrying on head appeared....⁵⁶

He set up *Sabarmati Ashram* sited between a jail and a crematorium, as he believed that a *satyagrahi* has invariably to go to either place.⁵⁷ As already mentioned, some rules and regulations, known as *Ekadash Vrata* were written and adopted for practice by all inhabitants of the *Ashram*.⁵⁸

He found that the masses were illiterate. So he started setting up schools wherever he went for *Satyagrahis* and their families. He set up newspapers like *Young India*, *Harijan*, *Navjivan* to popularize his day to day thinking and activities.

He conducted the first experiment of *Satyagraha* in India during the first meeting at a reception at Mr Jehangir Petit's place in Bombay. He wore the typical Kathiawadi cloak, turban and dhoti when everyone else was dressed in western cloths in the glittering hall. He did so again in the reception by Gujaratis where Jinnah also attended. Everyone spoke in English but he spoke in Gujarati.

He continued the practice of *Satyagraha* all through, first by starting it on a local nature (Kheda, Mill-owners strike and Champaran) and later extended it to entire India. Kheda *Satyagraha* marks the beginning of an awakening amongst the peasants of Gujarat and the beginning of their true political education.⁵⁹

He used different names like Civil disobedience, Dandi March, Do or Die, Swadeshi, Swaraj and Quit India movement for

Satyagrahas. As a result he was sent to jail 17 times and spent 69 months⁶⁰ there. Similarly he observed penitential fasts 15 times for a total of 119 days⁶¹. Twice he observed fasts unto death but revoked after successful resolution of the objective

It is worth mentioning about two prominent Jains who were instrumental in making *Satyagraha* successful; Dr. Pranjivan Mehta in shaping and making the Gandhi's mission successful in England, South Africa and India and Sheth Ambalal and family who supported Gandhi in personal capacities as volunteers, with financial support and undertaking several charitable projects for social benefit championed by Gandhi. Both these individuals and their families displayed amply the practice of Jain way of life based on *Ahimsa* in conduct, *Anekant* in thought and *Aparigraha* as lifestyle. A brief account of both is given here:

Dr. Pranjivan Mehta (1864-1932). Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, a Jain medical doctor and lawyer from Morbi in Kathawad region, was one of the persons who had made a profound impact on Gandhi and his *Satyagraha* movement.⁶² Dr Pranjivan Mehta had been a close friend and benefactor of Gandhi since the latter's days in London to study law. He had helped Gandhi get settled to pursue his Law studies in England. Dr Mehta received Gandhi at Bombay port and took him to his home, introduced to Rajchandra (Gandhi's spiritual mentor and guru), son in law of his brother. Later on Dr Mehta was always available to help Gandhi financially (like setting up *Ashramas* at Phoenix and at Ahmedabad as well as Gujarat Vidhyapeeth). Gandhi used to stay with him whenever possible, like one month long stay at The West Minister Hotel London and at his homes in India and Rangoon. Dr. Mehta's daughter, Ramaben and daughter in law Lilawati actively participated in freedom struggle and as members of Azad Hind Fauz.

Dr. Mehta forecasted that Gandhi can bring *Swaraj* in India by freeing it from the slavery of British. Gandhi had said in a meeting on Feb 21st 1940 at Malikanda (now in Bangladesh)

“You may not perhaps know for whom I wrote Hind Swaraj. The person is no more and hence there is no harm in disclosing his name. I wrote the entire Hind Swaraj for my dear friend Dr. Pranjvan Mehta. All the arguments in the book are reproduced as it took place with him. I stayed with him for a month at The Westminster Palace Hotel London in 1909”⁶³

Similarly Dr. Mehta was one of the earliest to suggest to Mahatma that he meticulously plan and launch a nationwide campaign against British Salt Tax. This was about a decade before 1930 when the March actually happened. Mehta came to India in 1926 and again in 1929, to discuss the Salt March and other issues. Exactly one year before Gandhi embarked on the historic march, he visited Mehta in Burma in March 1929. Mehta, was crippled and in poor health. When Gandhi announced that he would embark on the march to Dandi, Mehta secured his permission to come to India and join the salt *Satyagraha*.⁶⁴ However, his poor health prevented this. Mehta died in 1932. On August 4, 1932 Gandhi wrote to his friend and associate Henry Polak, "I have lost a lifelong faithful friend." On his death, Gandhi described Dr Pranjvan Mehta as his greatest friend and benefactor with whom he had intense discussions on the idea of Salt March almost a decade before he set off on it in 1930. Mahatma Gandhi had made several references about his meetings in England, South Africa, Rangoon and Bombay with him in his autobiography.

Ambalal Sarabhai (1890–1967). The Sarabhai family has been a major business family of India belonging to the Shrimal Jain community. Sheth Ambalal was a leading industrialist of

Ahmedabad who also played an important role in India's freedom struggle. He had five daughters and three sons.

He was the president of the Ahmedabad Mill Owner's Association in the year 1918-1919 and also a member of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation when Gandhi organized a strike against mill-owners. He had been an ardent supporter of Indian independence movement since 1916, when even Gandhi had not yet launched any big movement in India. Gandhi's *ashram* at Sabarmati in his starting years ran from funds donated by Sarabhai. He supported Gandhi financially and otherwise at several occasions when needed most. The family was involved in the independence movement for India and later with the developmental tasks undertaken by the government of India by setting up a number of foundations to support development of underprivileged. His wife Sarladevi got inspired by the Maria Montessori philosophy and in the year 1922, Montessori sent E. M. Standing to India for the homeschooling of Sarabhai children.

Anusuya Sarabhai was born in 1885 into the Sarabhai family. She is the sister of Ambalal. She underwent an unsuccessful child marriage at the age of 13. With the help of her brother, she went to England in 1912 to take a medical degree, but switched to the London School of Economics when she realised the animal dissection involved in obtaining a medical degree was in violation of her Jain beliefs. Once back in India, she worked for betterment of women and the poor; she opened a school for striking women and their children. She decided to get involved in the labour movement after witnessing exhausted female mill workers returning home after a 36-hour shift. She helped organise textile workers in 1914 strike in Ahmedabad. Gandhi, a friend of the family, was by then acting as a mentor to Sarabhai. Anusuyabehn served Gandhi severally thereafter.

Mridula was one of eight children of Ambalal and Sarla Devi, and a sister of Vikram Sarabhai. She was home-schooled by a succession of British and Indian teachers under the supervision of her parents. In 1928, she was enrolled for college education at Gujarat Vidhyapeeth but dropped out the following year, ostensibly in order to participate in the Salt Satyagraha. At a young age, she heeded Gandhi's call to boycott foreign goods and institutions, and is said to have refused for this reason to go abroad to study. She continued her involvement in India's freedom struggle.

The following statement⁶⁵ from Gandhi shows the deep respect for Sheth Ambalal and family:

The principal man at the back of the mill-owners unbending attitude towards the strike was Sheth Ambalal. His resolute will and transparent sincerity were wonderful and captured my heart. It was a pleasure to be pitched against him. The strain produced by my fast on the opposition, of which he was the head, cut me therefore to the quick. And then his wife, Sarla Devi was attached to me with the affection of a blood sister and I could not bear to see her anguish on account of my action. Anusuyabehn and a number of other friends and labourers shared the fast with me on the first day.

Thus exemplary Jains like Dr. Pranjivan Mehta and Sheth Ambalal along with their families continued to cement Jain principles and practices earlier imbibed in Gandhi from his family and Rajchandra.

Truth: Gandhi held that Truth is nothing but God. And whatever we understand by God is implied in Truth.⁶⁶ His prayer, '*...Ishwar allah tere naam, sabko Sanmati de bhagwan*', is an example to this effect. Further speaking of Truth, Gandhi said that for humans it is a relative term. We have seen earlier that

Gandhi's inspiration for the definition of Truth is similar to the doctrine of Multiplicity of viewpoints *Anekantavada* of Jains. He indicated his understanding and practice of Truth in South Africa (chapter III) which he continued in India as well. He said, "Our creed was devotion to truth". A few incidences which demonstrate Gandhi applying this doctrine are:

I was delighted. So were my client and senior counsel, and I was confirmed in my conviction that it was not impossible to practice law without compromising truth.⁶⁷

The Champaran inquiry was a bold experiment with Truth and *Ahimsa*.⁶⁸

My experiments in dietetics are dear to me as a part of my research in *Ahimsa*. They give me recreation and joy. But my use of goat's milk today troubles me not from the viewpoint of dietetic *Ahimsa* so much as from that of truth, no less than a breach of pledge. It seems to me that I understand the ideal of Truth better than that of *Ahimsa*, and my experience tells me that, if I let go my hold of Truth, I shall never be able to solve the riddle of *Ahimsa*. The ideal of Truth requires that vows taken should be fulfilled in the spirit as well as in the letter. In this case I killed the spirit-the soul of my vow by adhering to its outer form only.⁶⁹

Gandhi was loath to hide or connive at the weak points of the community or to the press for its rights without having purged of its blemishes like discrimination between Untouchable-Upper caste Hindus and Muslim amongst themselves. He invited Harijans to stay in Sabarmati Ashram and later lived in their quarters as one of them.

The Government of India Act (1909), failed to satisfy the demands of the national leaders. Repressive measures continued and the British were finding it difficult to quell the spirit of nationalism. It was at this time that the Home Rule Movement

began. The Viceroy was very keen for Gandhi to support the resolution which he did speaking in Hindi. Gandhi issued leaflets seeking support but cited many misdeeds of British rule also, like depriving the whole nation of arms.

Ahimsa: He practiced *Ahimsa* to the extreme as it was the principal means of *Satyagraha* to eliminate the suffering of the oppressed. He considered discrimination, inequality, hurting or killing, and use of force, as violence. His understanding of practice of *Ahimsa* was highly influenced by Jain doctrine from both absolute and practical viewpoints as seen from his statement:

Ahimsa is a comprehensive principle. We are helpless mortals caught in the conflagration of *himsa*. The saying, ‘life lives on life’ has a deep meaning. Man cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward *himsa*. The very fact of his living-eating, drinking and moving about – necessarily involves some *himsa*, destruction of life, be it ever so minute. A votary of *Ahimsa* therefore remains true to his faith if the spring of all his actions is compassion, if he shuns to the best of his ability the destruction of the tiniest creature, tries to save it, thus incessantly strives to be free from the deadly coil of *himsa*. He will be constantly growing in self-restraint and compassion, but he can never become entirely free from outward *himsa*⁷⁰

In political and social spheres, his understanding of *Ahimsa* was also influenced by other sources like Tolstoy and *The Gita*.

He lived the life of self denial and self effort himself (e.g. cleaning the pots, farm etc) even though he could easily afford a luxurious life. His entire struggle was based on the Jain doctrine of *Ahimsa*. He never used brute/physical force to oppose the oppressor and relied on soul force by exercising self restraint. He said,

If I could popularize the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in place of brute force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out season therefore, I shall discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering, and present it for acceptance to those who care, and if I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law.⁷¹

The rule of not killing the venomous reptiles has been practised for the most part at Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati Ashram. At each of these places we had to settle on wastelands. We have had, however, no loss of life occasioned by snakebite.Even if it be a superstition to believe that complete immunity from harm for twenty five years in-spite of a fairly regular habit of non-killing is not a fortuitous accident but a Grace of God, I should still hug that superstition.”⁷²

Gandhi continued to be always transparent in his efforts to mobilize public support for his movement. He felt that his *Ahimsa* would be put to its severest test and that the question presented the widest field for his experiments in *Ahimsa*. His support to *Khilafat* movement by Muslims is a case that involved deep introspection by Gandhi about the importance of Muslims in *Satyagraha*. So he went to Delhi for discussions with Viceroy Chelmsford for the support for Muslims but ended up supporting involvement of Indians in British engagements in the war. He agreed to address a letter to the Viceroy for support to Muslim demand⁷³

He forewarned the people about the dangers that lay ahead and to resist oppression / hardships peacefully without retaliating or using force. He always experienced sufferings of oppressed himself by being one of them like travelling third class, living in Harijan settlements, using only one piece of cloth as women

could not bathe due to non availability of another *saree* (one piece of six yards of cloth women use as dress to cover their body) to cover themselves while bathing. His long sojourns in Jail and fasting for 69 days are examples of his commitment to self suffering and *Ahimsa*. Thus *Ahimsa* became his religion and most potent weapon all through his struggle for freedom.

A good example of practice of *Ahimsa* during *Satyagraha* by both Gandhi and Jains was the Mill-strike in 1918. Sheth Ambalal and his family were Jains. Gandhi was fighting for the rights of mill workers against mill-owners whose president was Sheth Ambalal. Both sides were concerned about the pain and agony of each other, and yet Sheth Amblal, his sister Anusuyabehn and daughter Mridula were always by the side of Gandhi helping him to see that wives and children of strikers were properly taken care of. Similarly Gandhi was introspecting and wished to avoid the coercion effect of his fast on Sheth Ambalal.

So Gandhi vigorously kept his experiments of truth and *Ahimsa* all through his life.

Dietetic experiments based on nonviolent food /vegetarian food: He followed strict vegetarian diet that gradually excluded even cow's milk⁷⁴ and spicy or stimulating food etc as well. He started eating less (skip breakfast). He even stopped using salt, taking tea and ate before sunset.⁷⁵ We came across the following incidences about his dietetic experiments and adherence to the vows simultaneously:

During my visit to Dr Mehta in Rangoon: My fruitarian diet was a source of trouble to the host. But since Dr Mehta's home was as good as my own, I could control somewhat the lavishness of the menu. However I had not set any limit on the number of articles I might eat, the palate and the eyes refused to put an effective check

on the supply of varieties ordered. There were no regular hours for meals. I personally preferred having the last meal before nightfall. Nevertheless as a rule it could not be had before eight or nine. ⁷⁶

I nearly ruined my constitution during the recruitment campaign. In those days my food principally consisted of groundnut butter and lemons. This gave a serious attack of dysentery. I did not take serious notice of this, and went that evening to Ashram, as my wont every now and then. I scarcely took any medicine those days. I thought I should get well if I skipped a meal next day. I knew, however, that to be entirely free I must prolong my fast and, if I ate anything at all, I should have nothing but fruit juice. There was some festival that day, and although I had told Kasturba that I should have nothing for my midday meal, she tempted me and I succumbed. As I was under a vow of not taking any milk or milk product, she had specially prepared for me a sweet wheaten porridge with oil added to it instead of *ghi*. She had reserved a bowl of *mung* for me too. I was fond of these things and I readily took them, hoping that without coming to grief I should eat just enough to please Kasturba and to satisfy my palate. But the devil had been waiting for an opportunity. Instead of eating very little I had my fill of the meal. This was sufficient invitation to the angel of death. Within an hour dysentery appeared in acute form. The same evening I had to go to Nadiad where dysentery continued in spite of treatment (I refused to take any external medicine)... Sheth Ambalal with his good wife came down to Nadiad, conferred with my co-workers and removed me with greatest care to his Mirzapur bungalow in Ahmedabad. It was impossible for anyone to receive more loving and selfless service than I had the privilege of having during this illness. Surrounded as I was with all the love and attention that could be showered on me under Sheth Ambalal's roof, I began to get redress and urged him to remove me to the Ashram. At Ashram, a number of doctors came and advised eggs or advised meat broth instead of milk. But for all of them his answer was NO. He said "for me the question of diet was not one to be determined on the authority of *Shastras*. It was the one interwoven with my course of life which is guided by principles no longer depending on outside authority. I had no

desire to live at the cost of them. How could I relinquish a principle in respect of myself when I had enforced it relentlessly on my wife, children and friends?⁷⁷

Fasting: He continued observing fasts to help him stay healthy and enhance self restraint and observe *brhmacharya* that are good for soul. Skipping a meal and observing a day's fast were his way of life to reverse any deviation in his dietetic experiments. Similarly he would always put a limit as to the number of food items he would consume and avoided milk or milk products completely. He experimented with longer fasts also as penitential fasts (15 times for a total of 119 days during his *Satyagrahas* in India) for the transgressions committed by him and his colleagues or others involved in *Satyagraha*. These practices are similar to the first three external austerities in Jainism where fasting, eating less than the normal daily quantity, giving up one type/taste of food everyday are required to be observed to enhance self restraint.

Vows as the basis of lifestyle: In South Africa, he established the vows to be observed by all *Ashramites* including him. To enforce their sanctity at that time, he said:

When an intelligent person makes a resolution deliberately he never swerves from it by a hair's breadth. With him the resolution carries as much weight as a declaration made with God as a witness..... a man who violates an oath administered to him is not only ashamed of himself but is also looked upon by the society as a sinner. ⁷⁸

Not only did he continue the simple lifestyle and observances as practiced in South Africa, but made them more stringent. He shifted to wearing one piece of cloth only (as poor women had only one saree and hence could not take bath), using walking for health and economic (a habit he acquired and talked about in his

school days) reasons and for short journeys on daily basis, as well as to get masses involved in *Satyagraha*- like Dandi March. His made his food habits as simple as could be for spiritual purification to invoke soul-force. He continued practice of celibacy and *Aparigraha*.

Gandhi described an interesting episode while returning from the trip to Hardvar to prove the efficacy of vows and dietetic experiments in *Satyagraha*:⁷⁹

If the pilgrimage to Hardvar and to the Kumbha fair was not sinful, I must impose some act of self denial on myself in atonement for the iniquity prevailing there and purify myself. This was quite natural for me. My life is based on disciplinary resolutions. I thought of the unnecessary trouble I had caused to my hosts in Rangoon and Calcutta, who had so lavishly entertained me. I therefore decided to limit the articles of my daily diet and to have my final meals before sunset. So I pledged myself never whilst in India to take more than five articles in twenty four hours, and never to eat after the dark.... if I counted medicine amongst the five articles, and made no exception in favour of special articles of diet. I therefore decided that there should be no exception on any account whatsoever.

I have been under these vows now for thirteen years. They have subjected me to a severe test, but I am able to testify that they have also served as my shield. I am of the opinion that they have added a few years to my life and saved me from many illnesses.

In Jainism, the first four external penances relate to control of palate, namely *Anshana* (fasting), *Unodari* (eating less than normal quantity), *Rasparityaga* (giving up one of the five types of tastes like acrid, bitter, astringent, sour and sweet one day each i.e. abstinence from one or more articles of food like milk, curd, ghee, oil, sugar and salt; and from one or more kinds of tastes), *Vrataparisankhyan* (mental vow to accept food from a

right person-place and of a specific type only). Jains normally put restrictions to the number of food items they take as a check for observing these austerities. Day dining is a requirement for health and observance of *Ahimsa*.

Gandhi established a set of eleven vows, called *Ekadash Vrata* for observance by all *Ashramites* who were also known as *Satyagrahis*. These vows were firmed up later in India and published as a handbook called *Yerawada Mandir* as it was completed during his stay in Yerawada Jail.

Religion: He paid equal respect to all religions. He worked very hard to keep Muslims in his *Satyagraha*'s fold as indicated by him, "It would be on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity that my *Ahimsa* would be put to its severest test and that the question presented the widest field for my experiments in *Ahimsa*"⁸⁰

Gandhi was deeply influenced by the value system he inherited from his family; from the area he was born and brought up; his own objectives of self-improvement and uplift of his fellow countrymen. Introspection of his own actions continuously in line with his experiences, inner voice, study of religious texts, and contacts with religious political and social teachers were the hallmark of his philosophy. Realization of the Truth was his ultimate objective of life. He improvised the path of Truth realization to involve his countrymen for their betterment as well. For example, he extended the self-improvement path to *Sarvodaya* (uplift of all), self-reliance and *Sanyam* (self-restraint) to *Swaraj* and *Swadeshi* and use of *Ahimsa* to eradicate untouchability and win the hearts of his opponents. In the next chapter we shall discuss his eleven observance/vows which he prescribed for his fellow *Ashram* inhabitants along with other doctrines applied by him in his pursuit of realization of Truth. In

fact Gandhi always practiced first whatever he preached to the society.

Gandhi was extremely careful and worked hard to keep the untouchables within the fold of Hindus and called them as Harijan. In fact he called himself as Harijan by choice. He was against the superstition like purifying by taking a bath in the river Ganga etc. He considered service of humanity as service to God and always said that his life's mission as self-realization or seeing God face to face, similar to that Jains says as *atmanubhuti* or experiences the true nature of pure self.

Gandhi was highly religious himself and believed in self sacrifice as the purest form of religious practice. He studied the *Gita* all his life and called it as his solace. He taught the *Gita* for 40 long years and wrote a commentary on it called *Gospel of Selfless action or Anasakti Yoga* which provides a deep insight in his philosophy and thinking. We shall discuss his philosophy expressed in the *Gita* eleven observances in details in the next chapter as they both show a deep impact of Jainism as can be seen by the comments from Tilak (most revered *Gita* scholar) that he had always taken Gandhi to be a Jain.⁸¹

We also came across a book '*Gandhi Ujjawal Vartalap*' edited by Ratna Kumar Jain and published by Svashrya Prakashan Samiti Delhi in 1954. The book shows Gandhi had deep insight and appreciation of Jain philosophy during his several meetings with Jain female ascetic Sati Ujjawalaji in Bombay in 1944. To support this statement, we reproduce the concluding dialogue between Gandhi and Sati Ujjawala ji:

One day Gandhiji was offering curd. Then Satiji said- Bapu! If you take my pot in your hand and pour curd out of your cup directly in it, then no curd will be spilled. Gandhiji took the wooden pot of Satiji in his hand and according to his jovial nature

said, while pouring curd – Mahasatiji-I am not so lucky to hold such a pot? If it was so, then all worldly complications in my life would end and I could live in peace.⁸²

Conclusion

This chapter narrates several events in Gandhi's life that demonstrate the unique qualities that made him an unparalleled leader and Mahatma. First, he endeavoured toward transparency in his thoughts and actions. He was forthright and reflective regarding his mistakes and attempted to correct them. Second, Gandhi had a profound desire to support and restore the dignity of all human beings. His method of struggle for independence was unique in this regard as he aimed his nonviolent actions at problems rather than individuals.

Of course, Gandhi's *Satyagrahas* did not always succeed in resolving the specific issues they target. However, they were each successful in focussing on the issues and the methods used to test the moral standard of the people involved in it. When the nonviolent struggle faltered, Gandhi joined his fellow citizens by sharing the failure and offering personal penance in the form of fasting and withdrawal from the struggle to reflect. He gave credit to the people for their victories.

Third, Gandhi uniquely combined nonviolent resistance with constructive efforts. He aimed to reject unjust practices but also to develop positive alternatives. While many of his followers and colleagues were confused about striking a balance between the two, Gandhi did not find it difficult. Struggling against oppressive structures and cultivating life-affirming models were two related tasks in Gandhi's life, and each had the seeds of the other imbedded in it. Gandhi's focus on the purity of means created a meaningful synthesis between the individual revolutionary, the wider revolution community, and the objective of the revolution. These extraordinary qualities made Gandhi a

Mahatma—a great soul, and not merely a great leader. Although it may be tempting to compare the life and works of Gandhi, and the manner of his death, with those of his contemporaries such as Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Hitler, yet, one must ask in such comparisons whether nonviolence, the spiritual life, the spirit of toleration of one's opponents, and faith in the efficacy of peaceful means to settling disputes have a place in the modern world, or whether we should rely on unmitigated political violence to bring about change in society and in the hearts and minds of people.

As a political leader, Gandhi embodied a unique combination of political engagement and saintliness. Yet, unlike other saints, he did not keep himself aloof from the people; and unlike other politicians, he did not free himself from moral responsibilities. His character was a rare combination of religiosity, moral values, rationalism, intuition, open-mindedness, and firmness. He was a leader who valued ancient traditions with a practical attitude. Above all, he remained devoted to the practice of Self-improvement and to the aim of achieving spiritual realization while working tirelessly to improve the material conditions of the masses.

Gandhi might not have been born as a Jain, yet his philosophy and values, actions / karmas do demonstrate a strong imprint of Jain philosophy and way of life that is visible although in his life.

Notes and References

¹ *My.Ex.*, op.cit, p. 317

² *My.Ex. I*, p. 311.

³ *My.Ex.*. 331-2

⁴ *My.Ex. I* p 353

⁵ *My.Ex. I*, p.394

⁶ M. K. Gandhi, *Ashram Observance in Action* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publication House, in soft copy), pp.5-8

Hand-weaving was the principal industry with some carpentry as accessory to it. No servants were engaged; therefore cooking, sanitation, fetching water, — everything was attended to by the Ashramites. Truth and other observances were obligatory on them all. Distinctions of caste were not observed. Untouchability had not only no place in the Ashram, but its eradication from Hindu society was one of our principal objectives. Emancipation of women from some customary bonds was insisted upon from the first. Therefore women in the Ashram enjoy full freedom. Then again it was an Ashram rule that persons following a particular faith should have the same feeling for followers of other faiths as for their co-religionists.....

⁷ In the Champaran district of Bihar, the cultivators were forced by Europeans to grow indigo, a blue dye, and this imposed on them untold sufferings. They could not grow the food they needed, nor did they receive adequate payment for the indigo. Gandhi was unaware of this until an agriculturist from Bihar, Rajkumar Shukla, met him and told him of the woes of the people of Champaran. He requested Gandhi to go to the place and see for himself the state of affairs there. Gandhi was then attending the Congress meeting at Lucknow and he did not have time to go there. Rajkumar Shukla followed him about, begging him to come and help the suffering villagers in Champaran. Gandhi at last promised to visit the place after he had visited Calcutta. When Gandhi was in Calcutta, Rajkumar was there too, to take him to Bihar.

⁸ *My.Ex.1*, op.cit., pp.377-84

⁹ *My.Ex.1* p371

¹⁰ *My.Ex.1*, p370

¹¹ *Indian peasants in Champaran campaign for rights, 1917*, <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/indian-peasants-champaran-campaign-rights-1917>, accessed on 11February 2014

¹² M. K. Gandhi, *Auet*, op.cit, p.393

¹³ *Ahmedabad Satyagraha*, <http://www.wowessays.com/dbase/ad1/bsw271.shtml>, accessed on 17January 2014

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- ¹⁴ Under the Land Revenue Rules, if the crop was four *Annas* (25 percent of standard production) or under, the cultivators could claim full suspension of the revenue assessment for the year. According to the official figures the crop was said to be over four *Annas*. The contention of the cultivators, on the other hand, was that it was less than four *Annas*.
- ¹⁵ *Champaran and Kheda Satyagraha*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Champaran_and_Kheda_Satyagraha, accessed on 12 February 2014
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp.400-402
- ¹⁷ *Kheda Satyagraha 1918*, <http://www.gktoday.in/kheda-satyagraha-1918/>, ...The government in Bombay rejected the petition and warned the peasants that non-payment would result in the confiscation of land and property, as well as possible arrest. The farmers did not resist arrest, nor retaliate to the force employed with violence. Instead, they used their cash and valuables to donate to the *Gujarat Sabha* which was officially organizing the protest. The revolt was astounding in terms of discipline and unity. Even when all their personal property, land and livelihood were seized, a vast majority of Kheda's farmers remained firmly united in support of Patel. Gujaratis sympathetic support to the revolt in other parts resisted the government machinery, and helped to shelter the relatives and property of the protesting peasants. Those Indians who sought to buy the confiscated lands were ostracized from society.
- ¹⁸ The Khilafat movement (1919–1924) was a pan-Islamic, political protest campaign launched by Muslims in British India to influence the British government and to protect the Ottoman Empire during the aftermath of World War I. The position of Caliph after the Armistice of Mudros of October 1918 with the military occupation of Istanbul and Treaty of Versailles (1919) fell into a disambiguation along with the Ottoman Empire's existence. The movement gained force after the Treaty of Sevres (August 1920) which imposed the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire and gave Greece a powerful position in Anatolia, to the distress of the Turks. The European powers had played a leading role in reducing the might of Turkey in Europe to Eastern Thrace, Constantinople

and the straits in the Balkan Wars (1912-13). To seek revenge, the Turks decided to side with the Germans against the Allied Forces. The Indian Muslims supported this decision.

Muhammad Ali argued that for Muslims to accept mandates over Iraq, Syria and Palestine would amount to a total disregard of the wishes of the Holy Prophet (S. A. W.). Thus the Muslims of India launched the *Tehrik-i-Khilafat*. The objectives were- (1) To maintain the Turkish Caliphate, (2) To protect the holy places of the Muslims, and (3) To maintain the unity of the Ottoman Empire. There was absolute unanimity among the Indian Muslims. Though separated from Turkey by thousands of miles, they were determined to fight Turkey's battle from India. Here was a new threat to British rule.

¹⁹ Sanderson Beck, *Gandhi and India 1919-1933*, <http://www.san.beck.org/20-5-GandhiandIndia1919-33.html>, accessed on 21 December 2013

Afghan Amir Habibulla was murdered in February 1919 and was succeeded by his son Amanullah, who was suspected of being behind the murder. Incited by revolutionaries from India, he tried to rally his forces by attacking the British. His Afghan troops crossed through the Khyber Pass into India in early May, calling on the tribes to rise. Other Afghans were joined by Wazirs and Mahsuds, but they were repelled by General Dyer's forces. The British defeated the Afghan forces in the Khyber and occupied the frontier town of Dakka. After planes dropped bombs on Kabul and Jalalabad, Amanullah agreed to a truce in August. He negotiated with the Bolsheviks but signed a treaty with the British in November 1921. During the interval Waziristan was out of control, and regular troops from India had to replace the tribal militias on which the British had relied since Curzon.

The Sedition Committee named after Justice Rowlatt had submitted its report in April 1918, and it led to the repressive Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act in March 1919. A special court with three judges and no appeal was set up to meet in secret, and the Indian Evidence Act did not apply. Provincial governments could order any suspected person to furnish security, to reside in a particular area, or to abstain from any specified act.

They could search and arrest without a warrant, and the confined person had no right to a lawyer.

After the Government introduced the two bills to implement the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee in February 1919, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Madan Mohan Malaviya resigned from the committee. Gandhi called a conference and was chosen president of the Satyagraha Sabha to organize a campaign.

²⁰ *My.Ex.*, op.cit, pp.433-5

²¹ The Jallianwala Bagh massacre—also known as the Amritsar massacre—was a seminal event in the British rule of India. On April 13, 1919, a group of nonviolent Sikh and other protesters, along with *Baishakhi* pilgrims, had gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh garden in Amritsar, Punjab. On the orders of Brigadier General E.H. Dyer, the army fired on the crowd for ten minutes, directing their bullets largely towards the few open gates through which people were trying to run out. The dead numbered between 370 and 1000. The “brutality stunned the entire nation” resulting in a “wrenching loss of faith in Britain’s good intentions.” The ineffective inquiry and the initial accolades for Dyer by the House of Lords fuelled widespread anger, leading to the Non-cooperation Movement of 1920-22

²² *My.Ex.*, p.436 “As things stood, to break the order against my entry into the Punjab could, it seemed to me, hardly be classed as civil disobedience, for I did not see around me the kind of peaceful atmosphere that I wanted. ... for me, therefore, to offer civil disobedience at such a time, even if it were possible, would have been like fanning the flame. I therefore decided not to proceed to the Punjab in spite of the suggestion of the friends.” [Part V, Ch. XXXIV of the *Autobiography*]

²³ Gandhi called for Non cooperation movement due to colonial oppression exemplified in the Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala Bagh massacre, economic hardships to the common citizenry as a significant portion of Indian wealth was exported to Britain, as well jobs of Indian artisans as British factory-made goods replaced handmade goods. Among Indians, there was also a popular resentment over Indian soldiers dying during World War I while

fighting as part of the British Army in battles that otherwise had nothing to do with India.

²⁴ *Non-cooperation Movement*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-cooperation_movement, accessed on 12 February 2014 Three hundred people met in Delhi but could not resolve the increasing sectarian conflicts. In April 1926 a riot in Calcutta killed 44 and injured 584 people. The Hindu proselytizer Swami Shradhdhananda was assassinated by a Muslim fanatic in Delhi in December 1926. Between 1922 and 1927 an estimated 450 lives were lost and 5,000 people were injured in 112 communal riots

²⁵ Ibid, pp.135-7

²⁶ Ibid, p.141

²⁷ Ibid, p.149

²⁸ M.K. Gandhi, *CWVG*, Vol. 22, op.cit., pp. 302-5

²⁹ On February 5, 1922, at Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh (United Provinces), police shot at a procession, exhausted their ammunition, and retreated into their station. A mob set it on fire, killing twenty-two policemen. At Bareilly another mob was suppressed.

³⁰ H.S.L. Polak, *MGP*, op.cit., pp.152-3, Development in the working of Indian National congress from 1922 till maintained its attitude of non-cooperation but its emphasis kept on changing from constructive program to political program. Congress and went on promoting the National Schools and Village *Panchayats*. But many of its leaders, especially C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru, were opposing this tactics. However Gandhi's views prevailed. In December 1922, at its annual session, Indian National Congress at Gaya decided to form the Swarajya Party within Congress. At a meeting of the All India Congress Committee in June, 1924, Gandhi induced the majority to adopt a rule by which every congressman elected to any office or committee must pay his subscription, not in cash, but in the form of two thousand yards of self-spoon yarn which he must contribute every month. Das and his friends walked out in protest Motilal also doubted that spinning cotton would bring them closer to *Swaraj*. (H.S.L. Polak, *MGP*, op.cit., p.163)

After C.R. Das died in June 1925, the General Council of the Swarajya Party decided to cooperate with the Government. When the All India Congress Committee met at Patna in September, Gandhi suggested that the Congress emphasize the political work of the Swarajya Party even more than the constructive program. In December 1925, the Swarajist members walked out of the councils in Uttar Pradesh, the Punjab, Assam, Bihar and Orissa, Madras, and Bombay. Swarajist members left the Bengal Council and the Central Provinces Council in March 1926. (Vincent Sheean, *Mahatma Gandhi: A Great Life In Brief* (New York: A. Knopf Inc., 1955), pp.152, 156-7)

³¹ Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (Australia: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006), p.202

³² K.P. Menon, "The Great Trail" in Home A. Jack, ed., *MGRR*, op.cit, p. 205

³³ The Sultan of Turkey fled from Istanbul in November 1922, and his successor Mustapha Kemal abolished the *Khilafat*. In Malabar, the Moplahs, who were fanatical Muslims, attacked and pillaged Hindu landlords and tried to force people to convert to Islam. The Moplah rebels killed forty-three government troops, most of whom were Gurkhas, but in the fighting they suffered major losses: 2226 killed, 1615 wounded, 5688 captured and 38,256 surrendered. Much violence had occurred on both sides during this campaign, and Gandhi realized that more education in nonviolence was needed. The non-cooperation campaign did not achieve its goals, but thousands of people had lost faith in the government and had been moved to action. The Indian National Congress had become a powerful movement with mass support and was dedicated to nonviolent revolution. In spite of a growing fluency in nonviolent actions, communal riots between Hindus and Muslims broke out in Calcutta in May 1923 and lasted for several days. The riots sporadically erupted in various towns and villages. The scurrilous attack on Muhammad in the book *Rangila Rasul* (The Gay Prophet) provoked riots in 1924, and the author was murdered in 1929. Muslims attacked fifteen Hindu temples in Gulbarga in Nizam's territory in 1924. The worst riot was at Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province in September 1924 that killed 36

Hindus and burned 473 houses and shops. Investigators could not agree on who started the violence, and the British Government had allowed the looting.

³⁴ Sanderson Beck, *Gandhi and India 1919-1933*, <http://www.san.beck.org/20-5-GandhiandIndia1919-33.html>, accessed on 21 December 2013

³⁵ H.S.L. Polak, *MGP*, op.cit., p.163.Refusing to pay taxes, the lands of the peasants were seized and put up to auction; their buffaloes were taken; many peasants were imprisoned for long terms by the Government. In spite of all this, they remained nonviolent. The campaign lasted six months, and hundreds were arrested.

³⁶ Beginning in February 1930, Gandhi's thoughts swayed towards the British salt tax, one of many economic improprieties used to generate revenue to support British rule, as the focal point of nonviolent political protest. The British monopoly on the salt tax in India dictated that the sale or production of salt by anyone but the British Government was a criminal offense punishable by law.³⁶ More so than in more temperate climates, salt was invaluable to the people of India, many of whom were agricultural labourers and required the mineral for metabolism in an environment of immense heat and humidity where sweating was profuse. Occurring throughout low-lying coastal zones of India, salt was readily accessible to labourers who were instead forced to pay money for a mineral which they could easily collect themselves for free. (Homer A. Jack, *GSW* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), p.235)

Moreover, the controversy over salt was a concern that appealed across regional, class, and ethnic boundaries—a criteria that was important to Gandhi. Everyone needed salt, and the British taxes on it had an impact on all of India.

Led by an “inner voice” during this period of strategic uncertainty, Gandhi used the British Government's salt tax monopoly as a catalyst for a major *Satyagraha* campaign. According to Gandhi scholar Judith Brown (1977), the choice of the salt tax as a strategic protest point was ingenious because every peasant and every aristocrat understood the necessity of salt in everyday life.

The conflict over salt was common enough so as not to alienate congressional moderates and was simultaneously an issue of such significant importance as to mobilize a mass following. (Anthony Copley, *Gandhi: Against the Tide* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1987), pp.46-8).

³⁷ Geoffrey Ashe, *Gandhi: A Study in Revolution* (London: Heineman Ltd., 1968), p. 301

³⁸ M. K. Gandhi, "Victory in South Africa" in Louis Fischer, ed., *The Essential Gandhi* (New York: Vintage, 1962), pp.84-111

³⁹ Homer A. Jack, *GSW*, op. cit, p.237

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp.240-3

⁴¹ B.R. Ambedkar born into a caste of street-sweepers but was unwilling to sweep the streets. Ambedkar's caste had been employed at British military bases, and some of its members, including his father, had thus become rather better off than other Untouchables. Ambedkar attended school and, notwithstanding the humiliations there due to his Untouchable status, showed such academic promise that an enlightened maharaja undertook to subsidize his higher education. In due time he earned an M.A. degree at Columbia University in New York, and a Ph.D. at the University of London, and studied Sanskrit at the University of Berlin. He was unique. (based on *Dhananjay Keer's Dr. Ambedkar. Life and Mission*, Popular Prakashan; 4th ed., 2009)

⁴² See *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, vol. i (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1953), p.52

⁴³ There was one very significant difference, however. The Muslims were at least concentrated in the North West and North East part of India. The Harijans, on the other hand, were scattered throughout India, but hardly formed a majority in any part of India. A demand for a separate state for them would have created tension in the country and the damage would have been done to the Harijans who formed a minority in almost every village where they lived. Gandhi also wanted to bring the Harijans in the mainstream of Hindu society.

⁴⁴ Narayan Desai, *My Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 2011), p.126-128

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 127

Gandhi wrote: “My fast has reference only to separate electorate.” As soon as that is withdrawn the letter of the vow will be satisfied and I would be bound to call off the fast. But a very heavy responsibility will then lie upon me of having a substitute that is infinitely superior to separate electorate.... If you will not resent my saying it, I would like to say that I am a ‘touchable’ by birth, I am an ‘untouchable’ by choice. And it was in this dual capacity that I wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare then the Prime Minister. It is that dual capacity that has compelled the fast. Looking at the matter in this light I must say that I am not in love with the idea of statutory reservation. While it is not open to the same objection that separate electorate is, I do not have a shadow of a doubt that it will prevent the natural growth of the suppressed classes and will remove the incentive to honourable amends from the suppressers. What I am aiming at is a heart-understanding between the two, the greatest opportunity of repentance and reparation on the part of the suppressers.I would therefore favour widest possible franchise for the suppressed and establish a convention between the two sections for securing proper election of representatives of the suppressed....Nothing will satisfy me till the last vestige of untouchability is gone. I would therefore insist on a statutory declaration that all public places of worship, wells, schools, etc., should be open to the suppressed, precisely on the same terms as the suppressers....”

⁴⁶ Ibid, pp. 128-30

On the evening of September 22nd 1932, Ambedkar and his three colleagues came to meet Gandhi. Ambedkar said to Gandhi: “We must accept that in the country there are two groups belonging to two different ideologies. I should get my compensation....The decision of the Government gives me seventy-one seats and I feel that is a just, reasonable and definite allocation.”..... “Over and above that I get the right to vote and contest elections in the general constituencies, I also get a franchise in the labourer constituencies. We do realise that you are of immense help to us.” Gandhi said, “Not to you personally.” “But I have only one quarrel with you, that is, you work for the so called national welfare and not for our interest alone. If you devoted yourself entirely for our

welfare, you would then become our hero”, Ambedkar complained. “Very sweet of you to say so”, Gandhi said. “I want political power for my community. That is indispensable for our survival. The basis of the agreement therefore should be: I should get what is due to me. I wish to tell the Hindus that I should be assured of my compensation.” Ambedkar added.

Gandhi said “You have clarified your position very beautifully. However, I should like to ask you one question... If I accept the primary election, the letter of my vow is not violated. I therefore accept the Clause but I would most certainly have to scrutinise its wording...I suspect something when you insist that the panel should consist only of three candidates. It does not give me sufficient place to turn in... I have to safeguard without any discrimination not the interest of one group alone but of the Depressed Class as a whole. I want to serve the untouchables. That is why I am not at all angry with you...when you use derogatory and angry words for me. I tell myself that I deserve that. I will not at all get angry even if you spit on my face. I say this with God as witness. I know that you have drunk deep of the poisoned cup. However, I make a claim, which will seem astounding to you. You are born an untouchable but I am an untouchable by adoption. As a new convert I feel more for the welfare of the community than those who are already there... You spoke the truth when you said that the welfare of untouchables is dearer to you than my own life. But do not be false to Harijans...Without eradicating untouchability, root and branch, the honour of Hindus cannot be saved. That can only happen when untouchables are treated at par with caste Hindus in every respect. A person who is regarded as ‘unseeable’ today should also have the opportunity to become the Viceroy of India. I had said in the first political speech I made on coming to India that I would like to make a Bhangi the President of the Congress.....About other issues you should put the Hindu Community on its honour...I know that the country will be ruined if I swerve from the stand I have taken.”

Whist other members of the Committee wished that the right to vote for the Constitution should be given to the people every five years, Ambedkar and his group insisted on a period of ten years.

Ambedkar explained his point of view: “We want to keep a section for punishing the Hindus that if they do not remove our disabilities, we could ask for a Harijan referendum; what objection could you have for such a referendum”.....Gandhi said, “You must be able to find out in the course of a year whether the Hindus are behaving properly with you or not...Either you put us on our honour or you do not...but that you are talking of a longer period indicates that you have reservations in your mind. If my utter truthfulness has any effect on you I tell you to put us on our honour.” Ambedkar did not have any reply to this. He got up saying, “We shall come tomorrow.”

After two hours of discussion somebody reported to Gandhi that in spite of Ambedkar’s best efforts the Depressed Class Party did not accept the period of five years. At last Birla found a way out by saying that the entire practice must automatically be stopped after ten years, during which period both the parties may get together and find another option. Gandhi was happy at this.

The document was signed. As Ambedkar came to Gandhi, Thakkar Bapa said, “Ambedkar has changed.” Gandhi said, “That is what you say, but Ambedkar does not!” Ambedkar said: “Yes, Mahatmaji, the change has taken place. You have been of great help. You have tried to understand me more than your people tried to make me understand. I feel that there is more similarity in both of us than in them.” Gandhi said, “Yes, of course.”.....

⁴⁷ H. S. L. Polak, *MGP*, op. cit, p.201

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Ibid. p.210

⁵⁰ H. S. L. Polak, *MGP*, op. cit, p.241-43: At the opening of the year 1942 almost the whole world was at war and the Viceroy declared arbitrarily that India was on the side of the Allies, without caring to consult the ministries in the provinces. The Congress ordered all its ministers to tender their resignations. On the issue of participation in the war, however, there were differences even among the High Command. Gandhi was willing to give unconditional moral support to the Allies, some members of High Command wanted to bargain for political freedom over this issue, and they would be willing to support the war efforts by men, arms and money. The

British government fighting loosing battles on the European front at that stage was in no mood to discuss any of the terms. It was the fundamental issue of war ideology that Gandhi was separated from the British, as Gandhi disapproved of all war- aggressive and defensive. He was also becoming fully convinced of the complete lack of sincerity of all British offers of freedom to India.

⁵¹ Ibid, pp.243-50

⁵² Ibid, pp. 250-275

⁵³ Appendix I Jainism Page 5: *Nirjara* (Dissociation/annihilation of bonded karmas) is affected by observing twelve types of *Tapa* (austerities) along with stoppage.

⁵⁴ *My.Ex.1*, page 339

⁵⁵ *My.Ex.1*, page 389

⁵⁶ *My.Ex.1*, page 384

⁵⁷ *My.Ex.1*, page 394

⁵⁸ M. K. Gandhi, *Ashram Observance in Action* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publication House, in soft copy), pp.5-8

Hand-weaving was the principal industry with some carpentry as accessory to it. No servants were engaged; therefore cooking, sanitation, fetching water, — everything was attended to by the Ashramites. Truth and other observances were obligatory on them all. Distinctions of caste were not observed. Untouchability had not only no place in the Ashram, but its eradication from Hindu society was one of our principal objectives. Emancipation of women from some customary bonds was insisted upon from the first. Therefore women in the Ashram enjoy full freedom. Then again it was an Ashram rule that persons following a particular faith should have the same feeling for followers of other faiths as for their co-religionists.....

⁵⁹ *My.Ex.1*, page 391

⁶⁰ <http://www.mkgandhi.org/arrestsofmahatma.htm>

⁶¹

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Fasts_undertaken_by_Mahatma_Gandhi

⁶² Review of the book “The Mahatma and the Doctor- The untold story of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta’ by Prof. S. R. Mehrotra of HP University Dr. Pranjivan Mehta (TOI Ahmedabad Feb 24th 2014)

on the anniversary of Dandi March: “Caption: Dandi March anniversary: Pranjivan Mehta first talked of Salt March with Mahatma

AHMEDABAD: The idea of the Salt March against oppressive British laws was for Mahatma Gandhi to show the world how the Raj unfairly imposed Britain's will on even the most basic aspects of Indian life.

Not many know that it was Dr Pranjivandas Jagjivandas Mehta, a Kathiawadi who Mahatma Gandhi described as his "greatest friend and benefactor", with whom Bapu had intense discussions on the idea of the Salt March almost a decade before he set off on it. History books today have little to say about this associate of Gandhi, who had a profound impact on Bapu's life and his Satyagraha movement in India.

"In a letter to the Mahatma, dated 8 September 1920, Pranjivandas urged Bapu to recognize the urgent necessity of a widespread and vigorous agitation against the salt tax, a question he had been interested in for years," says S R Mehrotra, in his book 'The Mahatma and the Doctor The Untold Story of Dr Pranjivan Mehta'. Mehrotra is a retired historian from Himachal Pradesh University who is a visiting fellow at St John's College, Cambridge University. He says Pranjivandas had been a close friend of Gandhi since the latter's days in London to study law. "Mehta was greatly excited when Gandhi launched the non-co operation movement in 1921 and wanted to return to India to take part in it. He was terribly concerned about the poverty of India, especially of the debt-ridden peasantry, and often sent Gandhi suggestions for social and economic improvement of the masses, especially the rural poor, "says Mehrotra, in a recent essay. Mehta suffered a major stroke by the mid-1920, while at his home in Burma. He had to spend most of 1920 and 1921 in Europe for treatment.

Mehta came to India in 1926 and again in 1929, to discuss the Salt March and other issues. Exactly one year before Gandhi embarked

on the historic march, he visited Mehta in Burma in March 1929. Mehta, was crippled and in poor health. When Gandhi announced that he would embark on the march to Dandi, Mehta secured his permission to come to India and join the salt satyagraha. His poor health however prevented this. Mehta died in 1932. On August 4, 1932 Gandhi wrote to his friend and associate Henry Polak, "I have lost a lifelong faithful friend."Dandi March anniversary: Pranjivan Mehta first talked of Salt March with Mahatma

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ S.R. Mehrotra, a retired historian from Himachal Pradesh University who is a visiting fellow at St John's College, Cambridge University. 'The Mahatma and the Doctor The Untold Story of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta'. He says Pranjivandas had been a close friend of Gandhi since the latter's days in London to study law. "Mehta was greatly excited when Gandhi launched the non-co operation movement in 1921 and wanted to return to India to take part in it. He was terribly concerned about the poverty of India, especially of the debt-ridden peasantry, and often sent Gandhi suggestions for social and economic improvement of the masses, especially the rural poor, "says Mehrotra, in a recent essay. Mehta suffered a major stroke by the mid-1920, while at his home in Burma. He had to spend most of 1920 and 1921 in Europe for treatment.

⁶⁵ *My.Ex.1*, page 384-386

⁶⁶ Shriman Narayan (ed.), *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol.6 (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1997), p.97

⁶⁷ *My.Ex.1* page 353.

⁶⁸ *My.Ex.1* page 371

⁶⁹ *My.Ex.1*, Page 404

⁷⁰ *My.Exp.1*, page 313

⁷¹ *My.Ex.1*, page 400; part of letter by Gandhi to viceroy extending support to recruitment of volunteers

⁷² *My.Ex.1* Page 382

⁷³ *My.Ex.1*, p393-4

⁷⁴ *My.Ex.1*, p 295 as per the advice of Raychandbhai earlier

⁷⁵ *My.Ex.1*, p 291

⁷⁶ *My.Ex.1* page 347

⁷⁷ *My.Ex.1*, P 400-403

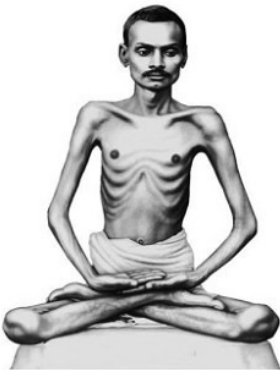
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- ⁷⁸ M.K.Gandhi *Satyagraha in South Africa*, www.gandhiheritageportal.org P 163-165; ‘.. to die but not to submit to the law..’
- ⁷⁹ *My.Ex.1*, page 348
- ⁸⁰ *My.Ex.1* page 392
- ⁸¹ Margeret Chatterjee, *Gandhi and the Challenges of Religious Plurality*, op.cit., p.33 ; and the quote by Tilak from ‘footage of a film covering his visit to and from England on the occasion of the 1931 Round Table Conference.’
- ⁸² Ratna Kumar Jain,*Gandhi Ujjawal Vartalap*,Swashrya Samiti Publication Delhi 1954, page 22

CHAPTER – V

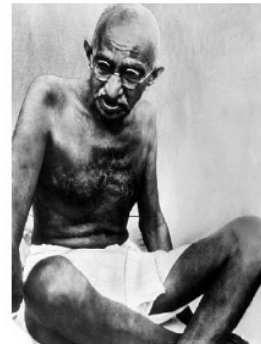
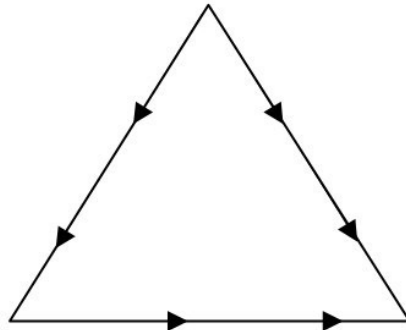
ROOTS AND ROUTES - AN ANALYSIS



Mahavira



Rajchandra



Gandhi

CHAPTER V

ROOTS AND ROUTES- AN ANALYSIS

“Three things in the Jaina system of thought influenced Gandhiji's outlook most. They were: *Ahimsa* on the religious side, *Anekanatavada* or *Syadvada* on the philosophical side, and the institutions of vows on the ethical side.”¹

In this chapter we shall analyze Gandhi's philosophy and his way of life to assess the impact of Jain philosophy and way of life on them, if any. A word about religions is important here. All Indic religions believe in life after death, transmigration of soul, and karma doctrine etc.² Each religions delves deeper and in greater details some features and emphasize them more to give them a unique identity; for example in Jainism detachment, *Ahimsa* at the subtlest level, *Anekantavada*, celibacy, vows and fasting are emphasized most.

Gandhi taught *The Gita*, referred it quite frequently in his autobiography as his refuge; read, taught, experienced and even wrote a translation cum commentary on it called ‘*The Gospel of Selfless Action*’. He also talked of the eleven vows or *Ekadash vrata* which he finally documented as *Yerawada Mandir*.

We shall discuss a number of values / philosophical factors and give their philosophical and ethical interpretations as per Jain doctrine and give corresponding references in *The Gita* particularly as translated by Gandhi to demonstrate similarity between the two. Of particular interest is the ‘Message of Gita’ in this translation (*The Gospel of selfless action or The Gita according to Gandhi*; Hindi version called *Anasaktiyoga*) written by Gandhi himself and made a part of the book that gives his thinking while translating verses of *The Gita*. Similarly ‘My

Submission' by Mahadeva Desai (translator) gives a very good scholarly view and analysis of *The Gita* and Gandhi's translation. A brief reading of Appendices I and II of the book will help the reader appreciate Jain interpretations given in this chapter. Special mention is made of the speech by Gandhi on November 16th 1921 about Rajchandra at Ahmedabad placed as attachment to Appendix II.

While writing this chapter, I have kept *Anekntavada* or multiplicity of viewpoints (Gandhi himself was highly appreciative of this and used it in majority of situations where he faced conflicts and had to provide their resolution) of Jain logic in mind to give Jain interpretation as I understood and Gandhi's translation and views for comparing both viewpoints simultaneously as well as looking at the Truth from both absolute and relative viewpoints.

The roots / values:

Till he met Rajchandra in 1891 in Bombay, Gandhi was a Vaishnav-Jain by practice due to his family, upbringing and place of birth and childhood. However, meeting Rajchandra³ in 1891 and correspondence till 1991 was perhaps the most significant event in Gandhi's life that started strengthening and sprouting of the roots of his philosophy and value system. He started having frequent and highly intense interactions with Rajchandra to build a strong religious foundation and way of life as a householder with the ambition for attaining self realization (*Moksha*).

Rajchandra could converse with Gandhi with ease on matters pertaining to religion and philosophy. Initially the relation between them was that of friends, but gradually it changed to that of a teacher and a disciple. Rajchandra gave him several of his own writings as well as Jain books like *Shaddarshan-*

samuchchaya for reading. Gandhi read and referred to these books regularly. Gandhi also spent time observing Rajchandra perform his business duties successfully in a detached manner, lead simple life, write and teach. These interactions with Rajchandra cemented Gandhi's earlier moral values like Vow of *Brahmacharya*, Vegetarian food and Dietetic experiments, Simplicity, Religious harmony, Equanimity, *Aparigraha*, Compassion, *Dharma*, Spiritual yearning and Service to humanity and soul. Thus the Jain values and way of life which were acquired by Gandhi from his parents and community during his childhood and schooling kept on growing on him. These values, though latent, as Gandhi himself has said, had a profound impact on him. In this manner, Gandhi later on adopted such legacies with his autonomous interpretation and subsequent variations for social uplift as well.

Gandhi's life in India was the beginning of the formative phase of his life as bread earner and to acquire and experience spiritual values and their application in life, a process which was greatly impacted by Jain doctrine through Rajchandra. However due to difficulties Gandhi faced in earning money to support his family in India, he accepted an offer to go to South Africa⁴ in 1893. Within a year of his reaching South Africa, Gandhi underwent several experiences of racial discrimination/ hatred (appearance in the court dressed in a turban, train and coach journey to Johannesburg and Pretoria) that gave him a clear picture of the plight of Indians there as well as his own status in a state under colonial rule. He settled there as God's wish and continued various social uplift activities even at the cost of his professional career. His friends in South Africa were pressing Gandhi to convert to Christianity or Islam. Gandhi was bewildered and had started wondering if Hindu religion was suitable enough to meet his religious needs. He entered into correspondence in India and

England with friends from different religions with whom he had trust and mailed a set to questions to them his friends.⁵

Gandhi continued his spiritual and religious discussions with Rajchandra from South Africa through letters. He wrote to Rajchandra first in 1894 from South Africa seeking clarification to a number of issues concerning self realization, God, *Avataras*, purpose of life, religion etc. He made a questionnaire of 27 questions (these 27 questions and their answers by Rajchandra are given in Appendix-II). These questions are indeed revealing to understand the turmoil going on in Gandhi's mind and the impact of answers from Rajchandra (Gandhi always referred to him as Raychandbhai or *Kavi*) in firming up his beliefs on these issues.

Gandhi wrote two more subsequent letters to Rajchandra⁶. His second letter was written nine months later in which Rajchandra talks of six propositions (*Padas*). These six propositions (*Padas*) are i. Soul exists; ii. Soul is eternal; iii. Soul is doer of karmas; iv. Soul is enjoyer of the results of karmas; v. Soul can be liberated and vi. There is a way for soul to be liberated. It is interesting to see how Rajchandra addresses Gandhi in his three letters.⁷ It seems hardly a coincidence that Rajchandra made the same six propositions the basis of his long poem composed during 1895-96, *Atma Siddhi*, in which the true teacher answers all his pupil's doubts, to the latter's boundless delight.⁸ Stanza 127 (last) of *Atma Siddhi* indicates total impact on the pupil (perhaps Gandhi) of the teachings about the six propositions which is translated as 'by explaining the six *Padas* (spiritual steps or propositions), you have shown me the separateness of soul (from body), like the sword in the sheath, this has been an immeasurable favour to me. This is similar to stanza number 2 from the *Samayika Patha* by Amitgati written in 12th century AD that is also a prominent periodic recitation amongst Jains todate.

Thus Gandhi continued to be in touch with Rajchandra through letters on personal and religious matters till the early death of Rajchandra in 1901AD. Through Rajchandra the impact of Jainism became stronger on him. Rajchandra became his spiritual refuge.⁹

It was during his life in South Africa that Gandhi seriously studied the meaning of the scriptures and the essence of religion. The concluding remark in Rajchandra's letter was:

“On a dispassionate view of the question I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity,”¹⁰

This remark cleared all doubts of Gandhi and he decided to remain within the folds of Hindu religion in which he was born.¹¹ ‘Raychandbhai was responsible for bringing me to this position.’¹² The reader can thus imagine how much my respect for him must have increased.¹³

In a letter to his friend Henry Polak, Gandhi recommends that everyone at the Phoenix Settlement should read Tolstoy and that the Gujaratis among them should also read Rajchandra because, “The more I consider his life and his writings, the more I consider him to have been the best Indian of his time. Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. His books I have read have afforded me the highest solace. They should be read over and over again. So far as English book was concerned, Tolstoy is incomparable in my opinion in chastity of thought. His definition of purpose of life is unanswerable and easy to understand. Both *Kavi* (Rajchandra was popularly called *Kavi-poet*) and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached.”¹⁴ Gandhi felt himself irresistibly attracted to the saintly Rajchandra.¹⁵

J.T.F. Jordens in his paper titled 'Gandhi and the *Gita*'¹⁶ talks of the impact of Rajchandra on Gandhi:

Raychand's answers pacified him. It is in these answers that we find fundamental ideas that are very similar to those that we found to be the basic principles of Gandhi's conception of scriptures and religion and of the *Gita*-interpretation. The parallelism between Raychand's ideas as expressed in that letter of 1894 and those of Gandhi, described in the earlier part of essay (Interpretation of the *Gita* by Gandhi), are so pertinent and striking that one had to conclude that Raychand's influence on Gandhi's ideas was decisive.'

His writings are the quintessence of his experience One rare feature of his writing is that he always set down what he had felt in his own experience He was a man of self control the state of freedom from attachment was spontaneous to him his devotion to dharma was evident in every action of his.¹⁷

'Gandhi admired Raychand because of his self control and his freedom from attachment; he was like the *Sthitprajna* of the *Gita*. He admired his practice of religion because of their pragmatic and experimental nature. Raychand obviously was a man very much after Gandhi's own heart. While Raychand undoubtedly had great influence on Gandhi during a period of personal development, this seed did not fall on virgin soil.'¹⁸

Similar Stephen Hay's remarks about Raychand's influence on Gandhi are noteworthy.

'I became convinced that those (religious ideas) we can accept are found in Hinduism. Raychandbhai was responsible for bringing me to this position. The reader can thus imagine how much my respect for him must have increased.'¹⁹

Gandhi's admiration for his friend has been conclusively shown.²⁰ Tilak, the most respected scholar of *The Gita* and freedom movement leader once said 'I thought Gandhi was a Jain'.²¹

Thus Gandhi acquired from Jainism and Rajchandra, the theoretical structure that fitted his own deepest nature of a religious activist with the concept of *Jiva*, law of karma and the gradual purification of *Atma* to *Paramatma*; validity of scriptures and their interpreter, God and *Avatar*.

In South Africa itself, Gandhi changed his own life style on similar lines as practised and propagated by Jainism. He gave up his lucrative legal profession and led a life of poverty (like renunciation), setting up Indian settlements at Phoenix in 1905 and Tolstoy Farm in 1910, advising his countrymen to stop use of foreign medical system and lawyers as they were against the Indian spirit. He started practicing *Ahimsa*, dietary restrictions, *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) and became a practitioner of *Satyagraha* (nonviolent resistance) to achieve his own *Atmadarshan* (self realization) as well as to empower his countrymen to enjoy social rights and dignity.

We shall now review the impact of Jainism on his philosophical thought first which can be expressed best through his translation of *The Gita* as *The Gospel of Selfless Action* with some foot notes and the introduction titled 'Message of *The Gita*' in it.

a. Interpretation of *The Gita* as *Anasakti-Yoga* (Gospel of Selfless Action)

Gandhi called his interpretation of the *Gita* as *Anasakti Yoga*. Gandhi said that *Anasakti Yoga* is written by him primarily for women, untouchables and the less educated even though for he himself Gospel of Truth was an epitome of selfless action.²² This

interpretation of the *Gita* by Gandhi is strikingly different from other interpretations of the same by venerable scholars. Gandhi justified his interpretation by making the following statements about the qualifications of a good interpreter of the *Gita*.

‘I am not aware of the claims made by the translators of enforcing the meaning of the *Gita* in their own lives. At the back of my reading there is the claim of an endeavour to enforce the meaning in my own conduct for an unbroken period of forty years²³ i.e. the one with prayerful study and spiritual experience at the feet of a guru and scan the spirit of the scripture rather than allegorical meaning.’²⁴

These observations of Gandhi are similar to Mahavira’s delivery of his sermons in Prakrit language, the language of commoners instead of Sanskrit the language of Brahmins and the learned and based on his experience as He always ended his sermon with ‘*Te bemi*’ i.e. so I say indicating he is talking from experience. Similarly qualities of an interpreter/*Acharya* indicated in Jain holy literature, given below, are similar to Gandhi’s claim of talking from long experience while interpreting *The Gita*.

‘That teacher is worthy who is free from desire for sensual pleasures, is free from bondage and possessions and endowed with the practice of knowledge acquisition, and is a strenuous practitioner of meditation and austerities.’²⁵

In Jainism *Anasakti* means detachment (*vitragata*) and *Yoga* means action. *Anasakti* implies absence of *Asakti* (attachment, infatuation, indulgence) and action implies the activity of embodied soul to perform actions either for its self realization or for the welfare of others (*hitopadesh*). The story of Madhubindu described pictorially in Jain literature shows how attachments to the worldly pleasures, which are momentary, cause pain and *Sansara* (cycle of birth and death). Jainism is accordingly called

as the Science and Philosophy of detachment (*Vitaragata* or *Anasakti*)²⁶ and the way of life (i.e. spiritual activism or use of soul-force, the term Gandhi used often) without attachment to any being including the body for both the ascetics and the householders. Such a practitioner ultimately achieves the state of bliss and it is the essence of the three worlds. The embodied soul in this state is called supreme soul or *Paramatma / Jina* as it is always immersed in its nature thereafter. From practical view point, total detachment can also be termed as universal love / equanimity or equal love (or absence of expectations) to all living beings and should be the guide for selfless service.

Kundakunda (1st cent AD), venerated Jain preceptor says: ‘Mysticism consists in realizing the *Paramatma* (transcendental self) through introspection first to become the *Antaratma* (introspecting on the self) after renouncing the *Bahiratma* (ignoring the self engrossed in non-self)²⁷. Thus *Paramatma* is the true goal of the mystic quest. The journey from the *Antaratma* to the *Paramatma*, called self-realization, is travelled through the medium of moral and intellectual preparations and efforts, which purge everything obstructing the emergence of potential divinity.

On the other hand, Gandhi, in his Message of *The Gita* in *The Gospel of Truth /Anasakti Yoga* (point 13, page 128) says:

... Man is not at peace with himself till he becomes like unto God. The endeavor to reach this stage is the supreme, the only ambition worth having. And this is self realization. This self realization is the subject of the *Gita*.

b. Self / Soul / Atma

Jainism advocates two way classification of reality namely *Jiva* (with consciousness) and *Ajiva* (without consciousness like matter etc.) both infinite in numbers (almost similar to the two

Sankhya principles of *prakriti* and *purush* in The Gita). *Jiva* is further classified as empirical soul and pure soul. Empirical soul is an amalgam of pure soul and matter karmas (two types namely obscuring and non-obscuring) and physical body.²⁸ Empirical soul without obscuring karmas is called *Paramatma/Jina*; *Jina* being similar to *Sthitprajna*²⁹ as Gandhi called in his translation of the *Gita* (verses II.55-72)

Thus a *Jina*, representing pure soul embedded in a human body, is free from all types of attachments and is always immersed in his own nature of knowledge and bliss. When the *Jina* leaves his physical body (i.e. dies or attains *Nirvana*), he becomes *Siddha* or just the pure soul and stays in that state forever. In stanza II.72 of *Anasakti Yoga*, Gandhi says: “This is the state, O Partha, of the man who rests in *Brahman*; having attained to it, he is not deluded. He who abides in this state even at the time of death passes into oneness with *Brahman*.” Gandhi also explained vividly the concepts of *Jina* and *Moksha* while writing a preface on Raychand’s book in 1926.³⁰

Rajchandra responded to Gandhi’s query on soul as six propositions (*Padas*)³¹ namely i. Soul exists; ii. Soul is eternal; iii. Soul is doer of karmas; iv. Soul is enjoyer of the results of karmas; v. Soul can be liberated and vi. There is a way for soul to be liberated. This concept of soul and its effort to progress from empirical soul to pure soul state is similar to Jainacharya Amitgati (10th century AD) in *Samayika Patha* (Spiritual Song) as:

That eternal state of the deity with its attributes as Truth or *Satya*, free from impurities, eternal, blissful and glorious is the most magnificent. Those who experience this state of deity in their own soul/self ultimately attain *Nirvana* (liberation).³²

The characteristics of soul, both from absolute and relative viewpoints i.e. of empirical soul and pure soul, in Jainism can be summed up again as:

Soul is existent. Empirical soul keeps on changing different bodies as per its karmas and enjoys the pains and pleasures associated. On the other hand pure soul without physical body stays in the same state for ever enjoying bliss and infinite knowledge.³³

Jainism thus propagates the spiritual activism³⁴ i.e. soul to attain its supreme state i.e. *Paramatma* through self effort. It gives the right to live and enjoy to every living being.³⁵ This is similar to how Gandhi's translation of Stanzas II.11-30 of *The Gita (Anasakti Yoga)*³⁶ on activation of soul and in line with Karma doctrine and concept of soul included in Rajchandra's responses to Gandhi's 27 questions.

c. Karma Doctrine of Jainism and Karmayoga of Gandhi in the *Gita*

Jain doctrine of karma³⁷ implies that 'every action, word, and thought produces, besides its visible, an invisible and transcendental effect' which gets stored as subtle matter particles with the soul as karmas. These karmas cause obscuring (delusion, knowledge and intuition obscuring and interfering /obstructing), defilement, counteracting, chaining the soul with attachment and aversion, linking with past and future and create suffering and making the soul dependent on others and not let the soul enjoy its own nature.

Bondage of karmas to soul is pain. Bondage results from actions of mind body and speech when the soul is tainted by delusion and attachment. The actions of soul in its deluded state are equated to violence and sin by Acharya Amritchandra of Jains.³⁸ Thus violence causes pain not only to the victim but to the doer/agent first. Actions performed by the soul in a state of

detachment and without expectation leads to either *Punya* (merit) or annihilation of bonded karmas. Gradual annihilation of karmas, when completed, results in *Moksha* ultimately. Actions performed in a state of delusion or attachment results in pain. This is comparable to Gandhi's explanation of *Karma*, *Vikarma* and *Akarma* in *Anasakti Yoga* stanza IV.17.

Jain karma doctrine thus implies independence and activism of individual soul in its activities and results. In fact the karma doctrine of Jainism is unique in empowering an individual living being to be the master his own destiny (i.e. the law and law giver) and hence equating karma to God.

There is similarity between Gandhi's interpretation and Jain Karma doctrine as can be seen from his following interpretations in *Anaskti Yoga*:

Stanza III.4 & footnote: "The bondage in action is the bondage of *Sansara*, the cycle of death and birth. All actions will have their consequences, as we shall see, will be the bondage of *Sansara*, in the other case it will be freedom from it."

Stanza V.14: "The Lord creates neither agency nor action for the world; neither does he connect action with its fruits..." He further explains "God is no doer. The inexorable law of karma prevails, and in the very fulfillment of this law-giving everyone has his desserts, making everybody reap what he sows-lies God's abounding mercy and justice..."

Stanza IV.6: Though unborn and inexhaustible in My essence, though Lord of all Beings, yet assuming control over My nature, I come into being by My mysterious power.³⁹

The above interpretations by Gandhi exhibit direct impact of Rajchandra as seen his response to Gandhi's question number 1.a. Gandhi also said⁴⁰:

God may be called by any other name so long as it connotes the Law of Life- in other words, the Law and the Law giver rolled into one.

Jain view on these interpretations by Gandhi: Concept of *jiva*/empirical soul and pure soul discussed earlier says that the soul is the doer, enjoyer and annihilator of karmas (pain). *Jiva* experiences pains and pleasures due to the matter karmas (seeds bearing the results of earlier actions and their activation) associated with it. Therefore *Jiva* makes strenuous efforts to attain the pure soul state i.e. annihilate these matter karmas associated with it. Matter karmas cause attachment and delusion in soul resulting in tainted emotions like anger, arrogance, greed etc. Pure soul devoid of any bondage of matter karmas is the state of eternal bliss and referred as *Paramatma/Jina* when embodied as human being and *Siddha* when liberated i.e. on death.

Moksha / liberation

Rajchandra's reply "...There is a natural urge in life to be free from all bondages and limitations. This state of total freedom from bondage and limitations is described by seers as *Moksha*." Thus *Jina*, the human being and *Siddha* after his *Nirvana* are in the state of *Moksha*. Delusion is the most powerful of the four obscuring karmas in Jainism and its elimination results in annihilation of other three obscuring karmas as well. This pure soul without obscuring karmas is always immersed in its own nature i.e. has achieved self realization and its only activity is to be in that state as well as deliver sermons of spiritual beneficence to others. This is similar to Gandhi's statement of

pure soul⁴¹ and the translation of *Sthitprajna* (stanzas II.55-72) discussed earlier.

The path to attain *Moksha* is called *Moksha Marg* in Jainism and consists of right belief-knowledge-conduct together.⁴² Gandhi also had similar views when he says, ‘The *Gita* contains the gospel of work, the gospel of *Bhakti* or devotion and the gospel of knowledge. Life should be harmonious whole of these three.’⁴³

When the empirical soul attains *Nirvana*, then it is just pure soul, and stays in the state called *Moksha* to enjoy bliss and just knowledge forever. Thus pure soul never returns to the world as empirical soul. Similar statement about pure soul is made by Gandhi:⁴⁴

Nirvana is not an utter extinction. As far as I have been able to understand the central fact of Buddha’s life. *Nirvana* is the utter extinction of all that is base in us, all that is vicious in us, all that is corrupt and corruptible in us. *Nirvana* is not like the black dead peace of the grave, but the living peace, the living happiness of a soul conscious of itself and conscious of having found its own abode in the heart of the Eternal.

d. God, Avatar

Rajchandra’s reply (Q.2) shows that pure soul is the state of being *Ishwar* / God as it has the wealth of knowledge and perfection i.e. devoid of any pain / pleasure and is always in a state of bliss. The pure soul embodied as a human being is called *Jina* / *Arihant* / *Tirthankara* and the liberated pure soul is called *Siddha* or the state of *Moksha* from where it never returns as empirical soul. The word God or *Ishwar*, does not signify a unique being of great power, or a creator of the universe, it is a term describing the perfect state of *Atman* in *Moksha*. Similarly in response to question no 25, he says ‘I do not think that any

soul can be a portion of God.., for God himself will be the cause of ignorance etc, and if it is true than he ceases to be God.”

Here it is important to understand the difference between *Jina/Arihanta* and *Tirthankara* in Jainism. *Jina* or *Kevali* is the pure soul in human body which had annihilated all the four obscuring karmas and hence becomes omniscient (*Sarvajna*) and totally detached (*Vitaragi*) from all external things (physical and psychical and in delivering the sermons of spiritual beneficence to his followers (*Hitopadesh*). *Tirthankara* is also an *Arihanta* but he establishes the creed and enables a number of his followers to attain liberation (*Moksha*) during his own life time and later on.

The above explanation of *Jina* is similar to Gandhi’s statement of pure soul⁴⁵ and the interpretation of *Sthitprajna* (stanza II.55-72 in *Anasakti Yoga*) along with his following interpretation about Krishna in the ‘Message of *The Gita*’ therein.

Krishna of *The Gita* is perfection and right knowledge personified; but the picture is imaginary. That does not mean Krishna, the adored of his people, never lived. The idea of perfect incarnation is an after growth⁴⁶

Belief in incarnation is a testimony of man’s lofty spiritual ambition to become like unto God.” Further he said, “In Hinduism, incarnation is ascribed to one who performed some extraordinary service of mankind. All embodied life is in reality incarnation of God...”⁴⁷

While discussing the concept of God, it is worthwhile to note what Rajchandra had to say on the subject in response to question 2.0 as summed below:

You, I and others are souls suffering from the bondage of karmas, i.e. our souls are in bondage of foreign matter and foreign impulses. The soul's existence in its natural state, that is, in freedom from karmas and purely as *Atma* is the state of being *Ishwar* (God). That which has the *Aishvarya* (wealth) of knowledge, etc., may be described as *Ishwar* (God). This *Ishwar* - hood is the natural state of the *Atma*, which is not revealed when it is engaged in karmas. When *Atma* however, realizes that being engaged in karma is not its real nature and fixes its attention on itself, then alone do omniscience, power etc., manifest themselves in it and we can see nothing among all the objects in the universe with greater power than of *Atma*. It is, therefore, my positive belief that *Ishwar* (God) is another name for *Atma* and does not signify a different being of greater power.

Rajchandra in his response to question number 25 explained the concept of *Avatar* as follows:

...I am not prepared to believe any soul to be a portion of God; how, then, can I believe that such was the case with great and holy souls like Rama and Krishna? There is no error in believing that these two were un-manifest states of God, but it is doubtful whether perfect Godhood had become manifest in them.

Gandhi agreed with Rajchandra's views when he said⁴⁸:

God never incarnates himself as an *Atman* and is never born as a human being. He is ever the same. When, from our human point of view, we see special excellence in some human being, we look upon him as an *Avatar*. In God's language there is no such *Avatar*; it exists only in the language of human beings.

He further said, "I talk of God exactly as I believe Him to be. Why should I beguile people into error and work my own perdition. I seek no reward from them. I believe God to be creator as well as non creator. This is the acceptance of many-ness of

reality. From the platform of Jains, I prove the non-creative aspect of God and from that of Ramanuja the creative aspect. As a matter of fact we are thinking of the Unthinkable, describing the indescribable, seeking to know the Unknown and that is why our speech falters, is inadequate and even often contradictory.”⁴⁹

The concept of *Avatar* as explained by Rajchandra and accepted by Gandhi is, “*Avatar* is a human being with extraordinary power and some specific role and responsibility while a *Jina/Arihanta* and *Tirthankara* is the elevation of a human being through self sacrifice (all actions with detachment) and elevated to the highest state of existence i.e. pure soul or Godhood with no attachment (*Vitaraga*), omniscient (*Sarvagya*) and delivers sermons of spiritual beneficence to all (*Hitopadesh*) and attains liberations ultimately.” When asked pointedly about the difference between theism of the *Gita* and Jain doctrine that there is no God”, Gandhi answered⁵⁰:

I have never seen any difference between the Jain doctrine and the general Vedic doctrine. The difference is only one of point of view.” He then went on to explain how the point of view was different, The *Gita*, he wrote, “is a poem”, and “the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjun is imaginary”; this imaginative way of writing was not “inappropriate or untruthful,” however Jainism, on the other hand, “stated the truth logically unpoetically” in declaring there was no God. When one went to the root of things, Jainism and the *Gita* both expressed the same truth, that religion is the individual’s effort to achieve freedom from attachment; only the medium for expressing the Truth was different.

e. Truth Satya:

Jain definition of *Sat* (Being, essence or truth): All beings or existents are real.⁵¹ Reality itself is multiple, with broad grouping as sentient and insentient beings or as *Jiva* (Living

beings) and *Ajiva* (Non-living). Both are infinite in number.⁵² Reality comprises permanence and change, multiplicity and identity as well as universality / generality simultaneously.⁵³ It therefore considers both permanence as well as change as real.

On the other hand, Gandhi's definition of *Sat*: "Truth is God nothing else, nothing less.... The nearest word answering to Truth in Sanskrit is *Sat*, *Sat* means 'being'. God alone is *Sat*. He alone is; nothing and no one else is."⁵⁴ Further he said, I am an *Advaitist*, and yet I can support *Dvaitism*. The world is changing every moment and is unreal; it has no permanent existence. But, though it is constantly changing, it has something about it which persists, and is therefore, to that extent, real. God may be called by many names so long as it connotes the living Law of Life—in other words, the Law and the Law giver rolled into one. Everyone has faith in God, though everyone does not know it. For everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to the nth degree is God.⁵⁵ These statements of Gandhi look at *sat* / reality as per Jain doctrine of *Anekantavada* which was so dear to Gandhi. *Anekantavada* implies viewing an object or an event from at least two viewpoints, namely Absolute viewpoint and the Practical viewpoint. Both these viewpoints are to be taken simultaneously as the Absolute viewpoint leads to eternal nature of self while the practical viewpoint relates to the existing state of the soul embodied as human or other forms of living beings. Gandhi's definition of *sat* here seems to address the Absolute viewpoint only.

Further speaking of Truth, Gandhi said that for humans it is a relative term. Gandhi also talked of each philosophical issue from these two viewpoints, like from Absolute viewpoint the Krishna in the *Gita* is said to be the inner self /soul (God like) and from the practical / social viewpoint leads to believe Krishna, the lord, the historical person who lived as an *Avatar* or

incarnation of God. ⁵⁶ *Anekantavada* of Jains forms the basis of Gandhi's interpretation here.

f. Anekantavada i.e. Many-ness of reality

*Anekantavada*⁵⁷ is the Jain doctrine of multifaceted truth based on their definition of *Sat* as with origination-destruction-permanence simultaneously. This implies that momentary and permanent existences are both real and co-exist i.e. opposites (like permanence and momentary) co-exist simultaneously and our knowledge about momentary existence is relative to the time, knower, state of the being and place, that leads us to develop a temperament of reconciliation. Basis of *Anekantavada* is the doctrine of viewpoints or *Nayavada* which defines *Naya* as special effort to acquire or impart knowledge; intention of the seeker of knowledge; expression of one out of many attributes of an entity without negating the others. *Anekantavada* and *Nayavada* are the modes of cognition and *Syadvada* or conditional dialectic is its expression in words/language due to the limitation of our speech faculty. Prof A. N. Upadhye, explaining the relationship between *Syadvada* and *Nayavada*, said, '*Syadvada* is a corollary of *Nayavada*; the latter is the analytical and primarily conceptual phenomenon and *Syadvada* is synthetic and mainly verbal'.⁵⁸ *Syadvada* is the process of assertion that curbs down and harmonises the absolute views of individual *Naya*.

Gandhi was very inspired by this doctrine of *Anekantavada* and *Syadvada* as these played a vital role in shaping his concept of Truth.⁵⁹ He talked of views of different people as the leaves of the same tree and perception of Truth as different for different persons and adopted this doctrine to reach the Truth, particularly in situations demanding resolution of conflicts.⁶⁰ He also talked of the Jain example of seven blind men who gave different descriptions of the elephant and they were all right from their

respective viewpoint and wrong from the view point of others (blind) and relative to the one who knew the complete elephant. He said that he liked very much this doctrine of the many-ness of reality.

At some other point later, Gandhi said “It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. And this knowledge saves me from attributing motives to my opponents or critics..... Formerly I used to resent the ignorance of my opponents. Today I can love them because I am gifted with the eye to see myself as others see me and vice versa. I want to take the whole world in the embrace of my love. My *Anekantavada* is the result of the twin doctrine of *Satya* and *Ahimsa*.”⁶¹ This is exactly in line with the Jain doctrine of *Anekantavada* and *Nayavada* (doctrine of viewpoints).

Rajchandra used this doctrine in all his responses to Gandhi when he said that he should consider all his responses while staying in his religion of birth as all religions are in essence same.

g. Quest for TRUTH by Gandhi

Satya (truth) as a spiritual virtue was dearest to Gandhi. As his realization about the all pervading and ever omnipotent dimension of Truth matured, it became the dominant life- force and guiding principle for him. Metaphysical representation of *Satya*, derived from *Sat* (BEING or reality) is associated with the inherent nature of BEING (reality) which is indicated as *Sat-chit-ananda* or truth-knowledge-bliss that in turn is same as God. This derivation of *Sat* was taken by Gandhi, from Absolute viewpoint, to imply that nothing exists in reality

except God that is Truth and everything else is momentary / impermanent.

God is Truth has two different meanings in Gandhi's writings, namely: God is almighty which implies to see 'face to face' and he has seen faint glimpse; and perception of one who had himself attained the full vision of God (like pure soul in Jainism), where the seeker and God become one and the statement becomes Truth is God.

Gandhi's Experiment for Truth implied self realization i.e. *Atmadarshan* starting with seeing God face to face thus leading him to become one with Him, i.e. God / permanence or eternal BEING (*Sat-chit-ananda*). Thus, as a true practitioner of *Anekantavada*, he accepted the definition of Truth from absolute viewpoint (as being the state of *Sat-chit-ananda*) or God⁶² and from the practical viewpoint the path or religion to achieve Godhood as truth. 'Truth is what you believe to be true at this moment and that is your God'⁶³ implying 'still small inner voice within must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty.'⁶⁴

To put in his own words: "Truth is the same thing as *Moksha*. Anyone who does not display *Agraha* for *Moksha* is no man; he is only a brute..."⁶⁵

He realized that everyone wants to approach Absolute Truth, but it is not possible for everyone to do so. Hence one would have to be content with what he called relative truth. Further at each stage relative truth is as good as absolute Truth and both are in continuum and not dichotomous positions. He thus got involved in self realization (freedom from bondage or the pains of *Sansara* or birth-death) for himself as well as for the freedom of his fellow citizens from the pains of bondage of the British rule simultaneously.

The above discussions on his Quest for truth is in line with Jain view on empirical soul which is always trying to move upwards to achieve pure soul (*Sat-chit-ananda*) state through the practice of the institution of vows and penance continuously. In Jainism, the quest for Truth is called *Moksamarga* while Gandhi called it as *Satyagraha*.

Gandhi and the Jain Way of Life

Before we start the analysis, we shall briefly visit the life of two most venerated Jains, namely Tirthankara Mahavira, the ruling Deity of Jains and Rajchandra, a householder and the spiritual refuge of Gandhi.

Mahavira was born as Vardhman in a princely family in 599BC. From an early age, he started contemplating on his own existence as well as the miseries of others. Accordingly he renounced the life of a householder at the age of 30 completely and went to forest for introspection and meditate on his inner self. He led the life of a recluse, lived at desolate and lonely places, and cultivated an attitude of detachment even to his body (*Tyakta-deha*) for a period of over twelve and half years. With forbearance, contentment, severe austerities and deep meditation; he endured all adversities⁶⁶, both natural and supernatural, that came his way whether caused by gods, men or beasts with compassion, detachment and equanimity. He took simple food only on 349 days. For the remaining 4166 days he observed fasts as a penance to annihilate the impurities (tainted emotions and karmas) associated with his soul, rather than to gain worldly titles or achieving worldly objective. He was fearless, brave and patient. He used to observe fasts commencing from two days gradually going up to a fast lasting for six months for his self purification primarily but at times he used fasting to resolve some social ills like the women slavery. He attained omniscience at the age of 42 and *Nirvana* at the age of 72. His life was his

message to us to lead our life. Mahavira was looking for the absolute Truth / self realization as primary or the ultimate goal of his life and social uplift as secondary. He was perfection and knowledge combined and achieved Liberation (*Moksha*). Rajchandra venerated Mahavira and tried to practice the doctrine of Mahavira while staying as an ideal householder moving towards ascetic life for achieving perfection.

Rajchandra⁶⁷, though a householder and contemporary of Gandhi in all respects, led life like Mahavira. Gandhi found him always simple in life style, with a disposition of detachment (*Vairagya*) even when he was eating, practicing *Ahimsa* in all walks of life, constantly in search for Truth, attending to his business, resting, and absorbed in his duties and contemplations simultaneously. The poems written by him were always on his lips even when he was attending to his business (like, when will an opportunity come when I also become a *Nirgrantha* or totally detached).

His business dealings showed utmost vigilance and were successful. Gandhi was a frequent visitor to Rajchandra for short period when he was in India and observed his way of life very closely. Prominent influences of Rajchandra on Gandhi's way of life, can be summed up as practicing celibacy, diet and dietetic experiments, fasting, simplicity, religious equanimity, *Aparigraha*, compassion, Dharma, spiritual yearnings and service to humanity. "Hardly there is any area of Gandhi's life and pursuits which were not directly or indirectly impacted by Rajchandra and such influences have been deep, profound and encompassing."⁶⁸

Jain identity can be summed up as "A Jain performs his worldly activities keeping his ultimate goal of attainment of the transcendental life / bliss / liberation / *Moksha*."⁶⁹ Thus Jains are required to minimize violence (*himsa*) and maximize *Ahimsa* in

their day to day activities. The main ethico-spiritual values of Jainism are practicing strenuous effort based on detachment (*Vitaragata* or *Anasakti*), meditation and contemplations, vegetarian diet / food, fasting, conservation and sharing their bounties with others. In spite of these, most of their lifestyle activities are predominantly similar to the Indian social customs-culture prevalent in the region/state of India they live in. It is not necessary to be born in a Jain family to practice Jain way of life.

Spiritual path of progress of a Jain householders are categorized in eleven stages (called *pratimas*)⁷⁰ that indicates progressive adherence to the regime of rules and vows. These stage represent his progress from a basis-intermediate to a serious votary and finally to become a monk (homeless and without worldly possessions). Jain householders, called votaries, are clubbed in three categories accordingly:

Beginner: Consumption of non violent food primarily (like abstinence from consumption of meat, and foods infested heavily with bacteria), use pure water for drinking and cooking, avoids eating after sunset, and observance of seven abstinences (vices namely sexual intercourse with other than one's own wife, gambling, consuming intoxicants like alcohol, hunting, harshness in speech, harsh punishments and misappropriation of other's property).

Intermediate: Observe six daily essential duties that are: worship the true deity, obeisance to holy teachers, studying the scriptures, self-control/restraint, penance and charity.⁷¹ They exercise greater self restraint and caution and start observing the five minor vows which constitute the part of institution of five minor vows.

Advanced: They observe greater restrictions on the vows indicated in the first two stages by observing the five minor and seven enhancing vows.⁷²

Gandhi advanced progressively from beginner to intermediate / votary and became spiritually awakened⁷³. During his stay in Bombay in September 1944, Gandhi expressed his desire to become an advanced Jain votary and monk to focus on self realization.⁷⁴ The individual characteristics of a Jain votary are freedom from doubt in kindness/compassion to all creatures, freedom from possessive desires, becomes free from follies (superstitions) and develops virtuous dispositions of honesty, gratitude, forgiveness, modesty. The social characteristics of such a votary are not to hate a meritorious being owing to certain diseased bodily conditions and the like, develops universal love to all creatures to provide equal opportunities for progress to all, rehabilitates the fallen or misguided and to publicize the righteous creed/path.

Like a Jain votary, Gandhi's primary life mission was self realization i.e. to see God face to face / *Atmadarshan* / *Moksha*. He took the concept of Service to Indians as service to God and self realization. So his self suffering in South Africa, like taking beatings from the rail and coach staff, giving up his legal practice for livelihood and live the life of poverty, enduring the pains inflicted on him peacefully, offering selfless service to others, practice celibacy⁷⁵, fasting and simple vegetarian-teetotaler diet, not eating after sunset⁷⁶, and their continuation in India, are the practices of a Jain votary⁷⁷ like Rajchandra. He stayed calm and composed (*Samatva*) even in the most adverse situations, and undertook fasting to enhance self restraint and self introspection (*Atmadarshan*).

Ethics

Gandhi's 'Religion of Truth' is essentially an ethical one, which is practical and immediate like Jain institution of vows (*Anuvratas* for laity and *Mahavratas* for monks). However Gandhi did not make any distinction between minor and major vows, even though he prescribed them primarily for *Ashramites*, who lived the life closer to that of a monk. The institution of vows enforce listening to the inner voice of conscience; without, it looks upon as all as part of the one world. To practice such ethics, one has to move towards ascetic self-discipline (based on *Ahimsa*) to empower oneself and to use its energy (called Truth force or soul force by Gandhi) for the good of others. To achieve his twin objectives, Gandhi established a set of eleven *Vratas* (vows/observances) as code of conduct. These eleven vows consist of

- The first five minor vows are *Anuvratas* or vows of a Jain votary, namely: Limiting violence, not-speaking lies, non-stealing, limiting possessions and partial celibacy. For monks, Jains call these major vows and each vow is to be practised in full i.e. without any limits. This categorisation of vows encourages everyone accept the need to practice observances as per their inclinations and capacity.⁷⁸
- The next six more observances are like applications of the first five vows to achieve social objectives thus constituting eleven observances or *Ekadash vratas*. Gandhi used the expertise of eminent sociologists and philosophers like Ruskin, Tolstoy, Gokhale, Tilak and Thoreau and the way of life of Rajchandra to establish the norms and practice of these observances.

Gandhi mixed both categories of vows for himself and for every inmate (called *Ashramite*) of his *Ashram* who were required to follow these eleven *Vratas* (observance). These vows were

introduced by Gandhi in South Africa but formalized in India, when he set up Kochrab Ashram in 1915 that got shifted to Sabarmati Ashram in 1917. These vows implied living the life of poverty (like life of semi renunciation/ Rajchandra) and as one of the fellow Indians. He reviewed and updated these observances from time to time based on his experiences and formalised them in the book *From Yeravada Mandir*, published in 1931. Gandhi used the terms vow and observance interchangeably but always stressed the deep rooted meaning of vow. He says

“A vow means unflinching determination and helps us against temptations. Determination is worth nothing, if it bends before discomfort. The universal experience of humanity supports this view....Vows can be taken only on points of universally recognized principles. The possibility of sin in such cases is more or less imaginary.... Taking a vow is not a sign of weakness, but of strength. To do at any cost something that one ought to do constitutes a vow.... God is the very large image of the vow. God would cease to be God if He swerved from His own laws even by a hair's breadth.... We should therefore never doubt the necessity of vows for the purpose of self purification and self realization.”⁷⁹

Through these eleven observances Gandhi illustrated his way of life to all inmates of *Ashram* and expected them to follow. These eleven observances were like eleven steps to higher awareness, higher realization of the self. He did not consider them as disciplinary rules made only for the select few who have renounced the world. These observances represented the essentials of morality as he understood it, and formed an ideal which all men and women should strive to follow. He wanted to change the individual and through individual the society. He felt that sensual inclinations should be restrained and the eleven observances are the means to help the practitioner achieve this

objective. These observances also acted as guidelines for personal conduct.

In Jainism, supreme *Ahimsa-Satya-Brahmacharya-Aparigraha* are clubbed as the very nature of pure soul. Their complete practice is advised for monks while these with some limitations is advised for householders. Further Mahavira introduced the concept of *Chedopasthaniya*⁸⁰ conduct (correction after fall) for his followers practising the vows enabling them to confess a transgression from the vow, seek punishment, perform sacrifice and start again observing the vow i.e. *Pratikramana*. Gandhi used this concept of *Pratikramana* right from childhood and later when a fall from his right path occurred.

We shall now discuss first five vows/observances by Gandhi for *Ashramites* vis a vis the five minor vows of Jainism for a votary householder.

Vow No. 1 Truth / Satya

Gandhi established truth or *Satya* as the first and foremost vow as per the description in quest for Truth earlier and indicated by him to a Jain monk below⁸¹:

One Jain monk said to me that I am a bigger devotee of Truth than of *Ahimsa* as I also give the first priority to Truth and *Ahimsa* afterwards. The reason is that I discovered *Ahimsa* while looking for the Truth.

The observation of Gandhi about Truth first and *Ahimsa* later can be seen as similar to *Ahimsa* as the first and truth as the second minor vow of Jains. Jains, like Gandhi, also talk of the righteousness of means and the end as the guiding principle of its code of conduct. In fact Mahavira even termed *Ahimsa* as God and is the very foundation of conduct and absolute Truth or pure soul state whose nature is *AHIMSA* as the objective. Gandhi's

interpretation of this vow and his concept of TRUTH are expressed using *Anekantavada* of Jains.

Gandhi defined the practice of truth as: “Generally speaking, observation of the law of Truth is understood merely to mean that we must speak truth. But we in *Ashram* should understand the word *Satya* or truth in a much wider sense. There should be truth in thought, truth in speech and truth in action. To the man who has realized this truth in its fullness, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it is not truth, and so not true knowledge; and there can be no inward peace without true knowledge. If we once learn how to apply this never-failing test of truth, we will at once be able to find out what is worth doing, what is worth seeing, what is worth reading.”⁸² Gandhi relates relative truth with inner voice or one’s conscience as the measure of truth and untruth.⁸³ He was able to lead his life following the dictates of his inner self.

Speaking the truth is related not only to every aspect of conduct but to the practice of every other observance. Take, for instance, the case of *Asvada*. It is the observance which required a man not to identify himself with the taste of the tongue i.e. it involves controlling the palate. Now suppose a man who is trying to practice this vow is able to check himself from partaking of his favourite dish, but yet inwardly pines to relish the same. If he does so, he will be untruthful and also will cause lapse from the proper observance for his mind, if not his body, and so will still be enslaved to the taste. Any observance, we must remember, is a commitment of the whole person. To conclude, truthfulness and right practice of an observance go together.

To sum up, Truth for Gandhi is a much broader concept and includes both knowledge of the material world and knowledge of

self. Modern science deals largely with the former. Some people have tried to create the impression that search for Truth for Gandhi meant the search for true spiritual values. This is a half-truth, how can one know oneself if one does not know the objective reality around? Truth is both an objective and subjective reality. He gave examples of Harishchandra, Prahlad, Hussain, Hasan and Christ as practitioners of this observance. Similarly Jain story literature is full of parables depicting the impact of lying in this and future lives (example Dhan Deva and King Vasu).⁸⁴

Satya-anuvrata or the minor vow of speaking truth in Jainism defines it as to tell an entity exactly as it is, neither less nor more due to close connection between not speaking the truth and violence. Telling a lie is volitional and tainted by passions like anger, arrogance, deceitfulness and greed. In its broader sense, the *Satya-anuvrata* requires great care with regard to expressions in all forms, like all acts of speech, writing and thought. Thus, even a truthful statement cannot be uttered if it leads to the destruction of or causing pain to a living being. A person lies in relations pertaining to ownership, forgery or adulteration of goods, misrepresentation as witness, divulging secrets of others, and using harsh language.⁸⁵ Hence tolerance, non-hurting, compassion, patience and respecting the views of even one's opponents result in the practice of *Satya-anuvrata*. As a vow/observance, Gandhi implicitly talks of practicing truth as indicated in *Satyanuvrata* and his metaphysical description of absolute Truth as right belief (*samyak-darsana*) in Jainism.

Vow No 2 Ahimsa/nonviolence

Gandhi discovered nonviolence in his search for Truth. He writes, "It appears that the impossibility of full realization of Truth in this mortal body led some ancient seeker after Truth to the appreciation of *Ahimsa*..."⁸⁶ Further he says, "Without

Ahimsa it is not possible to seek and find Truth. *Ahimsa* and Truth are so intertwined that it is impossible to disentangle and separate them.... *Ahimsa* is the means; Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so *Ahimsa* is our supreme duty.”

Gandhi learned practical *Ahimsa* from his parents as given in his childhood memoirs:

‘One day Gandhi saw an insect biting his mother’s foot. He shouted and the mother asked him to keep quiet and with a slight jerk to her foot allowed the insect to go away. On seeing this, Gandhi asked his mother as to why she did not kill it. The mother replied ‘Son! It also has the right to live.’⁸⁷

‘Gandhi made a clean confession of stealing in writing to his bedridden father. Gandhi did not dare to face his father and so peeped through the door to see his father’s reaction. He summarised this incidence as, ‘He (father) read it through and pearl drops trickled down his cheeks wetting the paper. For a moment he closed his eyes in thought and then tore up the note. He had sat up to read it. He again lay down. I also cried and could see my father’s agony.....For me this was an object lesson in *Ahimsa* (nonviolence). This I could read in it nothing more than a father’s love, but today I know that it was pure *Ahimsa*’.⁸⁸

Both these incidences show deep Jain impact of *Ahimsa* as discussed earlier. *AHIMSA*, being the inherent nature of pure soul (expressed as even *Bhagwai*), forms the basis of all ethical-spiritual activities. In Jainism *Ahimsa* is even equated to God. The doctrinal and subtlest definition of *Ahimsa* in the first Jain canon *Acharanga*, and as a social practice in 11th canon in *Prashna Vyakaran Sutra* and the basis of conduct *Purushartha-siddhi-upaya* by Amritchandra, and several other Jain holy texts substantiate the claim of Jains as their religion being *Ahimsa* centric primarily. A number of such Jain books occupied a

prominent place in Gandhi's reading books.⁸⁹ The Jain slogans 'Live and let live' and 'Living beings help each other'⁹⁰ resonate almost in every Jain celebration and religious congregations. Jain concept of *Ahimsa* is based on the premise 'there is no enemy' versus 'love thy enemy'. Dr. Radha Vinod Paul (Ex judge International Tribunal for trying the Japanese War criminals) said:

If anybody has any right to receive and welcome the delegates to any Pacifists Conference, it is the Jain community. The principle of *Ahimsa*, which alone can secure world peace, had indeed been the special contribution to the cause of human development by Jain *Tirthankaras*, and who else would have the right to talk of world peace than the followers of the great sages Lord Parshwanath and Lord Mahavira.

Gandhi himself called Mahavira as the foremost preacher and votary of *Ahimsa*.⁹¹

We now analyze *Ahimsa* of Jainism and its impact on Gandhi's perception and practice of *Ahimsa*.

Ahimsa in Jainism

The directive principle of living is not 'Living on others', or 'Living by killing', but 'Living with others' as enunciated by Mahavira⁹² given below:

"The *Arhats* and *Bhagvats* of the past, present, and future, all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, explain thus: all breathing, existing, living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away, This is the pure unchangeable, eternal law, which declared: among the zealous and not so zealous, among the faithful and not so faithful, among the cruel and not so cruel, among those who have worldly weakness and those who do not have, among those who like social bonds and those who do not; 'that is the truth, that is so, that is proclaimed in this creed. Having

adopted the law, one should not hide it, nor forsake it. Correctly understanding the law, one should arrive at indifference for the impressions of the senses, 'and not act on the motives of the world'. He who is not of this mind, how should he come to the other. What has been said here, has been seen (by the omniscient beings), heard (by the believers), acknowledged (by the faithful) and thoroughly understood by them. Those who acquiesce and indulge (in worldly pleasures) are born again and again. 'Day and night exerting thyself, steadfast', always having ready wisdom, perceive that the careless (stand) outside liberation; if careful, thou wilt always conquer. Thus I say."

Gandhi also believed 'that *Ahimsa* is our inherent nature i.e. Truth which resides within and not outside as told by some ancient seekers. 'The question which confronted the seeker was: Shall I bear with those who create difficulties for me, or shall I destroy them?' The seeker realized that he who went on destroying others did not make headway but simply stayed where he was, while the man who suffered those marched ahead, and even at time took others with him.'⁹³

Gandhi translates *Ahimsa* as love. Gandhi believed that *Ahimsa* is an inherent virtue of human soul. Man is essentially spiritual in nature and in course of civilization the progress is essentially moving towards *Ahimsa*. In its positive aspect *Ahimsa* is nothing but love. Love is a kind of feeling of oneness. In an act of love one identifies himself with the object of his love and this cannot be possible unless there is an effort to free mind from every such disposition that prevents the spontaneous outflow of love. Therefore, *Ahimsa* demands a sincere effort to free mind from feelings like anger, malice, hatred, jealousy, revenge etc. because these create obstacles in the way of love. Love according to Gandhi, is the energy that cleanses one's inner life and uplifts him and as such love comprehends such noble feelings as

benevolence, compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, generosity, kindness, sympathy etc.⁹⁴

Ahimsa as a vow for votary: Ahimsa-anuvrata

For Jain votary, this is a minor vow requiring extreme care in all his / her activities to abstain / minimize violence to other living beings as well as to self. This implies; total avoidance of violence against 2 to 5 sensed living beings and its minimization towards one sensed living beings.⁹⁵ This vow categorises violence in four categories, namely intentional (not allowed at all), professional and lifestyle (to be minimized) and defensive (to be practised when necessary and as a last resort). The transgressions⁹⁶ of this vow are: binding living beings in captivity, beating living beings, mutilating limbs, overloading excessive weight on living beings, withdrawing or providing insufficient food or water to living beings.

Ahimsa as a vow by Gandhi:

Basis:

Ahimsa according to Gandhi is not a philosophical principle but it is the very breathe of his life. Gandhi says “I have been practicing with precision *Ahimsa* and its possibilities for an unbroken period of over fifty years in all walks of life. I have applied it in every walk of life – domestic, institutional, economic and political. I know of no single case in which it has failed. Where it seemed sometimes to have failed I ascribe it to my imperfections.... In the course of my search for Truth, *Ahimsa* came to me. Universalization of *Ahimsa* is my life’s mission. I have no interest in living except for the fulfilment of that mission.”⁹⁷

He preferred violent resistance than coward submission to suffer injustice; hence he did not limit practice of *Ahimsa* just for saints but extended it to all. He did not prescribe absolute *Ahimsa* and

complete self discipline to all as he believed in ceaseless striving for perfection rather than perfection. The followers must live in the world normally, aware of the inevitability of violence in their actions, safeguarding *Ahimsa* if the impetus of those actions was grounded in compassion.

He further said, 'Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of *Ahimsa*. But it is its least expression. The principle of *Ahimsa* is not to hurt by even evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs. But the world needs what we eat day after day. In the place where we stand there are millions of micro-organisms to whom the place belongs, and who are hurt by our presence there..... Realizing the limitations of the body, we must strive day by day towards the ideal with whatever strength we have in us.'⁹⁸

The views expressed above by Gandhi based on his experience show a profound impact of Jain ethics for even a householder where violence is divided in four main subtypes, namely; intentional (not allowed at all), professional and lifestyle (to be minimized) and defensive to be practised when necessary. Defensive violence is similar to what Gandhi talks of at point-i above 'to commit violence against injustice'.

Progressive realization of *Ahimsa* is achieved by being careful in all activities of life, by exercising self restraint and caution; being nonviolent in thought speech and action such as indicated by the flaws of *Ahimsa Anuvrata* namely binding living beings in captivity, beating living beings, mutilating limbs, overloading excessive weight on living beings, withdrawing or providing insufficient food or water to living beings. Concerning his views at point ii., *Ahimsa* is the basis of its entire Jain philosophy to achieve liberation.⁹⁹

Thus Gandhi's views seem to be based on pronouncement of Mahavira as placed above that forms the basis of Jain ethics. His interpretation of the *Gita* as *Anasakti Yoga* shows how dear *Ahimsa* was to him as he pronounced that the *Gita* shows the most excellent path of self realization by practice of *Ahimsa*.¹⁰⁰

Gandhi's biggest contribution to the world, besides independence of India, is the doctrine and application of *Ahimsa* and *Anekanta* (Doctrine of many-ness) of Jains for conflict resolution. Gandhi formulated *Ahimsa* into the active social technique, which was to challenge political authorities and religious orthodoxy.¹⁰¹ He developed the technique and called it *Satyagraha* or non violent resistance for truth which he applied very effectively. We shall discuss *Satyagraha* later on separately.

Social Applications of *Ahimsa* in Jainism

*Parasparo-graho-jivanam*¹⁰² or Live and let live and living beings cooperate with each other, derived from Jain concept that all souls are similar, wish to be happy and live. The differences between them are due to their karmic bondage. The problem arises when one values his independence (selfishness /ego/arrogance) and ignores the same of others resulting in increased terrorism, vandalism, sexual/racial or economic exploitations etc. *Ahimsa* teaches that we have to behave with others as we would like to be treated by others. This is the essence of Mahavira's teachings.¹⁰³ Mahavira designated social *Ahimsa* by sixty synonyms, such as equanimity, detachment, love, power, friendship, tolerance, forgiveness, compassion and so on.¹⁰⁴ These are all positive aspects of *Ahimsa* which create a peaceful, blissful and tranquil environment for everybody to realize their full potential. *Meri Bhavana* by Jugal Kishor Mukhtar, a prayer recited by almost all Jains daily, shows the application of the principle of *Ahimsa* and *Anekantavada* in our

daily life i.e. what we as individuals should do and what others in positions of power and the nature should observe to make life peaceful through the practice of *Ahimsa*.

Gandhi and Social *Ahimsa* of Jains:

Gandhi said, “Jainism teaches compassion towards all living creatures and the duty of nonviolence; it even teaches the protection of violent animals against small creatures. This, however, is no justification for our neglecting the duty of compassion and nonviolence towards human beings.”¹⁰⁵

However, the originality in Gandhi’s *Ahimsa* was in its implementation in the social field. Never before was nonviolence practiced on such a massive scale. With Gandhi, *Ahimsa* no longer remained limited to saints and the sages but became a value to be practiced by ordinary men and women as well. He said, “*Ahimsa* is law of our species.”¹⁰⁶

Gandhi sought to give this ancient Indian concept of *Ahimsa* a life affirming social meaning and universal application. In Jain tradition, the rigorous practice of complete *Ahimsa* (absolute *Ahimsa*) could be pursued only by a saint who had renounced a worldly life, but even the ordinary persons were encouraged to practice it with certain limitations. Gandhi refused to accept different standards for saints and for ordinary men and hence interpreted *Ahimsa* in an original manner and broadens the meaning of it as he did not prescribe absolute *Ahimsa* and complete self-discipline. He believed in ceaseless striving for perfection rather than perfection. Thus Gandhi seems to be addressing the *Ahimsa-anuvrata* primarily for practice by all.

Like *Ahimsa-anuvrata* for householders in Jainism, Gandhi also realized that its followers must live in the world normally, aware of the inevitability of a degree of violence in their actions,

safeguarding *Ahimsa* if the impetus of those actions was grounded in compassion.¹⁰⁷ According to Gandhi, “If one does not practice *Ahimsa* in one’s personal relations with others, and hopes to use it in bigger affairs, one is vastly mistaken. *Ahimsa* like charity must begin at home..... Mutual forbearance is *Ahimsa*. Immediately, therefore you get the conviction that *Ahimsa* is the law of life, you have to practice it towards those who act violently towards you, and the law must apply to nations as well as to individuals..... If the conviction is there the rest will follow.”¹⁰⁸ For Gandhi, *Ahimsa* is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than any weapon of mass destruction. It is superior to brute force. It is living force of power and no one has been or will ever be able to measure its limits or its extent. For nonviolence to be strong and effective, it must begin with the mind, without which it will be *Ahimsa* of the weak and cowardly. He says that only strong person can practice *Ahimsa* and not coward.

“A person is coward who lacks courage when facing a dangerous unpleasant situation and tries to avoid it. A man cannot practice *Ahimsa* and at the same time be a coward. *Ahimsa* is dissociated from fear. It, being infinitely superior to violence, requires a higher kind of courage, the course of dying without killing. To the person without this courage, Gandhi advises killing or being killed rather than shamefully fleeing from the danger in the name of the *Ahimsa*. Gandhi feels that possession of arms is not only cowardice but also lack of fearlessness or courage. Gandhi stressed this when he says; “I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice but true *Ahimsa* impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness.”¹⁰⁹

Gandhi has said clearly that when there is a choice between cowardice and violence, he would prescribe violence (similar to defensive (*Virodhi*) *himsa* for householders in Jainism). Thus an

individual or a nation could take resort to arms in order to defend its honour rather than be a helpless witness in a cowardly manner. The practice of *Ahimsa* calls for the greatest courage and determination. Jains also say '*Ksama virasya bhshanam*' or forgiveness is the jewel of the braves. In Gandhi's words:

"*Ahimsa* is not the way of timid or cowardly. It is the way of the brave ready to face death. He who perishes with sword in hand is no doubt brave; but he who faces death without raising his little finger and without flinching is braver."¹¹⁰ Cowardice for him is "the greatest violence, certainly, far greater than bloodshed and the like that generally go under the name of violence."¹¹¹

Another aspect of Gandhi's concept of *Ahimsa* is his vision of a society based on *Ahimsa*, a vision that is likely to inspire even future generations. Gandhi's vision of nonviolent society was one where the individual would be working for the community and the community would be taking care of the individual. It would be a decentralized society where there would be minimum concentration of economic and political power. The pattern of the society was described by Gandhi as that of 'oceanic circles'. In the pattern of the oceanic circles the outer-most circumferences will not wield power to crush the inner circle, but will give strength to all within and derives its own strength from it¹¹², where the ultimate sanction will lie with the people's power to exercise *Ahimsa* as the means to deal with internal aggression. Gandhi again says, "I believe that the sum total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up and that is the result of the definite, if unconscious, working of the law of love. The fact that mankind persists shows that the cohesive force is greater than the centrifugal."¹¹³

Vow No 3: Asteya or Non-Stealing

According to Gandhi, *Asteya* generally implies not to take or accept things /objects that do not belong or owned by us, without

the permission of their lawful owner. He even went further to include taking things not owned by anybody (As the government is the legal owner of such things), cheating, stealing other's rights, conspiring or stealing of other's legacy, waging of war to usurp other's territories. Gandhi further expanded this concept of non-stealing even to the mental state by suggesting that not wanting things which we do not need also as *Asteya* or non-stealing. Mankind's greed and craving for artificial needs are also stealing. When we compound our needs and wants, we actually steal from others' right to basic requirements. One who follows the observance of Non-stealing will bring about a progressive reduction of his own wants. Much of the distressing poverty in this world has risen out of the breaches of the principle of Non-stealing". He considered Non-stealing as an integral part of Truth and *Ahimsa* as seen from following incidences.

During his Quit India movement, he stressed this concept of *Asteya* to British Empire as they have usurped India without the permission of Indians and kept on forcing them to quit.

Gandhi did not write the essay on *Swadeshi* in Yeravda jail as he thought it will be in conflict with the precinct of British Empire.

He further observed that non-observance of *Asteya* stands as an obstruction towards self-realization. Non-anxiety for future is another characteristic of *Asteya*. Our anxiety for future security in all directions knows no bounds. It baffles us and the tranquillity of our mind. It often induces us to adopt crooked and unfair measure for the acquisitions of future provisions and leads us to go astray. Similarly he considered plagiarism as theft committed by men of letters

Jain definition of *Acharya-anuvrata*¹¹⁴ or the minor vow of non-stealing is similar to what Gandhi says wherein stealing is

said to be both of physical and mental objects without the legal or willing permission of the owners to do so. It goes further to say that employing others to steal or encourage thieves (*Kritakarita-anumodana* are all same), smuggling, buying things at lower prices, mixing dissimilar objects (expensive and cheap) to sell at higher prices, avoiding or paying lower taxes or buying stolen things as stealing.¹¹⁵ Amritchandra said ‘Stealing is violence as it hurts the person whose objects are being stolen and is undertaken under the influence of tainted emotions. He further says that even accepting things which are free by a monk is stealing unless given by its legitimate owner.’¹¹⁶ According to Samantabhadra the observer of the householder’s vow of non-stealing, neither takes himself those things which are unoffered, placed, dropped, and forgotten by others nor gives them to anyone else.¹¹⁷ Somadeva holds that the underground property belongs to the king or the state; so also is the property of unknown ownership.¹¹⁸ Jainism also believes that to learn some art from a teacher, but when asked you say that you learnt it by yourself, is another kind of theft. Because this is forgetting the good that others did to you.¹¹⁹

Thus the views on *Asteya* of Gandhi and *Jainacharyas* are very similar.

Vow No 4: Brahmacharya or Celibacy / Chastity

Brahmacharya implies to be in tune with *Brahman* i.e. God or pure soul. Observance of this vow implies total self restraint on all five senses i.e. words, thoughts, food and deeds at all times and in all places, as they are all interlinked. Celibacy involves abstinence from hearing provocative dialogues or to see provocative visual impressions, to eat stimulating foods or drinks, sexual intercourse of any type leading to experience. Celibacy thus practiced leads one to the absence of lust (sexual desire) even in the presence of most alluring stimulus. Celibacy

requires self-restraint (*Sanyam*) as one of the primary requirements. Unlike in other Indic religions, this vow in Jainism can be taken at any age.

Gandhi and Jainism¹²⁰ both believe that Truth, Non-stealing, Celibacy and Non-hoarding are essential to be nonviolent. Mahavira gave great importance and necessity of *Brahmacharya* to practice *Ahimsa*. He therefore extended the earlier practised *Chaturyam* (four fold) vows to five vows by dividing the vow of *Aparigraha* into chastity and *Aparigraha*. Similarly Gandhi made chastity an integral part of the code of conduct of *Ashram* life. He was of the firm opinion that the full potential of chastity could not be harnessed unless its observance was not extended to all the five sensory pleasures.

Gandhi's concept and practice of the vow of *Brahmacharya* was a result of Jain influence especially of the Rajchandra.¹²¹ Gandhi resolved thereupon that he would take the vow of *Brahmacharya* and have only pure and selfless relationship with his wife. It was however during Gandhi's participation in Zulu War, as ambulance corps, which had a sort of epiphany. Gandhi concluded that if a man is going to be truly devoted to a life of service towards others, he must lead a life of purity, free from desires and cravings. Such cravings and desires would interrupt his hope of being totally committed to serving others. Consequently, Gandhi took his famous vow of *Brahmacharya* and vowed to live a life of voluntary poverty. He had tried and failed to adhere to the vow at least twice before, but this time, his determination was unwavering. Further he changed his diet limited to simple, spice-less and, if possible uncooked food to enhance his practice of celibacy.¹²²

Gandhi's emphasis on controlling thought, word and deeds reflects the Jain influence on his intellectual and philosophical

heritage. Moreover, he came to believe that periodic fasting was necessary to keep the senses from being overwhelmed. In this regard he began to see that, vows such as *Brahmacharya* and fasting, open the door to real spiritual freedom, and that without such vows, people are destined to suffer from doubt and failure.

Jainism proclaimed that observance of *Brahmacharya* i.e. to contemplate and stay in the state of pure soul or Brahman is the ultimate objective of an individual. Only a monk who becomes detached even with his own body can actually practice complete *Brahmacharya*. For a lay seeker, *Brahmacharya* implies abstention from wanton indulgence in carnal desires. The vow of *Brahmacharya* for Jain votary is called *Sva-dara-santosh Vrata* or contentment in the company of his own religiously wedded spouse. In this vow also the votary gradually reduces sexual activities with the spouse and ultimately vows to stay with together as friends or brothers-sisters. Concerning food, Jainism stresses heavily on simple, pure and minimal food to be consumed with regular fasting to observe vows.

In his own life, Gandhi adopted the Jain principle of *Brahmacharya* but made it personal to public or individual to collective. He aimed at an even higher goal, for he believed in rigorously practicing what he professed. For him, in chastity as conceived by the Ashram life, those who are married behave as if they were not married. Married people do well to renounce gratification outside the marital bond; theirs is a limited chastity. If a man gives his love to one woman, or a woman to one man, what is there left for the entire world besides? It simply means ‘we two first and the devil take all the rest of them.’

Vow No 5: Aparigraha or Non-Possession

Parigraha (infatuation or *Murchha*) is attachment to possessions.¹²³ Attachment takes us away from our inherent

nature. Such a person forgets himself and chases with full energy acquisition of other things first, then hoarding and protecting them. In such a case, the individual obsessed with attachment to possessions completely forgets his own inherent nature and hence enhances pain to everyone.

Jainism talks of two types of possessions namely-

Internal: or the tainted state of soul i.e. attachment (greed and deceitfulness) and aversion (anger and arrogance) termed as psychical.

External: like physical body, family and friends, moveable and immovable property, food grains, servants and even social status.

Such an individual, infatuated with attachment, transfers the basis of his happiness to other objects. He is always possessed of a feeling of owning (mine) and acquiring more to fan his greed for possessions. So, he is always engrossed with tainted emotions like anger, pride, deceit and greed, attachment and aversion as they all have their roots in external objects or possessions. Therefore, one is advised to develop a disinterest for these possessions. It depicts the essence of the vow i.e. the limitation of desire themselves and not merely of possessions.; 'Possession' and 'the desire to possess' are inter-related and that is why for a householder a prescription for the limitation of his worldly possession is made which restrict the number of possessions needed for his own (including his immediate family) maintenance, and for serving the society. Consequently he controls his limitless desires to acquire and possess more and more.¹²⁴ Desires are endless like the sky and they can never be satisfied for any person fully¹²⁵. The more you get, the more you want, desires increases with every gain. The more you get, the more you want, desires increases with every gain. Attitude of possessiveness/greed also gives rise to the feeling of

acquisitiveness i.e. to acquire more or to maintain and enhance possessions that creates disturbance in the mind of the individual and a taint on the soul. Even Mahatma Gandhi said “Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs but not for even one man’s greed.”

Aparigrah is the fifth vow in the Jain code of conduct for votary. For them it is called as *Ichchhaparimanavrata* or the vow of limiting our desires and possessions as they are interrelated. Therefore, implicit in the Jain concept of *Aparigraha*, is the philosophy of conservation of natural environment and avoidance of its over exploitation and wasteful consumption. This vow guides us for limiting and not eliminating:

Acquisitiveness/Desire/Greed to acquire material things beyond what is required,

Consumption (conservation) to minimize indulgence in material objects and waste of natural resources,

Possessions and possessiveness by developing a feeling of Trustee of the wealth and sharing the surplus for social cause, which leads to develop the attitude of trusteeship and the fair practice of *Dana*.

The principle of *Aparigraha* is a realistic, practical and rational principle with a solid foundation in the social system. It has individual’s moral growth as its basis, with direct relevance for the society of which the individual is a part. Its main thrust is on a balanced society consisting of balanced individuals. Apollononius Tyaneaus, Greek traveller of first century CE to India beautifully describes Jains as follows:

In India I found a race of mortals living upon the earth but not adhering to it, inhabiting cities but not being fixed to them, possess everything but possessed by nothing.

Thus *Aparigraha* is another area of Rajchandra and Jain influence on Gandhi. On return from England after leading a simple life there, Gandhi met and observed Rajchandra from close quarters. Whatever Rajchandra did, whether eating, resting, lying in bed, or conducting his business, he was not interested in the things around and was not tempted by material luxuries or worldly pleasures. He dressed simply, ate simply, lived simply, and accepted whatever was offered to him or came naturally in his way. Rajchandra's life became a role model for Gandhi and he wanted to live like him. Gandhi's life afterwards in South Africa and in India till his death is an example of this fact. Gandhi understood that equality, selflessness, kindness, non-possession, and renunciation are the core considerations in *Aparigraha*, which ought to be a central theme in any religion. Henceforth, Gandhi decided to consider himself a *Vanaprasthi*¹²⁶ like Rajchandra lived a detached and simple life in the spirit of *Vairagya*. He also understood that non-possession and equability presupposed a permanent change of attitude and a change of the heart.¹²⁷

Like Jains, earlier known as Shramans, Gandhi also said that *Aparigraha* does not mean remaining satisfied with poverty but to practice voluntary poverty through work for food and minimal needs.¹²⁸

Gandhi also talked of non-possession implying to give up ownership. Any possession is bound to bring bonds between men and men, between men and the world. Various scriptures ask us not to cling to possession. It plainly tells that nothing belongs to man, and everything is Gopal's. And yet Gandhi realized that giving up possessions was no easy matter. So, for non-*Ashramite* he propounds the ideal of trusteeship. So he suggested that businessmen and landlords should consider themselves not

owners but trustees of their property (combination of both *Dana* and *Aparigraha*) and use the same for their minimal needs. His motivation behind this vow was his uttermost concern about his fellow human beings, especially the poor. For him the best way to worship God was through the service of the poor. Like Jains, Gandhi believed that taking possession of things of others without their permission amounts to stealing. To him, stealing also lies in possessing something which is not at all needed now. Non-possession is the result of non-stealing. A self-imposed limit on possessions helps free the seeker from these passions and imparts him a rare sense of tranquillity and contentment. Thus the vow of *Aparigraha* of Gandhi has significant impact of Jain vows.

Gandhi, thus, started further simplifying his personal and family arrangements. In his personal life Gandhi's simplicity was legend. When he died, what he left behind was nothing but a pair of clothes, a shawl, a watch, a walking stick, a pair of sandals (*Chappals*) and his glasses. He had arrived at that stage after years of inner search and endeavours.

Vows Nos 6 -11

We shall now analyze the remaining six observances, namely; *Sharirshram* or Bread labour, *Asvada* or Control of the palate, *Sarvatra-bhayavarjana* or Fearlessness, *Sarva-dharma-samanatva* or equality of all religions, *Swadeshi* or Use locally made goods and *Sparsh-bhavana* or Removal of untouchability. Even though Gandhi had stated *Asvada* as vow number 4 in Yerawada Mandir, we are discussing it here to make an analysis of five minor vows of Jainism first. We shall briefly discuss these to see the impact of Jainism on these six observances.

Sharirshram or Bread Labour¹²⁹ came to Gandhi after reading Tolstoy's writing on Bread Labour 'The law, that to live man

must work'. But even before that he had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. "In my view the same principle had been set forth in the third chapter of the *Gita* where we have been told that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean Bread labour." He said referring to the third chapter of the *Gita*: "God created man to work for his food, and said that those who ate without work were thieves."¹³⁰ Gandhi had an idea of social revolution behind the bread labour as well. He wanted to establish a society based on equality (of man). He said, "There is a world-wide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread, distinctions of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustees of their property, and would use it mainly in the public interest."¹³¹ He himself spun cotton, cultivated agriculture produce to bring home the idea.

Jainism belongs to the '*Shraman*' tradition which has three Hindi synonyms, namely; *Saman* (observer of equanimity), *Shraman* (labourer or who performs self effort/ austerities) and *Shaman* (to pacify/suppress). Therefore, every living being has to work to achieve his goal. This dignity of labour is a distinct contribution of Jainism to Indian culture. Self-help and self-reliance constitute the basic motto of Jain religion. Laziness (*Pramada*) and disinterest in work (*Avirati*) are considered as some of the main causes of karmic bondage and violence in Jainism. Even to achieve *Nirvana*, one has to perform severe and strenuous penance to shed the karmas bonded with the soul. Even though we do not find the term analogous to bread labour implying body labour primarily in Jainism, yet the entire foundation of Jainism is based on labour of all types namely mental, vocal and physical and not just physical or body only.

According to Gandhi offering free meal to a healthy person is a form of *Himsa*.¹³² In this way Jainism and Gandhi both consider that one should remain satisfied by whatever is earned through honest labour. Any attempt to squeeze material wealth from others and exploit the weak is considered theft and hence violence.

***Aswada* or Control of the Palate:** Jainism supports the fact that attachment to senses and sensuous pleasures digresses one from the spiritual path. Hence a regime of activities to enhance self restraint in all activities through the prescription of *Guptis* (restraint on the activities of mind body and speech) and *Samitis* (carefulness), six-fold daily essential duties (*Avashyakas*) and penance (*Tapas*) have been prescribed for observance by the followers desirous of achieving self realization.

Concerning food, Jainism prescribes strict vegetarian diet that is pure, simple and wholesome in right quantities. It goes to the extent of asking even the layperson to abstain from eating after sunset, not consume tubers and alcohol or other such stimulants. Similarly *Tapas* or penance is prescribed in Jainism for annihilating bonded karma. *Tapas* are of two kinds, viz. i. external and ii. internal. The first four external penances relate to control of palate, namely *Anshana* (fasting), *Unodari* (eating less than normal quantity), *Rasparityaga* (giving up one of the five types of tastes like acrid, bitter, astringent, sour and sweet one day each i.e. abstinence from one or more articles of food like milk, curd, ghee, oil, sugar and salt; and from one or more kinds of tastes), *Vrataparisankhyan* (mental vow to accept food from a right person-place-type only). Thus these austerities stress strict control over food we take. Jain code of conduct also talks of caution to be observed in mixing of different types of eatables, storage and their shelf life etc for proper assimilation by the body and not creating digressions in our thought process.

Pleasant food should not be enjoyed with preference, for it stimulates our mind and strengthens lust like birds upon a tree with sweet fruits and make us deviate from righteous path.¹³³ In this way control of the palate is very important for spiritual purification in Jainism.

Control of palate by Gandhi was derived from the influence of Jainism on him as can be inferred from the three vows administered by Jain monk Becharji Swami before his departure to England, his search for vegetarian restaurant and books even though he constantly ran into difficulties regarding his vow of vegetarianism. Salt's book *Plea for Vegetarianism* made a great impression on him and Gandhi became a vegetarian by choice as well.¹³⁴ After his return from England, Gandhi used to discuss with Rajchandra his dietetic enigmas. It was Rajchandra who first pointed out to Gandhi that the use of cow's or buffalo's milk also posed a hindrance in one's spiritual path, as the milk came from an animal's body and had the tendency to arouse animal passions. Gandhi later discovered that the books on vegetarianism and food discussed with Rajchandra supported this argument. Gandhi, henceforth, pledged to abjure milk and started living on a diet of fruits and nuts. Like Jainism Gandhi said, "Unless we are prepared to rid ourselves of stimulating heating and exciting condiments that we mix with food we will certainly not be able to control the over-abundant, unnecessary, and exciting stimulation that we may have. If we do not do that, the result naturally is that we abuse ourselves and we abuse the sacred trust given to us, and become like animals and brutes."¹³⁵

Sarvatra-Bhaya-Varjana or Fearlessness: Both Gandhi and Jainism consider fearlessness essential for human life.

According to Jain canon *Prashnavyakaranasutra*, a frightened person deviates from the spiritual practices (*Sadhana*) and is

unable to accomplish even the mundane duties and responsibility.¹³⁶ Similarly *Uttaradhyayanasutra* says that one who is free from fear can only observe *Ahimsa*.¹³⁷ Thus fearlessness is an essential condition for *Ahimsa*. Fear begets cowardice and timidity which is same as *Himsa*.

Gandhi says: “Cowardice and *Ahimsa* do not go together any more than water and fire.”¹³⁸ “Cowardice is impotence worse than violence.”¹³⁹ These remarks show that cowardice arises from fear. The activity of coward lack moral worth inasmuch as they depend on others for maintenance of livelihood. To quote Gandhi ¹⁴⁰ ‘Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Coward can never be moral; because they are motivated not by voluntary-will but by panic and fear.’

Thus Gandhi considered weakness, cowardice and fear as signs against the human spirit. *Abhaya* was the greatest legacy that Gandhi bestowed upon us. “In other words, he turned the cripple; poor millions into dauntless supermen with the slogan ‘Do or Die’. This infusion of fearlessness was undoubtedly an outstanding revolution. The votary of *Ahimsa* has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. He wrecks not if he should lose his land, his wealth, his life. He who has not overcome all fear cannot practice *Ahimsa* to perfection.”¹⁴¹

To provide shelter from fear (*Abhay dana*) is a component of Charity/*dana*- one of the six essential duties for even the Jain householders. Similarly, the vow of abstaining from purposeless violence (*Anarthadanaviramana*) that is one of the seven enhancing vows of householders; says that fear arises from thoughts like (1) separation from desired (*Ishta*), (2) thought of getting the undesired results, (3) anxiety for disease and (4) anxiety for attainments and hence should be avoided.

Gandhi said, “Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear – fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one’s nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on.”¹⁴² It was so deep that in spite of his firm faith in nonviolence he would prefer violence to cowardice.

Sarva-Dharma-Samanatva or Equality of All Religions: 1st Jain Canon, *Acharangasutra* defines Equanimity as the essence of religion, while the observance of nonviolence is its external exposition or a social aspect of religion.¹⁴³ *Jina / Arihanta* or *Tirthankara* in Jainism is a human being who has developed complete detachment from everything except his pure soul, is omniscient and delivers sermons of spiritual beneficial to all.

Mahavira promulgated Jain religion by neither deprecating other religions nor trying to prove that other religions are wrong/false. In fact he propounded the doctrine of *Anekantavada*, i.e. many-sided nature of reality itself, and showed that a thing can be considered from many viewpoints. This obviously broadens the outlook of the persons as they are made to look at a thing from different angles. At the same time the principle of *Anekantavada* does not endanger the feelings of enmity or hatred towards other religionists because it believes that other religions also would have truth from their viewpoints thereby. Thus *Anekantavada* advocates tolerance as a part of *Ahimsa* and way of life, be it intellectual, social or religious. *Anekantavada* supplies the philosopher with catholicity of convincing that Truth is not anybody’s monopoly with religion put as its boundaries. Siddhasena Diwakar accordingly said, “*miccha-dansana-samuha-maeyassa*’, meaning that sermons of the *Jina / Tirthankara* are a comprehensive collection of all monistic philosophies. More Jain views on the subject are discussed under the caption Religious Harmony later.

Religious equanimity and tolerance came to Gandhi through his childhood encounters with different religions and later through his association with the Theosophist, Muslim, Jew and Christian friends in England, South Africa, and India. Much, however, he owed to Rajchandra in this regard because of the valuable lessons he learned from him through frequent discourses. Gandhi was so much influenced by Rajchandra that he said¹⁴⁴:

He was always bored by religious controversy and rarely engaged himself in it. He would study and understand the excellence of each faith and explain it to the followers of that faith. Through my correspondence with him from South Africa, too, this is the lesson which I learned from him.....My own belief is that every religion is perfect from the point of view of its followers and imperfect from that of the followers of other faiths. Examined from an independent point of view, every religion is both perfect and imperfect. Beyond certain point, every *Shastra* becomes a fetter hindering further progress; but then, that is the stage reached by one who has transcends the *Gunas*. If we follow Raychand bhai's point of view, no one need to give up his faith and embrace another. Everyone may, following his own faith, with his freedom, that is, *Moksha*, for to win *Moksha* means to be perfectly free from attachments and aversions.

Gandhi visualized different faiths/religions as different rivers that ultimately converge into one ocean. Just as the waters of all the rivers are the same, so is the basic substance of all religions. The tenets of all religions have similar ethos and essence. It was this ethos that Gandhi emphasized upon, without dwelling in the intricacies of individual preaching. Gandhi said in an article in *Young India*: "I came to the conclusion long ago, after prayerful search and study and discussion with as many people as I could meet, that all religions were true and also that they had some error in them, and that, whilst I hold by my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism, from which it logically follows that

we should hold all as dear as our nearest and dearest kith and kin and that we should make no distinction between them.”¹⁴⁵

Swadeshi or Use Locally Made Goods: Gandhi explained his concept of *Swadeshi* in wider context, i.e. not only with respect to economics, but with reference to total lifestyle in these words: “*Swadeshi* is that spirit in us which restrict us to use the service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion i.e. to the use of my immediate religious surrounding. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics, I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proven defects. In that of economics, I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting.”¹⁴⁶ He also urged people to prefer local products. Gandhi warned the votary of *Swadeshi* against making it a fetish. “To reject foreign manufactures merely because they are foreign and to go on wasting national time and money in the promotion of one’s country of manufactures for which it is not suited, would be criminal folly, and a negation of the *Swadeshi* spirit. *Swadeshim* is not a cult of hatred. It is a doctrine of selfless service that has its roots in the purest *Ahimsa*, i.e. Love.”¹⁴⁷

According to the Gandhi, *Svadharm*a in the *Gita* interpreted in terms of one’s physical environment gives us the Law of *Swadeshi*. Gandhi quotes *The Gita* “It is best to die performing one’s own duty or *Svadharm*a as against *Paradharm*a, or another’s duty, that is fraught with danger.”¹⁴⁸ Further Gandhi explains: “What *The Gita* says with regard to *Svadharm*a equally

applies to *Swadeshi* also, for *Swadeshi* is *Svadharmā* applied to one's immediate environment."¹⁴⁹

In Jainism, self restraint/*sanyam* encourages the individuals to stay within its own space and minimize attractions and indulgence in the sensual inclinations towards other objects that are said as non-self. Thus Gandhi's vow of *Swadeshi* appears to be in line with Jainism as supported by the following:

Concept of detachment implies to be absorbed in self introspection /contemplation and develop detachment even to the body gradually i.e. becoming more and more self reliant. This directly implies staying in one's own or *Sva* nature and place or *Desha*.

Concepts of Jain *Gunavratas* (enhancing vows), *Shikshavratas* (training vows)¹⁵⁰ lead one to achieve his objective of self realization by enhancing restraint on all activities of mind, body and speech. Practice of *Digvrata* (limiting the area of one's activities of mind body and speech).enables one to focus himself to his immediate surroundings and withdraw from activities (even trade i.e. buying, selling or consuming things) beyond the space limits set. This enables one to check the unbridled increase in desires and contemplate on one's duties toward oneself and its neighbours and so on.¹⁵¹ This vow is made further stringent in another vow called *Deshavakashik*, where house-holder sets limit for his activities to a very limited area surrounding him on a day to day basis. The area can be one square kilometre around one's home or even a house, a garden, a village, a field, a river, a forest.¹⁵² Jain Sadhvi Ujjvala Kumari compared *Deshavakashik* with *Swadeshi*.¹⁵³

Use of things, which are produced by others in large amount for business purpose, causes *Maharambha* (*Himsa* at gross level); because tendency of producer behind these products is selfish interest/greed/profit. *Alparambha* (subtle violence) is always better

than *Maharambha*. The concept of *Shauch* (purity/cleanliness) in Jain tradition denotes *Alparambha*.¹⁵⁴

Sparsh-Bhavana or Remove Untouchability: Jainism is well known for *Adhyatmik Samyavada*- the ‘Spiritualistic Doctrine of Equality’. Mahavira propounded the dharma of *Samata*. Jainism propounds that all living beings or souls, irrespective of their development, are equal. It means that right from the least developed souls of earth-bodied being up to the highly developed human beings, all are equal as far as the element of ‘soul hood’ is concerned. It has denied that anyone born in particular caste should be regarded high or low according to the social status given to the caste. Mahavira preached that man does not take birth with a particular caste label as such. Therefore, classification could only be based on what he does, what is his karma (action), and not by his birth.¹⁵⁵ In this way, we may say that Jainism believes in equality of man and does not recognize caste, creed and untouchability. It is open to all. The measure of a man is not his birth in a high or low status family, but his acquisition of good and noble virtues. The 1st *Tirthankara* of Jains, Adinath, while establishing a social order asked his subjects to choose one of the professions (agriculture and manual skills like smithy etc, defence, trade etc) based on their inclinations and thus did not support segregation of society by birth. Jain story literature is full of parables of thieves, prostitutes, and even animals etc choosing the path of spiritual purification and achieving heavenly / *Siddha* states.¹⁵⁶

Gandhi himself was very much influenced by Jain theory of equality. In October 1933, before launching out on the all- India anti-untouchability tour, Gandhi said, “Untouchability or what is today known as *Varnashramadharm*a has no place at all in the Jain philosophy. They must vehemently talk about it. It was in 1916 he prescribed eradication of untouchability as a vow, but

long before in Durban he observed anti-untouchability movement in his domestic life, e.g. asking his wife to accept cleaning of chamber-pots (toilets) and frequent stay of Christian clerk in the home.”¹⁵⁷ He drew sharp distinction between caste and *Varna*. *Varna* was based on profession. Gandhi thought caste system to be a social evil, but untouchability was a sin. All his life, Gandhi worked for untouchables. He wanted penance for crimes of discrimination that have been perpetuated for thousands of years as he wanted society to work hard to relocate the untouchables on an equal footing with the other members of society as it was *Himsa* by causing inequality amongst human beings and associated pain.

Gandhi cared for united India as one whole entity. Therefore, Gandhi wanted to remove these evils of high /low/untouchables from the society. Gandhi said, “My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my time. But through realization of freedom of India I hope to realize and carry on the mission of the brotherhood of man.”¹⁵⁸

In 1932 he made the removal the untouchability a principal item in the constructive programme and was devoting almost his entire attention to that cause. He launched a new constructive work organization called the Harijan Sevak Sangh and toured all round the country preaching against the cause of the untouchability and raising funds for the newly formed organization. He made it his regular habit until the end of his life. The year 1933-34 became a turning point in the history of untouchability in India. By and large Gandhi’s ideas were accepted by the so called higher caste people. As a result temples were thrown open to Harijans for worship, wells were made available for peoples of all communities and discrimination in the schools was withdrawn.

The three weekly journals launched by Gandhi under the general title of *Harijan*, *Harijan Sevak*, *Harijan Bandhu* in English, Hindi and Gujarati respectively became his organs for diffusing his views on all subjects. Soon articles from these journals were reprinted in newspapers and magazine having much wider readership. In this way, all his life, Gandhi worked hard at eradicating this heinous practice from its very roots.

Other Philosophical Issues of Social Importance Propagated by Gandhi

We shall now discuss some other important philosophical aspects of Gandhi's life which were the driving forces (ends or objectives) to be achieved by using the eleven vows and other potent tools like *Satyagraha* as the means.

Satyagraha or Nonviolent Resistance

The word *Satyagraha*¹⁵⁹ first came into practice in South Africa where Gandhi launched a crusade against apartheid. Literally it means: 'hold on or attachment or insistence on Truth.' It stands for the technique of resisting all that is evil, unjust or untrue by love, self-suffering and by appealing to the divine spark in the soul of the opponent. Describing the nature of *Satyagraha* Gandhi says, "Its equivalent in the vernacular rendered into English means 'Truth force' or soul-force or love force implying application of *Ahimsa* to establish Truth. It can be resorted to by the individual as well as the community and could be applied to all walks of life. It is not passive resistance but active non-doing of something like unjust ruling power (unjust laws, non-payment of unjustifiable taxes, rents etc.), closing down of business as a mark of protest, hunger strike and so on like civil disobedience i.e. insistence on truth.

“*Satyagraha* is based on soul-force and stands for vindication of Truth not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one’s own self. In Gandhi’s *Satyagraha* there is no scope for cowardice. It has to be cultivated following a discipline, a way of life.”¹⁶⁰ Thus *Satyagraha* proved itself to be the most powerful weapon to resist violence and secure social, economic or political emancipation. In this sense the doctrine of *Satyagraha* is strictly rigorist. In fact *Satyagraha* appears to Gandhi almost as a religious pursuit. It rests on a religious belief that there is one God behind everything and being, and as such the same God resides in every one of us. This is the basis of love, and unless one has this basic love for mankind he cannot practice the technique of *Satyagraha*. It, like *Ahimsa*, is conscious suffering by the practitioner. Gandhi has mentioned a number of qualities and characteristics which a *Satyagrahi* (Practitioners or followers of the tool *Satyagraha*) must possess like living faith in God¹⁶¹, honesty and sincerity, open minded, disciplined, fearless, loving, unselfish, firm in his dealings with others, have an attitude of humility and simplicity, practice self restraint and so on. Gandhi said, “Nations, like individuals are built through the agony of the cross and in no other way joy comes not out of infliction of pain on others, but out of pain voluntarily borne by one self.”¹⁶² That is why *Satyagraha* has been described by him as a method of conversion rather than a method of coercion. *Satyagraha* is said to be the most potent nonviolent social transformation tool invented by Gandhi to bring about change of heart of masses and establish the Truth/ peace, harmony and their sustenance.

A deep analysis of the philosophy, method of practicing *Satyagraha* and the qualities of the practitioner (*Satyagrahi*) as prescribed by Gandhi is almost based on the method as practiced and propagated by Mahavira for his spiritual beneficiation and social welfare.¹⁶³ Mahavira experimented the technique first on

himself by renouncing the worldly comforts, then living in desolate places not frequented by people, performed severe physical and mental austerities, meditated on his self, faced his foes and physical afflictions with equanimity till he attained the *Jina* state. To overcome social issues, like eliminating the women slavery practice (Chandana Bala), he took a vow of fasting till his mission was achieved. He also dealt with a number of his foes, i.e. over 300 philosophical systems opposed to his views, with equanimity and put his ideas across logically. He brought the learned (eleven most learned Brahmins along with disciples), kings and rulers, women and commoners in his fold by opening his creed to all and established the four fold *Sangha* / congregation by changing their hearts /thinking (conversion rather than coercion) by logic and his lifestyle, and by building his creed in two categories, namely monks (*Shramana*) who are serious to practice his way of life and householders (*Shravakas*) who were not so serious but approved the same and wished to go slow. Similarly each category was divided into male and female practitioners, a feat which instantaneously gave women the right to education and practice religion. Joining a particular category was purely voluntary depending on the inclination and capability of the new entrants,

Gandhi's objectives were two fold, namely discovering and experiencing the Truth (Pure soul state or unto God) through the practice of *Ahimsa* by him and his followers.

Rajchandra also practised the same path, primarily for his own self realization. This fact is endorsed by Gandhi also when he said that Rajchandra never spoke to gain popularity and was always speaking from his heart and experience. Similarly Gandhi talks of the selfless action as per his interpretation of the *Gita* to be his guide.

Swaraj or Self-rule

Swaraj is also one of the basic concepts of Gandhi's political philosophy which can be seen as a derivative of self realization in spirituality and extension of *Swadeshi* as an observance. The real goal of the freedom struggle was not only to ensure political independence from Britain, but rather to gain true *Swaraj* (self-rule) i.e. end of colonial rule or absolute government or monarchy, as well as demands for autonomy by religious, ethnic, or geographic regions which perceive themselves as being underrepresented in a national government. *Swaraj* first acquired its political meaning (of independence) through its use in that sense by Nauroji and later through its popularization by Tilak. It is closely allied with the meaning of *tapas* or renunciation. Gandhi stated, "It is *Swaraj* when we learn to rule ourselves." Further *Purna Swaraj* is an awakening among the masses, knowledge among them of their true interest and ability to serve the interest of the whole world to attain harmony, freedom from aggression from within or without, and a progressive improvement in the economic condition of the masses.

Self-rule is a self-achieved state of affairs, not something granted by others. It could not be granted even by God. We would have to earn it ourselves. *Swaraj* from its very nature is not in the giving of anybody.¹⁶⁴ It depends entirely on our internal strength. For a person to be fully free it is not enough to have the external obstacles to freedom removed; it is equally necessary to have the internal obstacles removed as well. In his 'Constructive Programme' submitted to the Indian National Congress in 1941, Gandhi strongly reaffirmed his commitment to *Swaraj*, paraphrasing the meaning of the term as 'complete independence through Truth and nonviolence'. In retrospect, what appeared to Gandhi then as the central lesson of his book was the emphasis on moral self-rule and self-restraint: "The essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs

and become self-sufficient. If he does not have this control he cannot save himself.” The most dramatic and direct application of the idea of *Swaraj* came in Gandhi’s ‘Quit India’ speech delivered in Bombay in 1942.

Indeed, like self realization in spirituality, concept of *Swaraj* is more basic than even *Ahimsa* which in turns is a means to achieve *Swaraj*. Self rule emanates from self restraint which distinguishes human beings from other types of living beings or brutes. Self-rule presupposes the agency of the *Atma*. The spirit exerts its influence on the empirical ego, on emotions, mind, and intelligence. Under the influence of the *Atma* the inner powers of the moral agent become integrated, such that he or she becomes a spiritually aware person, guided by true self knowledge. This concept of self rule is similar to Jain concept of soul elevating itself to supreme soul status through detachment i.e. introspecting on itself, practice of *Ahimsa*, self restraint and penance or self sacrifice.

Answers to Gandhi’s question no 1 by Rajchandra (Appendix-IV) clearly appears to the basis of his interpretation of the philosophy of *Swaraj*. Further in Jainism, ‘the nature of an entity is defined as its *Dharma*, tenfold spiritual virtues like forgiveness etc are *Dharma*, Right belief-knowledge-conduct is *Dharma*; and protecting the living beings is *Dharma*.’¹⁶⁵ Nature of all living beings is to be happy ultimately leading to the attainment of four infinities (bliss, infinite intuition, knowledge and energy). Mahavira further said, ‘bondage / pain i.e. dependence on others including one’s body is the cause of all pain.’¹⁶⁶ This leads to the code of conduct to be practised for attaining freedom by practicing *Ahimsa*, Self restraint and penance as seen from the following verse¹⁶⁷:

That which is non-violence, self restraint and austerity is *Dharma* (spiritual values). It is by virtue of spiritual values that supreme beneficence results. To him whose mind is absorbed in spiritual values even gods (heavenly beings) bow down to their feet.

Practicing nonviolence / *Ahimsa*, self-restraint or awareness / carefulness in not causing harm to any living being including the oneself also and austerities / penance enables one to achieve the highest goal i.e. bliss is the supreme religion / *Dharma*. This definition of *Dharma* is related to the conduct to be practiced by the followers.

Thus we see the basis of *Swaraj* emanating philosophically from Jain doctrine that equates *Dharma* and its definition as nature and means to attain pure soul state of Jainism. Gandhi translated this doctrine from practical viewpoint to remove the mundane worldly pains of fellow human beings.

Philosophy of Means and Ends

Another distinguishing quality of Gandhi that separates him from other political leaders was his insistence on the principle of purity of means as he did not believe in politics severed from spirituality or morality. While he realized that the end may depend on factors that were beyond one's control, the means were something that one could choose oneself. "We have always control over the means," he said in *Young India* of July 1924, "but not over the ends."¹⁶⁸

He was led to this position by his early acceptance of *Satya* and *Ahimsa*, as twin moral absolutes and his consistent view of their relationship. We cannot get a rose through planting a noxious weed. "The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree."¹⁶⁹ He said 'means are after all means'. I would say

‘means are after all everything’. As the means, so is the end.’¹⁷⁰
Impurity of means is caused by arrogance (like wrong belief in one self about one’s knowledge, capacity and expectation of achieving the end) primarily. However Gandhi supported the metaphysical belief in the moral law of karma, under which there is an exact causal connection between the extent of the moral “purity” (detachment and disinterestedness or the degree of moral awareness) of an act and the measure of individual effectiveness in promoting or pursuing and securing a morally worthy end, over a period of time. He thus recommended that we must be primarily or even wholly concerned with the immediate adoption of what we regard as a morally worthy (i.e. intrinsically justifiable) means. Gandhi explicitly rejected the doctrine that the end justifies the means,¹⁷¹ and went so far as to assert that a moral means is almost an end in itself because virtue is its own reward.

The two qualities which made Gandhi unique were: his crystal clear transparency i.e. no discord or deviation between his thought, word and deed and publicly admittance of his Himalayan blunders; and his keen desire to restore the dignity of all human beings.

Jain ethics support the principle that right-ought-good cannot be separated with the guiding principle to maximize *Ahimsa* over *Himsa* until the attainment of complete *AHIMSA* as the highest good. So *Ahimsa* becomes a means as well as the end. The criterion of what is right etc. is the greater balance of good over bad. Jain ethics holds the teleological theory of right (Maximum balance of *Ahimsa* over *himsa* as the right-making characteristic). Further the four passions i.e. anger, arrogance, deceit and greed are the causes of wrong belief and conduct resulting in bad results. In a positive way it implies straightforwardness or harmony in acts of mind body and speech,

humility, love and sharing / giving results in good results. This is further supported by Jain doctrine of karma of ‘As you sow so shall you reap’ or consequential ethics shows a direct correspondence of righteousness and goodness of means and ends. So as per *Anekantavada* doctrine, purity i.e. selfless or just spiritual and goodness of means lead to ultimate self realization and worldly happiness respectively. It seems that Gandhi’s interpretation of the *Gita* and Karma doctrine form the basis to arrive at his philosophy of means and end.

Sarvodaya or Welfare of All or Rising of All Living Beings

The key to *Sarvodaya*¹⁷², for Gandhi, is dedicated service to humanity so that all living beings can live happily and are free to make efforts to ultimately experience their nature (bliss, knowledge and eternity). The nonviolent society with the ideal of *Sarvodaya* is founded on the recognition of this altruistic element in human nature. This is possible if man is remade with soul force. Gandhi claimed to be a humble servant of India and humanity. According to Gandhi, it is *Sarvodaya* i.e. the good or the welfare of all, which should be the aim of all human activities. It is our highest end, the *summum bonum*. The good or the welfare aimed at is the all-round welfare- social, political, economic, etc., and it is the good not only of men but also of animals and even of the natural world.¹⁷³ For Gandhi the word first appeared in the form of the title for the Gujarati translation of John Ruskin’s book entitled *Unto This Last*. *Sarvodaya* was the title of a series of nine articles, which Gandhi wrote and got published in Gujarati in the *Indian opinion* weekly in South Africa in 1908.

Sarvodaya may rightly be described as the totality of Gandhian thought in theory and in action with its roots going back to the days of Mahavira and Buddha, who preached the law of sublime love, compassion and nonviolence. In short, its philosophy

advocates ethical idealism and supremacy of moral values like self effort or one's duty towards self and fellow beings using the principles of self-denial and self-negation; supreme aim of life is pursuit of ultimate reality which reaffirms that "soul is God" and soul is not a physical body. Thus all living beings are seen as with similar souls, it is impossible to conceive of one man's interest being in conflict with that of another. Therefore *Sarvodaya* advocates 'meta-political' and 'meta-social' solution to the present order by postulating "a rational integration of the human soul based on suffering, non-covetousness and a spirit of self-surrender to the divine spirit." *Sarvodaya* encompasses all other terms (such as *Swaraj*, *Ramrajya*, *Ahimsa*, *Satyagraha* and similar other terms) suggesting a total re-construction and transformation of Indian society.

Gandhi took recourse to *Sarvodaya* in which everyone undergoes an inner change both mentally and spiritually. The elevation of work to worship as a spiritual force enhances man's endeavour to himself by means of knowing others (logic or knowledge) and allowing everyone to evaluate himself in terms of doing right under any trying circumstances. He allows what is True, God and beautiful and rejects whatever stands in the way of the well-being of all. This is possible for him because the spiritual force of *Sarvodaya* also teaches and trains his mind how to win over all possible forms of cowardice and endowed with the spirit of *Abhay* that stands for fearlessness. As the process is endless, Truth under the name of *Sarvodaya* embraces *Ahimsa* or nonviolence.

Mahavira's doctrine of *Ahimsa* as given earlier clearly gives the directive principle of *Sarvodaya* as the practice of *Ahimsa* to achieve welfare not only of the practitioner but every living being. The means to progress are given as *Anuvratas* and penance, while for the welfare of all others is the practice of

social *Ahimsa*. The entire doctrine of Jainism is based on the concept of soul and its activism (attribute called *Virya*) of self effort to achieve its worldly and trans-worldly objectives. The religious congregation of Mahavira was open to all, i.e. not just limited to human beings of different castes / creeds, levels of spiritual attainment but even to animals, birds and so on. Jain story literature dating back to over 2000 years is full of stories of the lowliest of low people and even living beings belonging to animal kingdom achieving spiritual awakening and enlightenment based on the sermons of Mahavira. Samantabhadra, 5th century *Jainacharya* has rightly said that Mahavira's creed is really the creed for the enlightenment of all i.e. *Sarvodaya tirth*.

Gandhi on Women

Empowerment of the women in India, i.e. from '*Abala*' or helpless to '*Sabala* or empowered / strong, had been very dear to Gandhi. Customs and practices like female infanticide, child marriage, *Purdah* (veil), dowry, polygamy, *Sati* (immolation on the pyre of the husband), repeated pregnancies, permanent and pathetic widowhood, illiteracy, wife beating and verbal abuse made life of common women very hard. Although some social reformers, missionaries and government had made efforts to remove some of the hardships of women, yet Gandhi gave a totally new perspective regarding gender equality through the application of *Ahimsa*. Gandhi, concerning women's role in society, said, "My contribution to the great problem lies in my presenting for acceptance of Truth and *Ahimsa* in every walk of life, whether for individuals or nations. Woman is the incarnation of *Ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and derives joy in the suffering involved. What can beat the

suffering caused by the pangs of labour? But she forgets them in the joy of creation". Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget that she ever was or can be the object of man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader. It is given to her to teach the art of peace to the warring world thirsting for that nectar."¹⁷⁴

He said that the soul in both (men and women) is similar. The two live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. The one cannot live without the other's active help.¹⁷⁵ Gandhi identified lack of education and information as the roots cause of all the evils against women as education will enable women to assert their natural right and to exercise them wisely and to work for their expansion.

Jainism has always taken a leading position to provide equal rights and opportunities to women. In fact women always outnumbered the male Jain monks and lay followers and the trend continues even today. Further the latest census of India shows that over 94% Jain women are educated, progress on their own without total subservience to husband / father / son. 1st *Tirthankara* Adinath, who as a king established the social order, gave full education and responsibilities to his daughters (Brahmi and Sundari) as to his sons and established the four fold creed with male and female members. Historically Mahavira gave special consideration to the uplift of women by his following actions:

He expanded the four fold vows i.e., *Chaturyam* to fivefold by bifurcating non- possession to celibacy and non-possession as the feeling by his time took root that women were sheer possessions of men.

He undertook severe penance (fasting) to eliminate the women slavery tradition (Chandan Bala episode).

He again established the four fold creed with Chandan Bala as the head of female monks and Chelana (queen of king Shrenik) as the head lay-women followers. The 9th limb of Jain canons called *Antakrishdasha* shows large number of women getting initiated into monkhood by Mahavira and attaining liberation.

The above examples of Jainism are given specifically for women.

Religion, Nation and Religious Harmony

Gandhi gave higher place to religion and described it in the form of Truth and righteousness. In his constructive programme, he gave the first place to communal harmony among the people of different faiths.

The principal question before him was harmony between Hindus and Muslims who inhabited this country. Gandhi felt that if Hindu-Muslim unity was established, unity with other communities which were already there could easily be strengthened. He never found serious differences between the Hindus and Muslims and other minority communities like the Christians and the Sikhs, not to speak of the small community of Parsis. Therefore he turned to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. He insisted that the Hindus who are in a majority in the country should help the Muslims and should never entertain any idea of enforcing their rights but try to win the hearts of the minority community. "There is nothing in either religion to keep the two communities apart". Religions are no exception to the natural law. The need of the moment is not an establishment of a Universal religion but there is a greater need to develop mutual respect towards the different religions i.e. unity in diversity.

Rajchandra's response to the twenty seven questions by Gandhi gave him a better picture of different religions. This was the period during which a number of influential Christians were trying to convert Gandhi to Christianity. A quick review of the responses by Rajchandra shows the definition of religion as narrated by Gandhi above and showing equality of all religions from different viewpoints. For example:

Definition of *Arya Dharma* (Answer to Q 8): *Arya Dharma* or noble path is one which enables the soul to realize its true nature, and rightly so.

Which religion is best? (Q 12): That religion alone is the best and is truly strong, which is helpful in destroying the bondage of worldly life and can establish us in the state which is our essence (realizing pure and peaceful state of being).

Validity of Holy Scripture (Bible) and Jesus being the son of God (Q14, 15): This is a matter of faith and cannot be proved rationally. Same is applicable to the *Gita* and other scriptures if claimed to be inspired by God.

Miracles shown by Jesus and other prophets (Q 16): Mastery of *Yoga* techniques enables a person to perform certain miracles and if it is claimed that Jesus had such powers, we cannot assert that this claim is true or false. Such yogic powers are of no consequence compared to the power of *Atma*, the latter is infinitely greater than the powers attained by *Yoga*.

He advised Gandhi to read *Saddarshan-sammuchaya* by *Jainacharya* Haribhadra which gives an excellent treatise on the six prevailing philosophies in India in 8th century AD. He even insisted that Gandhi should stay in the religion in which he was born and he could find everything told by Rajchandra and more in his religion as well.

Similarly Siddhasen Diwakar, a noted *Jainacharya* of 5th century AD, based on *Anekantavada*, said “*Miccha-dansana-samuha-maeyassa*’ meaning that sermons of the *Jina / Tirthankara* are a comprehensive collection of all monistic philosophies”¹⁷⁶ Another example is the definition of Metaphysical definition *Sat* (reality) by Mahavira as ‘change to be as much ontologically real as permanence. Both are separable but only in logical thought. Being implies becoming and vice versa.’ Thus he talks of reality as being permanence with change simultaneously. The first and the last stanzas of *Meri Bhavana* by Pandit Jugal Kishore Mukhtar show the Jain dedication for harmony and nation building.

He, who has destroyed or subdued his attachment, aversion, desires and had understood the reality of this universe; who delivers the beneficial sermons to everybody about the path of spiritual purification and attaining liberation; who may be called by different names such as Buddha, Vira, Hari, Hara and Brahma or the self/soul; Imbued with devotion in Him, may this mind be eternally engrossed in Him.

May mutual love spread throughout the world and delusion stay at a distance from all; May no one use harsh, bitter and unpleasant words from their mouths; May everyone become the hero of his time and work for the progress of his country; May all understand the true nature of entities/substances and hence become tolerant of all sorts of pain flinched.

Historically, Jain kings like Chandragupta Maurya, and rulers (Gang and Hoysala dynasties in South, Kumarpala in Gujarat from 8th to 15th centuries AD) are known to have promoted and maintained religious harmony amongst their subjects. Jinasena wrote *Adi Purana* and incorporated a number of Hindu religious rites into Jainism. Hemchandra performed religious rituals to venerate Shiva to please King Siddha Raj. Jains and Vaishnavas in Gujarat are so intermixed that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other. The story goes on. Based on their doctrine of

Anekanta, traditionally Jains respect and practice religious and social harmony.

Gandhi said in his '*Autobiography*¹⁷⁷:

Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purificationAnd purification being highly infectious; purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings. But the path of self-purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion..... To conquer the subtle passions seems to me to be harder far more than the physical conquest of the world by the force of arms.

Gandhi concludes this paragraph, the penultimate one in his *Autobiography* saying¹⁷⁸:

But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as a man does not of his own freewill put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him. *Ahimsa* is the farthest limit of humility.

The above statements towards the end of his life by Gandhi is a clear evidence and reasoning of his religious and ethical striving being directed profoundly at Jain goals as the Jain path to salvation, relies so greatly on the restraint of the passions and gradual withdrawal from food and water, and even aims at their reduction to zero. Every Jain votary wishes to die practising the vow of *Sallekhana* through which one avoids even the violence committed by walking, moving, talking, eating and causing pain or destroying the life of even one sensed living beings.¹⁷⁹

On January 30th 1948, his soul left his mortal body for its eternal journey in a prayer meeting in Delhi reciting *Rama Nama* 'Hey Ram'. He left a legacy of achieving success through practice of *Ahimsa* (nonviolence), *Satya* (Truth), *Anekanta* (Non absolutism or many faceted truths), *Aparigraha* (non possession) and *Tapa* (Self suffering / effort).

Gandhi's interactions with Jains:

Gandhi was brought up in an environment heavily influenced by Jainism. His accepting the vows of three abstinences as a condition to be allowed to England show deep Jain influence in the family and community and on himself.

During his stay in England, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta¹⁸⁰, a Jain did his best to help Gandhi in getting settled. On return, Dr Mehta received Gandhi at Bombay port and took him to his home, introduced to Rajchandra, son in law of his brother. He provided guidance and advice to Gandhi on Hind Swaraj and Salt tax abolition initiative (resulting in the famous Dandi March). Dr Mehta was always available to help Gandhi financially (like setting up ashram at Phoenix and at Ahmedabad, Gujarat Vidhyapeeth, and Champaran movement). Gandhi used to stay with him in London as well as at his home in Rangoon. Dr. Mehta's daughter, Ramaben and daughter in law Lilawati actively participated in freedom struggle and as members of Azad Hind Fauz). Dr. Mehta forecasted that Gandhi can bring *swaraj* in India.

Virchand Gandhi, a lawyer and Jain philosopher guided Gandhi against the problems of legal profession and of being ex-communicated.

Rajchandra gave him the first hand practical and theoretical exposition of Jainism. He later resolved all religion-spiritual-way

of life issues of Gandhi. Gandhi called Rajchandra his spiritual guru. Unfortunately Rajchandra died young in 1901.

However another Jain, Sheth Ambalal Sarabhai¹⁸¹ came up several times during our study. He was the key mill owner and adversary against whom Gandhi called the mill strike in Ahmedabad (1918). Ambalal agreed to the demands of striking workers. Ambalal was also a big fund provider for Sabarmati Ashram as well as nursed Gandhi to health in his villa at Matheran. He always supported Gandhi during the periods when others withdrew. Similarly his sister Anusuyabehn and daughter Mridula Sarabhai actively supported Gandhi during strike against Mill-owners and later on.

During his freedom struggle in India, it became difficult to identify Jains as they use different surnames which are also used by fellow Vaishnavs and others. We came to know of 688 Jains from North India only involved in India's freedom struggle with 20 becoming martyrs.¹⁸²

We could locate a small booklet¹⁸³ giving briefs of Gandhi's month long stay in September 1944 in Birla House Bombay which shows the deep interest and following of Gandhi in practising Jainism. His daily meetings, discussions and offering food to Mahasati Ujjawala and later interactions with Jain-monk Mohan Lal in 1945 at Chowpatty demonstrate his deep knowledge and impact of Jainism on him.

He was fully conversant with Rajchandra's writings (*Atmasiddhi* particularly influenced him). He makes special mention of Jain religious texts *Purusharthsiddhiupay* by Amritchand, *Jnanaranava* by Shubh Chandra and *Shatdarshansammuchaya* by HariBhadra.

His deep knowledge of Jainism and its practise is also visible in his criticism (and advice) to Jains of being ignorant about

Ahimsa of Mahavira and their limiting it to just food (strict vegetarian and fasting etc) habits and protection of animals only.¹⁸⁴ As a result, perhaps, Jain community started to contribute significantly more for causes like education (more than 3000 schools set and run by them), setting up hospitals and dispensaries, organizing health camps, establishing homes for destitute (women, old people and orphans) and so.¹⁸⁵

We have discussed so far Gandhi's engagements with Rajchandra, Jain monks, business men and philanthropists and their impact where Jainism seems to make an impact on him or support his mission when needed most. We also tried to locate incidences where Gandhi interacted with common Jains to make an impact on them. He did this either singly or by addressing them in Jain monasteries or Jain conferences showing his deep understanding of Jain doctrine and way of life. We glanced through his literature and found several incidences backing these statements.¹⁸⁶ In such incidences, generally he was critical of Jains and their practices by explaining Jain doctrine and value systems and advised them to enhance their understanding of Jainism. We give below one such incidence to demonstrate Gandhi's study of Jainism (Excerpts from CWMG 21:427-435):

“... I tell Jains and others too, that compassion does not merely mean not killing bugs, ants and other insects, though certainly they should not be killed. It also means that no soul born as a human being must be cheated. And yet what else do the businessmen do? If any Jain would show his account books to me, I would immediately prove that he was no Jain. How is the cloth, in which we trade, produced? Dealers ought to consider whether the manufacture of cloth is not tainted, whether it is not true that animal fat is used in sizing cloth. It must be, besides, repugnant to businessmen to charge exorbitant rates of interest. This is not worthily done by a Jain. Dealers may reasonably add

to the cost of an article one pice or two pice for their services. But, why is all this cunning haggling and lying? And the interest which is charged for money lent is so cruelly high that it kills the debtor. Wherever I go, I hear complaints against *Vanias*, both Jains and *Vaishnavas*. - - -

We must cease to be unscrupulous *Vanias* and become Kshatriyas. The Vaisya's dharma does not mean doing no manual work, no ploughing, no heroism and no consideration for right and wrong. The true Vaisya, rather, shows himself heroic in his generosity and discrimination in his business; he follows the Brahmin's dharma, too, by exercising his discrimination and deciding that he may not sell liquor or fish, that he may deal only in pure khadi. We shall fall into sin if others slave for us and we merely lend money and earn interest. At least by way of *yajna*, we should do some bodily labour every day.....”

Conclusion

Gandhi was born in a *Modhbania* Vaishanva family which on their own and the neighbourhood were profoundly impacted by Jainism. This is born by all the texts and statements made by eminent scholars and Gandhi himself. However the uniqueness of Gandhi is falling back on moral values with impact of Jainism, and his constant adherence and even making them more stringent as he grew up. Rajchandra became his mentor, spiritual guru who reinforced the Jain concepts of soul (*Atma*), God (inner self free from defilement), *Avatar*, Truth, institution of ethics, *Ahimsa*, *Anekantavada* or multiplicity of viewpoints, *Brahmacharya*, and *Tapasya* (self suffering) to annihilate impurities (tainted emotions like anger, arrogance, greed and deceit). The impact of these Jain principles is seen as decisive on Gandhi, through his interpretation of the *Gita* (which Gandhi called as his solace and mother) as *Anasakti Yoga* (translated in English as Gospel of Selfless action by Gandhi) and similar to

the description of Jain doctrine as the Science of detachment. The eleven observances Gandhi enforced for *Ashramites* (similar to monks in Jainism) are primarily the first five vows which are a mix of major and minor vows in Jainism. He tried to make adherence to these five vows as absolute on *Ashramites*, like *Mahavratas* for monks in Jainism.

The remaining six vows developed by him are the practice of the first five vows and his values to resolve social ills for which he used the expert advice of persons like Tolstoy, Ruskin, Gokhale and other similar people with whom he came in contact in person or through their writings. Thus he enlarged the practice of the first five vows by and for masses as well to bring them together in his movement to gain freedom for India. These observances also helped him ensure that the same was available to the lowest strata of Indian society for their betterment and enhanced self reliance.

Gandhi had Jain holy texts¹⁸⁷ always on his table and seized every opportunity to meet discuss and offer food to Jain monks till his death, perhaps indicating his respect to Jain monks, their way of life and his strong wish to attain self realization, like Rajchandra whom he observed very closely.

He called himself a Hindu. He also defined Hinduism as a grouping of all Indic religions with different shades of Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism as its components. This statement is based on the advice from Rajchandra to him to stay in the religion of his birth and do research and contemplations of their doctrine and concepts in light of his own experiences. As a result, he accepted Jain values acquired through Rajchandra primarily, reading Jain texts, contacts in community / families as seen in his interpretation of the *Gita*. He became a superior (*Sadhak*) Jain householder / votary. He even recommended to

Jains to appreciate the beauty of Jain doctrine of *Ahimsa*, *Anekanta* and *Aprigraha* to not limit it to their food and philanthropy towards animals but the same for the uplift of society as well.

Gandhian way of life and method for achieving his personal mission for self realization (*Atmadarshan*) and use of *Satyagraha* for social uplift and Indian freedom struggle amply demonstrates impact of the way of life of Mahavira and Rajchandra which involves self sacrifice (use of fasting, detached life style and *Ahimsa*) as a potent tool rather than reform others only. He used this principle of self sacrifice (termed *Satyagraha*) to achieve social transformation, keep India united (e.g. he called himself a *Harijan* by choice), achieve freedom from British and to involve the masses in his movement.

The uniqueness of Gandhi was his ability to transform personal practices of nonviolence and self realization into collective action by extending interpretation of vows beyond the purpose of self-purification so that they became tools for political peace that hastened Indian independence and even to tell Jains to practice the ideals of *Ahimsa* as preached by Mahavira.

We conclude with Gandhi's own wish as expressed to Sardar Patel, during stay in Bombay in 1944 at Birla House to meet Jinnah for discussion), while he was offering alms to Jain Mahasati Ujjawala Ji¹⁸⁸:

“One day Gandhi thought of earning the merit by offering food to Jain monk (*Satī*) Ujjawal. The question arose in his mind whether *Satījī* will accept food from him? *Satījī* gave her consent to him. On hearing this, Birlaji brought a silver plate with cups in Gandhi's hands. While Gandhi was offering food to *Satījī*, Vallabh Bhai Patel came by. Gandhi addressing Patel said, “Are you seeing that

I have become a Jain *Shravaka* (householder votary), Come I can make you one also.”

The next day Gandhi expressed similar desire to *Satījī*. He was offering curd to Jain *Sādhvī* Ujjawal. *Satījī* told Gandhi “If you take my pot in your hand and put curd in it than no curd will fall on the floor?” Gandhi took *Sādhvī*’s pot in his hand, and as per his nature, said to *sati* while pouring curd in her pot, “*Mahāsatiījī*: I am not so lucky to keep this pot (*Satījī*’s) in my hand. If it was possible, than I would have been free from all these worldly issues and could live peacefully”

As per the Jain philosophy propagated by its tirthankaras, status of a person is determined not by the family in which one is born but by his / her actions. Jain history is full of non Jains, who understood Jain principles very well, practiced them and became exemplary Jain preceptors. Based on this, even though Gandhi might not have been born in a Jain family, yet his understanding Jain doctrine and practice of the same makes him an exemplary Jain.

Notes & References

- ¹ Pearelal *MAHATMA GANDHI*, Vol. 1, *The Early Phase*; Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1965/ 1986, p. 276’.
- ² *CWVG*, 49:327-28 “I have never seen any difference between the Jain doctrine and the general Vedic doctrine. The difference is only one of point of view. The God of the Vedas is both a Doer and a non-Doer. Since the whole world is pervaded by God, He is a Doer, and yet He is not that because He remains untouched. - - - Looked at from this point of view, the verses which you have quoted from the *Gita* can be reconciled with one another. We should remember that the *Gita* is a poem. God does not speak nor does He do anything. - - - The conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna is imaginary. - - - It was a custom in those times to write religious works in such a form, and even today a learned

writer would not be criticized for adopting a similar form. Jainism stated the truth logically and unpoetically and, therefore, coldly, and said that there was no God who might be described as Creator of the world. It is not wrong to say this, but the ordinary mass of people do not respond to cold logic. They always crave for poetry. That is why even the rationalism of the Jains felt the need for temples, images and similar aids, for which pure *nyaya* [Logic] should have no use.” [Letter to Purushottam Gandhi, 18.4.1932,].

³ See *Appendix II* Rajchandra for details; also in Stephen N. Hay, op. cit., p. 31 “Rajchandra and Gandhi had much in common. Rajchandra was only a year older than Gandhi. They conversed of course in their mother tongue, Gujarati. Both had come from the Kathiawad peninsula to work in Bombay: they were up-country boys in the big city. Rajchandra was, like Gandhi, the son of Vaishnava father, but his mother was a Jain. When Gandhi met him he was a convinced Jain, a trusted partner in his Jain father-in-law’s jeweller’s shop, and an accomplished religious poet. Gandhi, then a ‘brief less barrister’, was equally impressed by Rajchandra’s efficiency as a businessman and by his spiritual insight: “I found his talk of absorbing interest....His words went straight home to me. His intellect compelled as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness.....In my moments of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge.”

⁴ Jain story literature is full of life sketches of Jains going overseas to acquire wealth and then return to India for establishing their families and practice dharma to attain liberation.

⁵ *CWVG* 32:1-13, “I entered into correspondence with every person in India in whom I had some trust, Raychandbhai being the chief among them. [*Vide* “Gandhiji’s Q.s to Rajchandra and his Replies”, *CWVG* 32:593-602, letter accompanying Rajchandra’s replies is dt. 20.10.1894.] I had already been introduced to him and a close bond had grown between us. I had respect for him, and so I decided to get from him everything he could give. The result was that I gained peace of mind. I felt reassured that Hinduism could give me what I needed. The reader will have some idea of how much my respect for Raychandbhai must have increased because of his being responsible for this result. Nevertheless, I have not

accepted him as my guru. I am still in search of one, and so far my feeling in regard to everyone whom I might think of as a guru has been “No, not this”. One must have the requisite qualification to come upon a perfect guru, and I cannot claim to have it.” [Preface to “Shrimad Rajchandra”, 5 Nov. 1926,].

⁶ Kumarpal Desai, *Śrīmad Rājacandra ane Mahātmā Gāndhī* in Gujarati has these two more letters, please see Kumarpal Desai, *Śrīmad Rājacandra ane Mahātmā Gāndhī* (Shri Rajsobhag Satsang Mandal, 2007), p. 85-109.

⁷ Ibid; Pages 85-109 contains answers to three letters by Rajchandra. His address to Gandhi in three letters is: letter 1: *Ātmārthī, Guṅgrāhī satsaṅgyogya bhāi* (Engaged in self realized, accepts the virtues, and worthy of holy company); letter 2 *Jnani bhāi śrī* (inquisitive brother) and Letter 3: *Ātmārthī bhāi* (engaged in self realization) showing his enhanced desire and belief for self realization as per the explanations of Rajchandra about soul.

⁸ *The Ātma Siddhī* (or self realization of Srimad Rajchandra), Translated, Rai Bahadur J.L. Jaini, as quoted from Stephen N. Hay, op. cit., p. 34.

⁹ *My.Ex.*, p. 113, M. K. Gandhi, cited in Stephen N. Hay, op. cit., p. 31: ‘I found his talks of absorbing interest... His words went straight home to me. His intellect compelled as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness... In my moments of spiritual crisis, therefore he was my refuge’.

¹⁰ *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p. 127.

¹¹ Satish Sharma, *GTR* (Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad, 2005), p.vii.

¹² *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.127.

I expressed my difficulties in a letter to Raychandbhai. I also corresponded with other religious authorities in India and received answers from them. Raychandbhai’s letter somewhat pacified me. He asked me to be patient and to study Hinduism more deeply. One of his sentences was to this effect ‘On a dispassionate view of the question, I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought that Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity.

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- ¹³ *Gandhi and Shrimad Rajchandra*, p.9 cited in Stephen N Hay, 'Jain Influences on Gandhi's Early thought', (Promilla Publishers, New Delhi, 1993), p.35; *SPEECH ON BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF RAJCHANDRA, AHMEDABAD November 16, 1921: - - - - -*
Today's occasion is twice welcome as affording an opportunity for reflection over the meaning of compassion. We revere the person for honouring whose memory we have gathered here. I, too, rank myself among his adorers. A critic can never be this. - - - I assume, therefore, that only those who love the poet and hold him in reverence have come to this meeting. It is to these persons that I say that today's occasion is twice welcome. The man in whose hallowed memory we have gathered here was the living embodiment of this religion of compassion. He understood it well and had perfected it in his life. This same compassion inspires our present activities in the country. It is not anger which prompts them. The situation as it has developed has given us sufficient reason to be angry and has hurt us deeply. But, even at this unhappy hour we pause and think how we may act so as not to hurt the opponents; how, on the contrary, we may do a good turn even to them. Non-cooperation springs from compassion and not from anger. Afraid that we may be in the wrong, we refuse to be angry with the opponent and, instead, ourselves flee from him. I have often declared that I have learnt, and learnt much, from the lives of many persons. But it is from the Poet's life that I have learnt most. It was from his life that I understood the way of compassion. There can be no act which will not hurt the feelings of someone or another, but the pain must have been inflicted out of compassion.
- ¹⁴ *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol.9 , op.cit., pp.212-3, Letter to H.S.L. Polak, 26 April 1909.
- ¹⁵ *Mahatma Gandhi ane Srimad Rajchandra* (Mahatma Gandhi and Shrimad Rajchandra) (Oza Ayurvedic Pharmasi, Ahmedabad, 1993), p.11 cited in Stephen N. Hay " Jain Influences on Gandhi's Early Thought" in Sibnarayan Ray, ed., *Gandhi India and the World* (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1970), p.31.
- ¹⁶ J.T.F. Jordens, "Gandhi and the Bhagavadgita", in Robert N. Minor, *Modern Indian Interpreters of the Bhagavad Gita* Ed. (State University of New York, New York, 1991), pp.107-8.

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- ¹⁷ CWMG, XXXII,2,6,7 cited in J.T.F. Jordens, op. cit., p.108.
- ¹⁸ J.T.F. Jordens, in his paper on Gandhi's *Gita* in the book *Modern Interpreters of Gita* op. cit., p. 108
- ¹⁹ Stephen N. Hay, in his paper "Jain influences on Gandhi's early thought" op. cit., p. 35
- ²⁰ CWMG, 13:143-4, Speech at Rajchandra Birth Anniversary, Ahmedabad, 21.11.1915, *The Bombay Chronicle* (23.11.1915). "At a public meeting held at the Premabhai Hall, Ahmedabad, on November 21, 1915, to celebrate the birthday of the famous philosopher of Gujarat, Shrimad Rajchandra [Son-in-law of Revashanker Jagjivan Mehta, elder brother of Gandhiji's life-long friend and supporter, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta. Gandhiji first met him in 1891 at the suggestion of Dr. Mehta. A business man and an expert jeweller, he lived his life in the spirit of *karmayoga*. His was the first profound influence on Gandhiji in his mature years, comparable to that of Ruskin and Tolstoy later; *vide An Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. I], Gandhiji, who occupied the chair, dwelt in the course of his opening remarks on the appropriateness of the celebration of the great philosopher's birthday. Dealing with the life of Rajchandra, Mr. Gandhi mentioned that he had come in close personal contact with him and, so far as he was competent to judge, he declared it to be his deliberate opinion that the deceased was one of the best religious philosophers of modern times in India. He was incomparable in true perception, he was free from attachment, and had true *vairagya* in him. [*Gujarati*, 28-11-1915), "He had *gyana*, *vairagya* and *bhakti*] He followed no narrow creed. He was a universalist and had no quarrel with any religion in the world. In the West, the speaker had found Tolstoy and Ruskin among the best philosophers and he did not hesitate to put the deceased above both of them. The deceased outdid them in religious experience. The faith of the deceased was a robust faith, such as could only be based upon the true realisation of the self. Upon the speaker's own life, the deceased had exercised a very powerful influence. There was a suitable and certain sublimity and genuineness about the writings of the deceased, which gave them

peculiar charm and enabled them to have a powerful hold upon the reader.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi hoped that those who had attended the celebration would take the trouble of studying the writings of the deceased Mahatma and he promised that they would feel all the better for their trouble.

²¹ J.T.F. Jordens, “Gandhi and the Bhagavadgita”, in Robert N. Minor, *Modern Indian Interpreters of the Bhagavad Gita* Ed. (State University of New York, New York, 1991), pp.107-8 ‘Among these underpinnings, nothing is probably more important than the Jain influence identifiable in his mindset. He manages to graft several Jain concepts on to his own interpretation of Hinduism, so much so that no less than a person other than Bal Gangadhar Tilak once mentioned that he had always taken Gandhi to be a Jain’.

²² Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi* op. cit., p. 126, point 4 ‘Again this rendering is designed for women, the commercial class, the so called *Shudras* and the like, who have little or no literary equipment, who have neither the time nor desire to read the *Gita* in original and yet who stand in need of its support.

²³ *CWVG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. XLI, p. 92 as quoted from J.T.F. Jordens, op. cit., p. 97.

²⁴ *CWVG*, Dr Ramesh Betai, op. cit., pp. 80-85; M. K. Gandhi, Vol. XXVIII, pp.316-17, as quoted from J.T.F. Jordens, op. cit., p. 96. “For understanding the meanings of *Shastras*, one must have a well cultivated moral sensibility and experience in the practice of their rules... Hence anyone who offers to interpret the *Shastras* must have observed the prescribed disciplines in his life ...only those who have experience in the practice can explain the real meaning of *Shastras*.”

²⁵ Samantabhadra, *RKS*,1.10 (Vitarag Vani Trust, Tikamagarh, MP, 2006), p.25

“*Viṣayāsāvāsātīto nirārambho ’parigrahaḥ.*

Jñānadhyānatapāratnastapasvī sa praśasyate. 10.

²⁶ Pt. Daulataramji, *Chahadhālā*, Trans. Dr. Kirit P. Gosalia, (Teerthdham Mangalayatan, Aligarh, 2007),pp 1.1-1.3.

Tīna bhuvana meṃ sāra, vītarāgaviññānatā. Śivasvarūpaśivakāra, namahumṭriyoga saṃhārikeṃ.1.

²⁷ Kundkunda, *Mokṣapāhuḍa*, 4, 7.

²⁸ See Appendix 1, pp.

²⁹ Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi* op. cit., p. 148-64, verse II.55 To find comfort for oneself from Atman means to look to the spirit within for spiritual comfort, not to the objects outside which in their very nature must give pain as well as pleasure. . Spiritual comfort or bliss must be distinguished from pleasure or happiness. The pleasure I may derive from the possession of wealth, for instance, is delusive; real spiritual comfort or bliss can be attained only if I rise superior to every temptation even though troubled by the pangs of poverty and hunger.

³⁰ *CWVG*, 28:403-4, Speech at Mandvi, 31.10.1925, Let us stand in awe of the self alone; let us be concerned that the Self, which is ever watchful, does not suffer pain. Let us learn endless penance from Rajchandra's life and realize that at the end of such penance, he came to worship *Chaitanya* [Universal Consciousness]. Let us make our lives meaningful by realizing our insignificance and thus become meek as a lamb and strong as a lion by contemplating the *Chaitanya* that is within us." and introduction to the book on Raychand on November 5th 1926: We may not lower the standard of truth even for the sake of those whom we love dearly. *Moksha* is a condition of supreme value. It is the highest state of the *atman* [the self]. It is so rare a condition that to attain it much more effort and patience are necessary than, say, for emptying the sea drop by drop with a blade of grass. A perfect description of that state is impossible. A Tirthankar will naturally command, without seeking them, the powers which belong to the state immediately preceding *moksha*. One who has attained freedom while still living in this body will suffer from no physical disease. In a body untroubled by desire there can be no disease. There can be no disease where there is no attachment. Where there is desire there is attachment and while there is attachment *moksha* is impossible.

³¹ These are also discussed by Rajchandra in details in his book *Six Padas* as well as stanzas 1 to 10 in *Dravya Saṅgraha* by Nemichandra written in 1000AD.

³² Amit Gati, *Samayik Paath*, Hindi translation Yugalji and English translation by Shugan C Jain, (International School for Jain Studies, New Delhi)

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Apendix I, p.234

‘Besides the above, another interesting aspect of Jain karma doctrine is the capability (energy or *Viryā*) of soul to make efforts to change the state of karmas bonded with it thereby changing the inauspicious results to auspicious, extending the duration of auspicious results and reducing the results of inauspicious karmas. However there is one state of karma i.e. *Nikācanā* or immunization of karmas against all external activities which cannot be experienced and hence to be enjoyed by the soul.’

³⁵ See Chapter I, purgation and *Guṇasthāns*

³⁶ (A) Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi*, op. cit., p. 148

“By reason of delusion, man, takes wrong to be right. By reason of delusion was Arjun led to make a difference between kinsmen and non-kinsmen. To demonstrate that this as a vain distinction, Lord Krishna distinguishes between body (not-self) and Atman (Self) and shows that whilst bodies are impermanent and several, Atman is permanent and one. Effort is within man’s control, but not the fruit thereof. All he has to do, therefore, is to decide his course of conduct or duty on each occasion and persevere in it, unconcerned about the results. Fulfilment of one’s duty in the spirit of detachment or selflessness leads to freedom.”

(B) Ibid, p. 173

Stanza III.4: “The bondage of action is the bondage of *Samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death. All actions will have its consequences; the consequences in one case shall be bondage of *Samsāra* and in the other case it will be freedom from it”.

(C) Ibid, p. 165

Stanza II.55: “To find comfort for oneself, from Atman means to look to the spirit within for spiritual comfort or bliss must be distinguished from pleasure or happiness. The pleasure I may derive from the possession of wealth, for instance, is delusive; real spiritual comfort or bliss can be attained only if I raise myself

superior to every temptation, even though troubled by the pangs of poverty and hunger,”

(D) Ibid, p. 174

Stanza III.7: “... But he whose mind is truly restrained will, for instance, listen to the praise of God, or of good men. He will keep himself occupied with such activities as ennoble the soul. That is the path of action. Karma yoga is the yoga (means) which delivers the self from the bondage of the body, and in it there is no room for self indulgence”

(E) Ibid, p. 187

Stanza III.33: “... He who justifies himself saying, ‘I cannot do this, it is not in my nature’, misreads the Śloka, True we do not know our nature, but habit is not nature, Progress, not decline, ascent and not descent, is the nature of soul, and therefore every threatened decline or descent ought to be resisted.”

³⁷ See Chapter I section *Doctrine of karma* for details

³⁸ Amritchandra, *Purusharthasiddhiupaya*, stanza 42-48. It is one of the books Gandhi kept on his coffee table.

³⁹ Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi*, op. cit., pp. 195-6

⁴⁰ M K Gandhi, *Harijan*, 14.4.1946, p.80, quoted from, ‘The meaning of God’, http://www.gandhi-manibhavan.org/gandhiphilosophy/philosophy_god_meaning.htm, accessed on 16-04-2004

⁴¹ *My.Ex.*, op.cit, p.287: “That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul”; [*Navajivan*, 24-11-1921, CWMG 21:427-35]: ...*Moksha* is a condition of supreme value. It is the highest state of the *atman* [the self]. It is so rare a condition that to attain it much more effort and patience are necessary than, say, for emptying the sea drop by drop with a blade of grass. A perfect description of that state is impossible. A Tirthankar will naturally command, without seeking them, the powers which belong to the state immediately preceding *moksha*. One who has attained freedom while still living in this body will suffer from no physical disease. In a body untroubled by desire there can be no disease. There can be no disease where there is no attachment. Where there

is desire there is attachment and while there is attachment *moksha* is impossible.

⁴² Umāsvāti, *TS*, I.1, English translation by Shugan Jain, *Jainism, Key to Reality* (Digambar Jain Trilok Shodh Sansthan, Hastinapur, 2011), p.6

Samyag-Darśana-jñāna-cāritrāni mokṣa margah.

⁴³ *CWMG*, Vol. 35, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 3.11.27, see M. K. Gandhi, (Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi: 1958-94), p.173.

⁴⁴ *CWMG*, Vol. 35, Ibid, 24.11.27 see M. K. Gandhi, op. cit, p.246.

⁴⁵ *My.Ex.*, op.cit, p.287: “That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul”.

⁴⁶ Point 11 in his introduction to *Anasakti Yoga*, as quoted from Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi*, op. cit., p. 128.

⁴⁷ Dr. Ramesh S. Betai, op. cit., p. 90.

⁴⁸ *CWMG*, XXXII, M. K. Gandhi, p.189.

⁴⁹ *CWMG*, Vol. 29, op. cit, p. 411-12.

⁵⁰ *CWMG*, XLIX, M. K. Gandhi, p.327.

⁵¹ Umāsvāti, *TS*, V.29, op. cit, p.192

Sad dravyalakṣaṇam

⁵² Ibid, V.1, 2, 3, pp. 167-8

Ajīvakāyādharmādharmākāśapudgalāḥ.1

Drvyāṇi. 2. Jīvāśca.3.

⁵³ Ibid, V.30, p.193.

Utpādavyayadhraubyayuktaṃ sat.

⁵⁴ Shriman Narayan (ed.), *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol.6 (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1997), p.97.

⁵⁵ Dr Ramesh S Betai, op. cit., p.140.

⁵⁶ Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi* op. cit., p. 128, point 12,13.

⁵⁷ See Appendix I.

⁵⁸ Kundakunda, *Pravacanasāra*, (Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram, Agas, 2000) Introduction by AN Upadhye, p. 81.

⁵⁹ *CWMG*, Vol. 29, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 21.2.1926, see M. K. Gandhi, op. cit, p. 411-12; Three Vital Questions, *Young India* Jainism and *Syadvada & Anekantavada*.

“I am an *advaitist* and yet I can support *dvaitism* (dualism). The world is changing every moment, and is therefore unreal, it has no permanent existence. But though it is constantly changing, it has something about it which persists and it is therefore to that extent real. I have therefore no objection to calling it real and unreal, and thus being called an *anekantavadi* or a *syadvadi*. But my *syadvada* is not the *syadvada* of the learned, it is peculiarly my own. I cannot engage in a debate with them. It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. And this knowledge saves me from attributing motives to my opponents or critics. The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view, and wrong from the point of view of one another, and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant. I very much like this doctrine of the manyness of reality. It is this doctrine that has taught me to judge a Mussalman from his own standpoint and a Christian from his. Formerly I used to resent the ignorance of my opponents. Today I can love them because I am gifted with the eye to see myself as others see me and *vice versa*. I want to take the whole world in the embrace of my love. My *anekantavada* is the result of the twin doctrine of *Satya* and *Ahimsa*.”

⁶⁰ *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, pp.249-50.

“However, I must not digress. Before proceeding further I should give the reader a word of warning. Those who purchase Just’s book on the strength of this chapter should not take everything in it to be gospel truth. A writer almost always present one aspect of a case, whereas every case can be seen from no less than seven points of views., all of which are probably correct by themselves, but not correct at the same time and in the same circumstances. And many books are written with a view to gaining customers and earning name and fame. Let those who read such books do so with discernment, and take advice of some experienced man before trying any of the experiments set forth, or let them read the books with patience and digest them thoroughly before acting upon them”.

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- ⁶¹ *CWMG*, Vol.29, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 21-1-1926, see M. K. Gandhi, op. cit., pp.411-2.
- ⁶² For detailed discussions on Gandhi's concept of God as truth please see pp. 4.4 - 4.5 in chapter 4.
- ⁶³ *All Men*, p. 70, 72, *Autobiography*, p.xiv, cited in J. T. F. Jordens, 'Gandhi's Religion and The Hindu Heritage' in Sibnarayan Ray, *Gandhi India and the World*, op.cit., p.49.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid
- ⁶⁵ A Letter to Mahadeva Desai, 15-9-1919; as quoted from Ramesh S Betai, op.cit., p.225
- ⁶⁶ These are called twenty-two Parishahas in Jainism, namely:Hunger, thirst, cold, heat, stinging insects, nudity, discontent, women, wandering, meditation in deserted place, lodging, abuse, injury, begging, failure in begging, illness, injury from thorns, un-cleanliness, kind treatment, knowledge, obscure, ignorance, and right-belief-doubt.
- ⁶⁷ Refer Appendix III for details on his life.
- ⁶⁸ Satish Sharma, *GTR*, op. cit., p.89.
- ⁶⁹ Somdev Sūri, *Yaśastilaka-campū*, kalpa 34 verse 18(Bharatvarshiya Anekant Vidvat Parishad, Aligarh, 1989-90), P.378 : *dvau hi dharamau grhasthānām, laukikah, pārlaikikah! Lokaśrayo bhavedadyah parah syadagamaśrayah.*
and kalpa 8 verse 34: *Sarva eva ji jainānā pramāṇaṃ laukiko vidhiḥ, Yatra samyaktvavanirna na cāpi vrataduṣaṇaṃ.*
- ⁷⁰ Svami Kartikeya, op. cit., 305, *Shravaka-dharma-dohaka-* 10
- ⁷¹ Jinasena, *Mahāpurāṇa*, xxxviii.24
*devapujagurupastihsvadhyayahsadyamastapah/
danamcetigrihasthanamsatkarmani dine dine//*
- ⁷² Samantabhadra, *RKS*,3.5, (Vitarag Vani Trust, Tikamagarh, MP, 2006), p.116
*Gr̥hiṇāṃtredhātiṣṭhatyaṇu-guṇa-śikṣāvratātmakaṃcaraṇaṃ.
Pañca-tri-caturbhedaṃtrayaṃyathāsaṅkhyamākhyātam.*
- ⁷³ See Appendix 1 for Meaning of Spiritual awakening.
- ⁷⁴ *CWMG*, vol.78, p87-145, covers Gandhi's stay in Bombay from 9th to 29th September 1944 at Birla House for discussions with Jinnah. This reference relates to this period when Jain Mahasati Ujjawalaji used to meet him daily for food and talking and briefly

described by Ratna kumar Jain in *Gāndhī-Ujjavala Vārtālapa* (Svashraya Prakashan Samiti, Delhi, 1954), p. 22.

“One day Gandhi thought of earning the merit by offering food to Jain monk (*Satī*) Ujjawal. The question arose in his mind whether *Satījī* will accept food from him? *Satījī* gave her consent to accept food from Gandhi. On hearing this, Birlaji brought a silver plate with cups in Gandhi’s hands. While Gandhi was offering food to *Satījī*, Vallabh Bhai Patel came by. Gandhi addressing Patel said, “Are you seeing that I have become a Jain *Śrāvaka*, Come I can make you also one.”

The next day Gandhi expressed his desire to *Satījī*. Once Gandhi was offering curd to Jain *Sādhvī* Ujjawal (during his stay in Bombay during September 1944 at Birla House). *Satījī* told Gandhi “If you take my pot in your hand and put curd in it than no curd will fall on the floor?” Gandhi took *Sādhvī*’s pot in his hand, and as per his nature, said to *sati* while pouring curd in her pot, “*Mahāsatiījī*: I am not so lucky to keep this pot(*Satījī*’s) in my hand, If it was possible, than I would have been free from all these worldly issues and could live peacefully”.

⁷⁵ *My.Ex. op. cit.*, pp.127 and 147 (For religious harmony), 189,255 (*Brahmacarya*), 299-300, 327-8 (veg)

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p.300.

“.... .So, immediately after release from jail, I imposed on myself the two rules. As far as was then possible, I stopped taking tea, and finished my last meal before sunset. Both these now require no effort in the observance.”

⁷⁷ See chapter 1. Votary is householder who adopts the five minor vows as a way of life and is *samyakdrsti* or firm belief in the existence of soul and its capability to become supreme soul by its own strenuous efforts.

⁷⁸ Jinendra Varni, *Jainendra Siddhānta Kośa*, Vol-III (Bharatiya Jnanapeeth, New Delhi, 1972), p.624

⁷⁹ M. K. Gandhi, *YM* (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 2010), p. 29.

⁸⁰ See Appndix 1.

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- ⁸¹ U. S. Mohan Rao, *Mahātmā Gāndhī kā Sandeśa*, p.9, as quoted from Acharya Vidyananda Muni, *Jainadharma, Ahimsā evaṃ Mahātmā Gāndhī* (Kundakunda Bharati, New Delhi, 2007), p.13
- ⁸² M. K. Gandhi, *YM* (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmadabad, 2010), pp. 3-4.
- ⁸³ Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi* op. cit., p. 128, point 12,13.
- ⁸⁴ Samantabhadra, *RKS*, op. cit., pp.149-50; Shri Krishna Jain, *Pūjana-pāṭha- Pradīpa*, Ed. (Shaili Shri Parshwanath Digambar Jain Mandir, Delhi, 2004), p.215.
- ⁸⁵ Appendix I, p. 239.
- ⁸⁶ MK Gandhi, *Yerawada Mandir*, p.5.
- ⁸⁷ Manorama , *Śāntidūta Gāndhī* (Government of India, Publications Division, 1997), p. 1.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid page 38.
- ⁸⁹ Ratna Kumar Jain, op. cit., p.18.
Bāpū,“ I have read *Puruśārtha Siddhyupāya* which had detailed treatise on *Ahimsā* for all living beings...”; and, p.27, *Mahātmājī*, “In my professional life On my table along with many professional and legal books, I always had Jain books like *Jnanarva*. I used to read them to understand many Jain principles....”
- ⁹⁰ Umāsvātī, *TS*, V.32, op. cit, *Key to Reality*, p.149.
- ⁹¹ M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 28-10-1926, See M. K. Gandhi, *CWVG*, Vol. 31, op.cit., p.505
.... I have made a fair study of Jainism. This visitor’s *Ahimsa* was a distortion of the reality as I have known it in Jainism. But the Jains have no monopoly of *Ahimsa*. It is not the exclusive peculiarity of any religion. Every religion is based on *Ahimsa*, its application is different in different religions. ... I can say this because of my acquaintance with Jains, which is so old that many take me to be a Jain. Mahavira was an incarnation of compassion, of *Ahimsa*. How I wish his votaries were votaries also of his *Ahimsa*!
- ⁹² *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* in F. Max Muller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East Vol. XXII Jaina Sutras*, translated by Hermann Jacobi (Low Price Publications, Delhi, 1996), Fourth lecture titled ‘Righteousness’ For details also please see chapter 2, topic *Ahimsā*.

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- ⁹³ YM, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p. 5.
- ⁹⁴ CIP, B. K. LAL, (Motilal Banarasidas, New Delhi, 1978), pp.110-111.
- ⁹⁵ Samantabhadra, RKS,3.7, op. cit., p.119
Saṅkalpātkṛtakāritamananādyogatrāyasyacarasattvān.
Na hinastiyattadāhuṣṭhūlavadhādviramaṇaṃnipuṇāḥ.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid, 3.8, p.122
Chedanabandhanapīḍanamatibhārāropanaṃvyaticārāḥ.
Āhāravāraṇāpicasthūlavadhādvuyuparateḥpañca.
- ⁹⁷ CWMG, 72:23031 and M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, cited in R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao, *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi* (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1967, in soft copy), p.132.
- ⁹⁸ YM, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, pp.6-7.
- ⁹⁹ Amṛtcandra Sūrī, *PS* (Shri Paramshrut Prabhavak Mandal Rajchandra Ashram, Agasa), stanzas 42-46.
- ¹⁰⁰ Mahadeva Desai, *The Gita according to Gandhi*, op. cit., pp. 132-3, Points 25 and 26:
Thinking along these lines, I have felt that in trying to enforce in one's life the central teachings of the *Gita*, one is bound to follow Truth and *Ahimsa*. When there is no desire for fruit, there is no temptation for untruth or *Himsā*. Take any instance of untruth or violence, and it will be found that at its back was the desire to attain the cherished end. But it may be freely admitted that the *Gita* was not written to establish *Ahimsa*. It was an accepted and primary duty even before the *Gita* age. The *Gita* had to deliver the message of renunciation of fruit. This is clearly brought out as early as second chapter.
But if the *Gita* believed in *Ahimsa* or was included in desirelessness, why did the author take a warlike illustration? When the *Gita* was written, although people believed in *Ahimsa*, wars were not only taboo, but nobody observed the contradiction between them and *Ahimsa*.
- ¹⁰¹ J.V. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence, The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* (University of California Press, Los Angles, 1965), p.112.
- ¹⁰² TS, Umāsvātī, V.21,op.cit, *Key to Reality*, p.184.

- ¹⁰³ *BB*, 3rd Uddeshak, 4584, Editor, Chatur Vijay/Punyavijay, Shri Atmanand Jain Sabha, Bhavanagar, 1933
Jam ichhasiappanto, Jam cha naichhasiappanto, tam ichhaparassa vi, ettiyagamjinasasanayam.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Praśnavyākaraṇa, Samvaradvāra, 107*, Shri Agam Prakashan Samiti, Beawar, Edn. II, 1993, pp.161-62. English translation of these given in Appendix I, अहिंसा भगवती के साठ नाम
तत्थ पढमं अहिंसा जा सा सदेवमणुयासुरस्स लोयस्स भवइ दीवो ताणं सरणं गई पइट्ठा 1. णिव्वाणं 2. णिव्हुई 3. समाही 4. सत्ती 5. कित्ती 6. कंती 7. रई य 8. विरई य 9. सुयंग 10. तित्ती 11. दया 12. विमुत्ती 13. खंती 14. सम्मत्ताराहणा 15. महंती 16. बोही 17. बुद्धी 18. धिई 19. समिद्धी 20. रिद्धी 21. विद्धी 22. ठिई 23. पुट्ठी 24. पंदा 25. भददा 26. विसुद्धी 27. लद्धी 28. विसिट्ठदिट्ठी 29. कल्लाणं 30. मंगलं 31. पमोओ 32. विभूई 33. रक्खा 34. सिद्धावासो 35. अणासवो 36. केवलीण टाणं 37. सिवं 38. समिई 39. सीलं 40. संजमोत्ति य 41. सीलपरिघरो 42. संवरो य 43. गुत्ती 44. ववसाओ 45. उस्सओ 46. जण्णो 47. आययणं 48. जयणं 49. अप्पमाओ 50. अस्सासो 51. वीसासो 52. अभओ 53. सव्वस्स वि अमाघाओ 54. चोक्ख 55. पवित्ता 56. सूई 57. पूया 58. विमल 59. पभासा य 60. णिम्मलयर त्ति एवमाईणि णिययगुणणिम्मियाहं पज्जवणामाणि होंति अहिंसाए भगवईए।
- ¹⁰⁵ *CWMG*, XVI, p.399-400.
- ¹⁰⁶ *CWMG*, Vol.21 (in soft copy), M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 11.08.1920; See M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.134.
- ¹⁰⁷ Judith Brown, *Gandhi, Prisoner of Hope*, p. 85, as quoted from Surendra Kumar Jain(Ed.), *Glimpses of Jainism*, (Motilal Banarasidas, 1997, New Delhi), p. 146.
- ¹⁰⁸ M.K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 28.01.1939; cited in Narayan Desai, *My Gandhi*, op.cit., p.95.
- ¹⁰⁹ M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 15.07.1939; cited in N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, op.cit, p.160.
- ¹¹⁰ *CWMG*, Vol.43 (in soft copy), M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 11.10.1928; See M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.82.
- ¹¹¹ *CWMG*, Ibid, 20.12.1928; See M. K. Gandhi, Vol.43 (in soft copy), op.cit, p.416.
- ¹¹² *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 28.07.1946; See M. K. Gandhi, Vol.91 (in soft copy), op.cit, p.326.
- ¹¹³ *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 12.11.1931; See M. K. Gandhi, Vol.54(in soft copy), op.cit, p.84.
- ¹¹⁴ Appendix I.
- ¹¹⁵ For detail please see, *RKS*, Samantabhadra, op. cit., pp.130-4.

¹¹⁶ *PS*, Amṛtcandra Sūrī, op. cit., Stanzas 102-106.

¹¹⁷ *RKS*, Samantabhadra, 57, op.cit., p.130.

¹¹⁸ *Yaśastilaka campū*, p.265; *Sāgāra Dharmāmṛta*, 4.48, as quoted in, K. C. Sogani, *Ethical Doctrines in Jainism* (Lalchand Hirachand Doshi, Jain Sanskrit Samraksha Sangh, Solapur, 1967), p. 84.

¹¹⁹ Acharya Devendra Muni, *Jaina Acāra : Siddhānta aura Swarūpa*, Trans by Dr. Nagar Mal Sahal (Sri Tarak Guru Jain Granthalaya, Udayapur, 1995), p. 251.

¹²⁰ See Appendix I.

¹²¹ During his South Africa stay, Gandhi had read somewhere that Mrs. Gladstone, the wife of a British Parliamentarian, insisted on preparing tea for Mr. Gladstone even in the House of Commons and that this had become a rule in the life of this illustrious couple. One day Gandhi shared with Rajchandra his admiration for Mrs. Gladstone's devotion to her husband and praised her caring attitude and the conjugal love. Rajchandra was not impressed and he asked Gandhi. "Which of the two do you prize more, the love of Mrs. Gladstone for her husband as his wife or her devoted service irrespective of her relation to Mr. Gladstone? Supposing she had been his sister, or his devoted servant, and ministered to him with the same attention, what would you have said? Do we not have instances of such devoted sisters or servants? Supposing you had found the same loving devotion in a male servant, would you have been pleased in the same way as in Mrs. Gladstone's case? Just examine the viewpoint suggested by me."

Rajchandra's words appeared harsh to Gandhi at that time and he felt perplexed. But he continued to reflect on the posed question and realized that there was a substantial amount of truth in what Rajchandra said. For a wife, it was not so great if she was devoted to her husband, because this was a natural expectation in the conjugal relationship. But a similar devotion on the part of a sister or a servant was many times more admirable, as the devotion in these cases was more selfless and required a special effort in the cultivation. Rajchandra's views started making senses to Gandhi and he began to reflect upon his own relationship with his wife. He began to question whether his devotion and faithfulness to his wife

were selfless, or were those feelings based on an expectation in the conjugal relationship that also included lust and carnal desire. Gandhi's conclusion was that probably the latter was true. Then what should be his relationship with his wife and how that relationship could be made more pure and selfless, he considered.

¹²² *My.Ex.*, op. cit., pp.192-3.

¹²³ See Appndix I for details on Jain view on *Aparigraha*.

¹²⁴ Dr. Kamala Jain, *The Concept of Panchashila in Indian Thought*, (Varanasi: Parshwanath Vidyapeeth, 1983), p.231.

¹²⁵ *Uttarādhyayana*, 9.48.

“If there were numberless mountains of gold and silver as big as mount Kailash, they would not satisfy any avaricious man; for avarice is boundless like the sky.”

¹²⁶ *GTR*, Satish Sharma, op. cit., p.83.

¹²⁷ *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op. cit., p.244.

¹²⁸ Dr. Surjit Kaur jolly, *Reading Gandhi* (Concept Publishing House, New Delhi, 2006), p.136.

¹²⁹ Please see chapter 4, p.4.17-4.18.

¹³⁰ Narayan Desai, *My Gandhi*, op.cit, p.80.

¹³¹ *YM*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.22.

¹³² *YI*, M. K. Gandhi, 13.08.1925, cited in M. K. Gandhi, *India of My Dreams* (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, in soft copy), p.53.

“My *Ahimsa* would not tolerate the idea of giving a free meal to a healthy person who has not worked for it in some honest way. It has degraded the nation and it has encouraged laziness, idleness, hypocrisy and even crime. Such misplaced charity adds nothing to the wealth of the country, whether material or spiritual, and gives a false sense of earning merit by the donor. How nice and wise it would be if the donor were to open institutions where they would give meals under healthy, clean surroundings to men and women who would work for them. I personally think that the spinning wheel or any of the process that cotton has to go through will be an ideal occupation. But if they will not have that, they may choose any other work; only the rule should be “No labour, no meal.”

¹³³ *Uttarādhyayana* 32/10; *Yogaśāstra Prakāśavṛtti* by Siddha Sena Stanza 3.

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- ¹³⁴ *My.Ex.*, op. cit., pp.344-5.
- ¹³⁵ *CWMG*, vol. 13, p. 218.
- ¹³⁶ *Praśnavyākaraṇa*, 2/2.
- ¹³⁷ *Uttarādhyayana*, 6/2.
- ¹³⁸ *CWMG*, Vol.70, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.296.
- ¹³⁹ *Ibid*, Vol.85, p.281.
- ¹⁴⁰ *CWMG*, Vol. 21, op.cit, p.286, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 13-10-1921; cited in N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, op.cit, p.243.
- ¹⁴¹ *CWMG*, Vol.72, op.cit, p.416, M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 01.09.1940.
- ¹⁴² *YM*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit., pp. 17-18.
- ¹⁴³ *Ācārāṅgasūtra*, Agam Prakashan Samiti, Byavar, Rajasthan, 1/8/4 cited in Dr. Ashok Kumar Singh, “Tolerance of Jaina Religion: Through the Ages”, *Śramaṇa*, 42,4 (October-December 2011), p.98.
- ¹⁴⁴ *CWMG*, Vol.32, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.13.
- ¹⁴⁵ *CWMG*, Vol.35, op.cit, p.461, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 19.01.1928.
- ¹⁴⁶ *CWMG*, Vol.13, page 219.
- ¹⁴⁷ *YM*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.38.
- ¹⁴⁸ *YM*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.36.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁵⁰ See Chapter 1.
- ¹⁵¹ *RKS*, Samantabhadra, 68; Akalaṅka, *Rājavārtika*, 7/20-12.
- ¹⁵² *RKS*, Samantabhadra, 92-92.
- ¹⁵³ Ujjavala Kumariji, *Śrāvakaḍḍharma*, (Sanmati Gyanpeeth, Agara, 1954), p.156.
- ¹⁵⁴ Dr. Sagarmal Jain, *Bhāratīya Ācāra Darśana Eka Tulaṅātmaḱa Adhyayana*, part 2, (Prakrit Bharati Academy, Jaipur, 2010), p. 346.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Uttarādhyayana*, 25/31 “*Kammunā bambhano hoi, kammunā hoi khattiyo. Kammunā vaiso hoi, suddo havai kammunā*” i.e. it is by karma that one is *Brāhmin*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* or *Śudra*. On the basis of this only, no one should be considered high or low on the basis of his birth. In Jain religion, people from all castes and classes were given ‘*Dikṣā*’ (initiation).
- ¹⁵⁶ Añjana thief, Padmāvatī and Dharaṅendra, Kośā courtesan.
- ¹⁵⁷ *My.Ex.*, M.K. Gandhi, op.cit, pp. 255.

- ¹⁵⁸ *CWMG*, Vol.40, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 04.04.1929; See M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, pp.109-10.
- ¹⁵⁹ See chapter 4 for details.
- ¹⁶⁰ Manish Barua, *Religion and Gandhian Philosophy* (Akanksha Publishing House, New Delhi, 2002), pp.107-108.
- ¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp.117-119.
- ¹⁶² *CWMG*, Vol.48, op.cit, p.434, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 31.12.1931.
- ¹⁶³ *Kalpa Sūtra*, one of the most story text of Jains giving life of Mahavira.
- ¹⁶⁴ *CWMG*, Vol. 20, p. 133, M. K. Gandhi, *YI*, 25.05.1921.
- ¹⁶⁵ Svāmi Kārtikeya, *Kārtikeyānuprekṣā*, 4/78, Quoted in *Dharmāmṛta (Anāgāra)* Translated by Pandit Kailash Chandra Shastri, (Bharatiya Jnanapith Publication, New Delhi, 1977), p.12. *Dhammovatthusahavokhamadi-bhavoya das viho dhammo Rayanattayamcadhammojivanamrakkhanam dhammo.*
- ¹⁶⁶ The first discourse of Mahavira in *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (second limb of the twelve fold Jain canons having sermons of Mahavira) says: ‘One should know what causes the bondage (of the soul) and what one must know to remove it’. Then in the subsequent four verses Mahavira replies “He who owns even a small property in living or lifeless things or consents to others holding it , will not be delivered from misery; If a man kills living beings or causes other men to kill them, or consent to their killing them, his iniquity will go on increasing; A sinner, who makes the interest of his kinsmen and companions his own, will suffer much; for the number of those whose interest he takes to heart constantly increases; All his wealth and his nearest relations cannot protect him (from future misery); knowing this and the value of life, he will get rid of karma.”
- ¹⁶⁷ *Dasvaikālika sūtra verse 1.1*, (Agam Prakashan Samiti, Beawar. 1985). *Dhammo maṅgalamukkiṭṭhaṃ ahiṃsā sañjamo tavo. Devā vi taṃ namāṃsanti jassa dhamme saya mano.*
- ¹⁶⁸ *CWMG* Vol. 59, Narayan Desai, *My Gandhi*, op.cit, p.97;, Page 9.
- ¹⁶⁹ M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, (Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmadabad, in soft copy), p.67.
- ¹⁷⁰ M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, Feb.1937, as quoted from the Raghawan N. Iyer, “Means and Ends in Politics” in G. Ramachandran & T. K.

Mahadevan, *GANDHI – His Relevance for our times* (Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi), p. 325 in soft copy available at www.mkgandhi.org

¹⁷¹ *DGTM*, D. G. Tendulkar, Vol. 5 (Govt. of India, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1961), p.254.

¹⁷² See chapter 4, pp.4.33-4.35.

¹⁷³ K. N. Tiwari, *World Religion and Gandhi* (Classical Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1988), p.112.

¹⁷⁴ *CWMG*, Vol.71, *Harijan*, 24-2-1940; See M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, pp.208-9.

¹⁷⁵ *CWMG*, Vol.71, Ibid; See M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p.207.

¹⁷⁶ Siddha Sena Divākara, *Sanmatī Tarka Prakaraṇa*, last verse.

¹⁷⁷ *My. Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op. cit., pp.465-66.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p.466.

¹⁷⁹ Stephen N Hay, *Ethical Politics: Gandhi's Meaning for our Time* (Berkeley California: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, Institute of International Studies, University of California, Reprint no.359), p.36__“The above statements towards the end of his life by Gandhi is a clear I have given in another article, Jain influences of Gandhi's early thought, the evidence and reasoning which brought me to the conviction that Gandhi's religious and ethical striving was directed at Jain goals and followed that Jain disciplines, although infused and surrounded with the aura of Vaishnava emotional worship. I mention this here because the Jain path to salvation, like Gandhi's, relies so greatly on the restraint of the passions and appetites, and even aims at their reduction to zero, the ideal Jain death being self-starvation, through which one avoid even the *Himsa* or violence committed by destroying the life in vegetable and grain foods. Gandhi's genius is shown in the way he transmuted this orthodox teaching (which his friend and spiritual adviser Raychand Mehta actually carried to completion), into a career of self-denying social and political action making himself a living self-sacrifice for the good of mankind, even with his death at the hands of a Muslim- hating fellow Hindu.”

¹⁸⁰ Please see chapter IV, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta for details and reference of the book published.

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- ¹⁸¹ Please see chapter IV, Ambalal for details and references in Gandhi's Autobiography.
- ¹⁸² Dr. Kapur Chand Jain, *Swatantra sangram me Jain*, (Sarvodaya foundation, Delhi).
- ¹⁸³ Ratnakumar Jain, *Gāndhī-Ujjavala Vārtālapa* (Svashraya Prakashan Samiti, Delhi, 1954).
- ¹⁸⁴ *CWMG*, Vol. 31, M. K. Gandhi *VI*, 28.10.1926; op.cit, p.505 '...He claimed to be a Jain. I have made a fair study of Jainism. This visitor's *Ahimsa* was a distortion of the reality as I have known it in Jainism.'
- ¹⁸⁵ Shugan C Jain, 'Jains' Engagement in Social Work in Shugan C Jain and Prakash C Jain, *Social Consciousness in Jainism*, edited, (International School for Jain Studies, New Delhi and New Bharatiya Book Corporation, 2014), pp.218-19.
- ¹⁸⁶ *CWMG*, volumes 21, page 336; 24, page 207-208,131-32; 27,page 150; 31, pages 505-517and 513; 32, pages 16-17and 72-73 *CWMG* 64:359-60 and so on till the end of his life.
- ¹⁸⁷ See references 67, 68 in this chapter itself, also in Ratnakumar Jain, op. cit., p. 18.
- ¹⁸⁸ Ratna Kumar Jain, *Gāndhī-Ujjavala Vārtālapa* (Svashraya Prakashan Samiti, Delhi, 1954), p. 22.

APPENDIX- I

JAINISM AND JAIN WAY OF LIFE

Jains are varyingly referred as *Shramanas* (believers in self effort to achieve their objective), *Vartyas* (one who observes vows, fasts) and *Niggantha* (without any possessions) in Indian philosophical literature. They believe in attaining self realization / *Moksa*. It is the ultimate objective of human life. So whatever activity they indulge in, they always keep their eyes on this objective and are strict followers of *Ahimsa*. This is very well reflected in their credo or *Navakar Mantra*, which is as follows:

namo arihantāṇaṃ,
namo siddhāṇaṃ,
namo āyariyāṇaṃ,
namo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ,
namo loe savvasāhuṇaṃ.

(I pay obeisance to the perfect human beings who are perpetually enjoying the nature of their pure souls; liberated soul who crossed the sea of transmigration and attain liberation, heads of the congregation of ascetics, holy teachers and those who are following the path of spiritual purification through their strenuous self efforts.)

The above mantra sets the Jain ideals of self-realization through conscious strenuous self-effort.

Jainism is one of the oldest religions of India.¹ The word Jain is derived from *Jina*. *Jina* (*Arihanta* in the mantra) literally means spiritual conqueror i.e. one who annihilates the deluding karmas by exercising complete control over one's sensual inclinations (taste-touch-colour / form-hearing-smell)² and attains the state of bliss and omniscience. *Jina* is a perfect living human being who has realized the glory of his pure self residing within his physical body and ends existence in transmigration cycle and mundane existence on death. The path shown by *Jinas* is called Jainism and the followers are known as Jains. Jainism promotes existence of an independent soul in each living being which can

become supreme soul through its own strenuous efforts. In this state of supreme soul, the owner enjoys a state of bliss and eternity.

Some of the *Jinas*, known as *Tirthankaras* (or ford-makers) also show the path to others to attain *Jina* state and establish a creed. In the present time cycle, there are 24 *Tirthankaras*, with Adinath being the first and Mahavira being the 24th or latest *Tirthankara*. Even though Mahavira came from a prosperous family, he renounced his worldly life at the age of thirty and practiced extreme penance by giving up all worldly things, staying in desolate places, observing long and strenuous fasts and meditating on his soul to attain complete self realization (omniscience or enlightenment and bliss). His creed is propagated by a series of preceptors to date and practised by his followers called Jains. He propagated the ascetic lifestyle or *nivratti* attitude rather than **just** engagement in worldly life or *prvratti* attitude only. This attitude results in accepting the essentiality of practices like non-hurting anyone, self restraint or ascetic ideals (*nivratti*) even for worldly happiness.

We shall now discuss some distinguishing features of Jainism relevant to this study.

Quest for Truth (*Sat*) in Jainism

Looking at the colorful and different forms of existences in the universe, it is natural to be inquisitive about the form and nature of the **absolute truth** or reality i.e. their ultimate source of origin, state and final destination. Jain philosophy surmises:

All beings or existents are real.³ Reality itself is multiple, with broad grouping as sentient and insentient beings or as *Jiva* (Living beings) and *Ajiva* beings (Non-living). Both are infinite in number.⁴ Reality comprises permanence and change, multiplicity and identity / similarity and universality / generality simultaneously.⁵ It therefore considers both permanence as well as change as real. This doctrine of reality is the basis of the doctrine of *Anekantavada* (multiplicity of viewpoints) which says that the reality should be viewed both from permanence viewpoint (substance, absolute) as well as momentary (mode, practical)

viewpoint. Further the real, termed *dravya* or substance in Jainism is endowed with attributes and modes⁶

Cosmos is defined as *Loka* or the place where all types of substances⁷ exist. According to Jainism, this cosmos is eternal and is not created by anyone. However its constituents / contents keep on changing continuously.

The following four primary principles give Jainism a religious / spiritual fervour.

Every mundane soul is bound by subtle particles of matter known as Karma from the very beginning. It considers that just as gold is found in an alloyed form in the mines, in the same way mundane souls are found along with the Karma-bondage from time eternal. The impurity of the mundane soul is thus treated as an existing condition. Thus man is not perfect and the imperfectness in man is attributed to the existence of Karma associated with his soul. The human soul is in a position to attain perfection. In the state of perfection, it is endowed with four primary characteristics, viz., infinite perception or faith, infinite knowledge, infinite energy and infinite bliss.

Even though man is not perfect, yet by his spiritual nature man can and must control his material nature. It is only after the entire subjugation of matter that the soul attains perfection, freedom and bliss. Such a state of perfection can be achieved through the control of senses and thoughts.

It is only the individual human being that can scientifically separate its own soul from the matter associated with it. The separation cannot be effected by any other person. This means that man himself, and he alone is responsible for all that is good or bad in his life. He cannot absolve himself from the responsibility of experiencing the fruits of his actions.

The soul can exist in three states, namely; External orientation when the living being thinks of itself as the body and denies existence of soul, Internal oriented soul when the living being accepts the nature and existence of soul as his eternal existence

and intends to attain the pure soul state (the living being in this state is called *Samyakdrsti* or with right belief or spiritually awakened) and Supreme Soul (the self is completely detached from external impurities in this state). In Supreme soul state, human beings attain bliss and pure knowledge and are in a state of enjoying the inherent nature of soul. Such human beings are called *Jina* or *ssthitpragya* in *The Gita* as explained by Gandhi. On death such souls get liberated from all material associations and attain *Moksa* or eternal state of bliss and knowledge.

These three states of soul are perhaps the basis of proclamations like “Truth is God” by Gandhi, or “Kingdom of God is Within You” by Tolstoy. The path to attain the state of perfection i.e. state of eternal bliss and knowledge or pure soul comprises right belief-knowledge-conduct together.⁸

The Meaning of Spiritual Awakening / *Samyagdarshan*

The pronouncement of the *Acharanga* that the ignorant are asleep and the wise are awake inspires us to be aware of the highest in us, which is our Real Nature (TRUTH). In Jain terminology we may say that this is tantamount to achieving *Samyagdarshan* (Spiritual Awakening) or right belief / attitude or eliminating delusion. When we are asleep we are in the state of spiritual perversion.⁹

Jainism regards spiritual awakening as the beginning of the spiritual pilgrimage, and it is the foundation of the magnificent edifice of liberation. Value or rational knowledge and ethico-spiritual conduct is acquired through spiritual awakening.¹⁰ The spiritually awakened self considers one’s own self as a genuine abode and regards the outward dwelling places as artificial. This awakened soul renounces all identification with the animate and inanimate objects of the world, and properly weighs them in the balance of their awakened spirit. Thus they develop a unique attitude towards their self and the world around them.

There are certain individual and social characteristics that accompany *Samyagdarshan* (spiritual awakening) and the same can be classified as individual and attitude towards others.¹¹ The

individual characteristics are freedom from doubt in kindness/compassion to all creatures, impose upon him restraint in the realm of possessive desires, becomes free from follies like superstitions and develops virtuous dispositions of honesty, gratitude, forgiveness, modesty etc. The social characteristics are not hating a meritorious being owing to certain diseased bodily conditions and the like, develops universal love to all creatures to provide equal opportunities for progress to all, rehabilitates the fallen or misguided and to publicize the righteous path. In addition to these eight characteristics, there are other characteristics that accompany spiritual awakening.¹² These are:

- i. Reduction of passions to the extent of acquiring mental peace;
- ii. Turning away from the causes which enhance worldly career;
- iii. Expression of the non-sceptical attitude towards the spiritual nature of Reality;
- iv. Manifestation of universal compassion

Definition of Dharma (Religion)

Jain canons define *Dharma* in many ways. For example:

Nature of an entity is its *Dharma*; Tenfold spiritual virtue like forgiveness etc are *Dharma*, Right belief-knowledge-conduct is *Dharma*; and protecting the living beings is *Dharma*.¹³

Philosophically speaking, nature of an entity or its inherent spiritual virtue is said to be its religion/ *Dharma*. Nature of all living beings is to be happy and stay in a state of bliss forever. *Dharma* also implies as the conduct to be in tune with the transcendental nature of the soul.

Dharma is the inherent tenfold nature of soul, namely: forgiveness, humility, sincerity, straightforwardness, truthfulness, cleanliness, giving up, penance, detachment, and stay in its own nature.¹⁴

Dharma is the path to achieve bliss and consists of right belief-knowledge-conduct together.¹⁵

Protecting the lives of all living beings is also said to be the religion.

From ethics view point, Jains say that the supreme religion / *Dharma* as:

That which is Nonviolence (*Ahimsa*), self restraint (*Sanyam*) and austerity (*Tapa*) is *Dharma* (spiritual values). It is by virtue of spiritual values that supreme beneficence results. To him whose mind is absorbed in spiritual values even gods (heavenly beings) bow down to their feet.¹⁶

Nonviolence will be discussed in details later.

Self restraint implies exercising restraint and carefulness in all our activities keeping in view the objective 'maximize *Ahimsa*' in any activity we undertake i.e. controlling sensual inclinations.

Austerities imply strenuous effort to purify the impurities associated with our soul/self. Austerities put lot of stress on observance of fast and control on the palate; developing humility, repentance, study of scriptures and meditation. *Jain-munis* are called *Shramanas* or ascetics also.

Using again the metaphor of *Ahimsa* as a flawless boat sailing smoothly on the water to help us cross transmigration cycle, it is obvious that as soon as *Himsa* is committed, the boat gets a hole in its bottom and water starts leaking in and accumulating thus sinking the boat. As soon as *Sanyam* is applied, the occurrence and magnitude of *Himsa* is reduced, the hole starts becoming smaller and less and less water seeps in. With further restraints (we can imagine applying the brakes fully), the hole in the boat is completely plugged and no more water leaks in. The accumulated water is thrown out of the boat observing *Tapa* (austerities / penance).

Jainism promotes four cardinal principles mentioned below along with self effort to achieve one's objective.

Ahimsa or nonviolence in conduct,
Aparigrah or Non-possession/Non-acquisitiveness in life and society,
Anekanta or multiplicity of viewpoints in thoughts and behaviours,
Syadvada or conditional dialectic in speech,

Thus one who practices these values becomes a Jain even if s/he is not born as a Jain. Leading *acharyas* like principal disciples of Mahavira, and later prominent ones like Sayyam Bhava, Haribhadra, and even in our times Ganesh Varni, Amarmuni and Sushilmuni were not Jains by birth.

The Doctrine of Karma

Jain doctrine of karma implies that ‘every action, word, thought produces, besides its visible, an invisible and transcendental effect’. This means every action, word or thought produces rewards or punishments. The actions get stored in special types of subtle matter particles (called *Karman Varganas* in Jainism) which are capable of storing the results of the activities performed by an individual along with its characteristics and become karmas after their bondage with the soul). These matter particles are considered as impurities/stains associated with pure soul causing obscuring, defilement, counteracting, chaining the soul with attachment and aversion, linking with past and future and create suffering and making the soul ignorant of its own nature.

Virtuous activities result in merit and wicked activities cause demerit. Spiritual activities result in annihilation of impurities. If the soul is inflicted with tainted emotions (*Kashayas*) then the influx causes pain and extension of transmigration cycle by karmas getting bonded with soul. Similarly if the soul is free from tainted emotions, then the influx does not result in bondage and hence causes happiness and shortening of transmigration cycle.¹⁷

The deluding karma is the most powerful species of karma as it obscures first the faith in the soul about its own attributes and

capabilities and then deludes the conduct i.e. spiritual practice to make progress in its journey to attain Jinahood.

Two processes are required for de-bonding of karmas from soul, namely: *Samvara* (stoppage) i.e. no bonding of new karmas and *Nirjara* i.e. dissociation of accumulated karmas.¹⁸ Stoppage is instrumental in dissociation. Stoppage is affected by attitudes of restraint / control and carefulness in activities, virtues (ten characteristics of the soul), Contemplations, Endurances of bodily afflictions and practice of conduct.¹⁹ *Nirjara* (Dissociation / annihilation of bonded karmas) is affected by observing twelve types of *Tapa* (austerities) along with stoppage.²⁰

Complete annihilation of bonded karmas from the soul is called *Moksha* or liberation and the pure soul stays in this state forever enjoying its inherent nature.

Besides the above, another interesting aspect of Jain karma doctrine is the capability (energy or *Virya*) of soul to make efforts to change the state of most of karmas bonded with it thereby changing the inauspicious results to auspicious, extending the duration of auspicious results and reducing the results of inauspicious karmas.

Logic in Jainism

Distinguishing characteristic of living being is its being sentient i.e. having consciousness and its manifestation as awareness / intuition and knowledge²¹. Hence knowledge exists nowhere else except in the soul of each and every living being. Pure soul is just consciousness or pure or full knowledge and empirical soul has lower levels of this manifestation of knowledge that is directly proportional to the level of bondage of the awareness and knowledge obscuring karmas. The state of this knowledge capability of the soul can be understood by the state of moon on full moon night and its gradual decline over the period of its movement to no moon night, even though moon with its full glory exists but the veil of clouds or other obstructing objects like sun etc cause the decline of luminosity of moon light to us.

Knowledge can be acquired in two ways through doctrines of *Pramana* (source of or measure of valid cognition) and of *Naya* (view-points). For mundane living beings like us, doctrine of viewpoints that is unique to Jainism is useful in attaining complete knowledge about an entity.²²

Naya is defined as a special effort to acquire or impart knowledge; intention of the seeker of knowledge; expression of one out of many attributes of an entity without negating the existence of others. Jains say that there are as many types of *Naya* as the attributes and modes of a substance. Mundane living beings can acquire knowledge that is partial and relative to the seeker's intentions and level of knowledge. *Nayas* can be broadly classified in two ways which are further subdivided into seven types. The two primary types are:

Substance or transcendental or absolute viewpoint: It looks for identical or generic attributes of the objects of knowledge.

Mode or practical viewpoint: It looks for specific or differences (modes) of the objects of knowledge.

Doctrine of Anekant or Non-absolutism or Multiplicity of Viewpoints²³

Anekantavada or the doctrine of non absolutism / multiplicity of viewpoints is an extension of *Naya* doctrine of Jains and perhaps one of the most important ones in the arena of Indian Logic. It is based on the definition of Truth / reality i.e. reality is with origination-decay-permanence simultaneously implying that an entity is continuously changing and so is the knowledge about it. Since permanence is directly opposite of origination-decay; *Anekanta* says that the opposite attributes co-exist simultaneously. This is how the two types of *Nayas* i.e. substance and mode or transcendental and practical viewpoints make these aspects as their focus of acquisition of knowledge. Thus important feature of *Anekanta* is that our knowledge is relative (substance or mode viewpoint or their further sub divisions) to our own intentions or level of our knowledge.

The three pillars of *Anekanta* doctrine are relativity, simultaneous existence of opposites and reconciliation. *Anekanta* imparts impartiality, non rigidness or openness and collaborative aspects in our thought process.

We have to express our knowledge in words so that it becomes useful to others / listeners or readers. Our expression has serious limitations of the available words and the speed of our speaking words. Hence we cannot express our entire knowledge simultaneously, thereby necessitating the word “*Syat*” (a little bit / from a perspective and not probably) before every sentence we speak to show that our sentence has other aspects to it also or is relative to our viewpoint. This is the basis of the doctrine of *Syadvada* (conditional Dialectic) of Jains. *Syadvada* involves the seven propositions “*Saptabhangi*” to express our views through a sentence based on one of the seven propositions, namely: is; is not; it is and it is not; indescribable; it is and indescribable; it is not and is indescribable; and finally it is, it is not and is indescribable.

Jain Ethics

Ethico-spiritual conduct in Jainism is based on the inherent desire of the spiritually awakened person to realize one’s full potential / self realization. The soul thus tries to expunge the disharmony existent between its present and future conditions, and between the potential conviction and actual living.²⁴ It is centered on the doctrine of *Ahimsa* i.e. the progressive realization of perfect *Ahimsa* as the ultimate objective of human life which is equivalent to realization of Godhood (*paramatma*).²⁵ Basis of Jain ethics are:

The right, ought and duty cannot be separated from the GOOD: The criterion of what is right etc. is the greater balance of good over bad (Maximum balance of *Ahimsa* over *Himsa* as the right-making characteristic).

Acts are logically prior to rules and the rightness of the action is situational: There are rules to decide the rightness of action, yet every action is to be judged on the goodness of the consequences expected to be produced as the vows (*vratas*) may be inadequate to

meet the complexities of the situation.²⁶ For example Jainism disallows the purchase of things at low price in order to maintain the vow of non-stealing.²⁷ According to moral rules exceptions cannot be allowed. This implies that Jain ethics does not allow superstitious rule-worship but at the same time, prescribes that utmost caution is to be taken in breaking the rule.

The entire code of conduct in Jainism is derived from the doctrine of *Ahimsa*

The practitioners or Jains are accordingly divided in two categories, namely:

1. Those wish to practice complete *Ahimsa* all the time. Such practitioners are called *sadhus / sadhvis / munis / Shramans / recluse / ascetics / monks*. The conduct of a monk consists of 27/28 basic virtues, five major vows, five attitudes of carefulness, three *Guptis / attitudes of restraint*, enduring twenty two types of physical afflictions and contemplation on ten spiritual virtues²⁸.
2. Those who wish to practice *Ahimsa* partially due to their occupation and life style i.e. householder but they also try to minimize *Himsa* in all their activities and progress towards the ultimate objective. Such persons are called householder / Shravak / votary. They classified in three stages as follows:

Beginners: Practices eight basic virtues i.e. consumption of non violent food primarily (like abstinence from consumption of meat, and foods infested heavily with bacteria), seven abstinences (vices namely sexual intercourse with other than one's own wife, gambling, drinking liquor, hunting, harshness in speech, harsh punishments and misappropriation of other's property), use strained water for drinking and cooking and avoids eating after sunset.

Intermediate: Observe six daily essential duties, namely: worshipping the true deity, paying obeisance to holy teachers, studying the scriptures, self-control/restraint, penance and charity.²⁹ These are derived from the six essential duties for

monks namely: practice of equanimity, veneration of (praise of 24 *Tirthankaras*, reverence to holy teachers), atonement), abandonment of body, sitting or standing motionless for a long period and renunciation of certain foods, activities for a specified period. They exercise greater self restraint and caution and start observing the five minor vows which constitute the part of institution of vows discussed later.

Advanced: They practice further restrictions on the rules followed by the first two categories and observe the Institution of vows³⁰ simultaneously: These comprise five minor vows and seven enhancing vows as discussed below.

The gradation of householders on the path of spiritual purification is indicated by 11 stages³¹, the last stage leads the householder to a monk's life.

Fasting and control of palate is practiced by each category as a way of annihilating bonded karmas and their intensity. Duration of fasts and control of palate increases simultaneously with the spiritual progress of the practitioner.

Anuvratas / Minor Vows

Nonviolence³²: Causing hurt to the life-vitalities of a living being is called *Himsa*. Limiting such activities is called *Ahimsa-anuvrata* or known as *Pranatipat-viraman-vrata* in which total avoidance of violence against two-sensed to five-sensed living beings is accepted and minimization towards one-sensed living beings is practised.³³ The word *Pranatipata* literally means to destroy (*Atipata*) life-vitalities (*Prana*) of living beings. In short it is refraining from violence. Life vitalities are ten (three channels of activities- mind, body and speech, five sense organs, the duration of life and respiration). To destroy or injure, through negligence or ill-will, one or more life vitalities of one's own or others is violence. For householders violence is divided in four categories, namely intentional (not allowed at all), professional and lifestyle (to be minimized) and defensive to be practised when absolutely necessary.

The flaws³⁴ of this vow are: Binding living beings in captivity, beating living beings, mutilating limbs, overloading excessive weight on living beings, withdrawing or providing insufficient food or water to living beings.

Truth: To speak / present an entity exactly as it is, neither less nor more.³⁵ The vow is to refrain from *Asatya* or lying of any sort. Jains see a close connection between *Asatya* and *Himsa*, since all lying is volitional and tainted by some operation of the passions, thus soul is injured by such activity. In its broader sense, the *Satya-anuvrata* requires great care with regard to expressions in all forms like all acts of speech, writing. Thus, even a truthful statement cannot be uttered if it leads to pain / destruction of a living being.

Flaws are: Untruth pertaining to ownership, forgery or adulteration of goods, misrepresentation as witness, divulging secrets of others, using harsh language.³⁶

Non-Stealing: Not to accept things without the permission of their lawful owner.³⁷ It is broadly defined as *Adattadana-virati* or refraining from taking anything, which is not given. Here the word 'given' means acquired through a legitimate transaction. Thus the householder who undertakes this vow is not allowed even to pick-up goods, which have been lost or forgotten.

Flaws: pick up goods not given, employing thieves to obtain things, receiving stolen merchandise, using false weights and measures, adulterating commodities, accepting goods without paying or under paying the required taxes and levies by the government.³⁸

Celibacy: To indulge in sexual activities with the religiously wedded spouse only.³⁹ It differs from all other vows in its double formation: positive in the sense of contentment with one's own wife i.e. *Sva-dara-santoshā* and negative as avoidance of the wives or unmarried females of others i.e. *Apara-dara-gamana*. According to this *Vrata* the person refrains from all types of sex passions. The sex passions imply materialistic pleasures of all

the five senses and their avoidance is complete celibacy. The male householder who undertakes this vow should not even think to be in contact of other females. It covers even the avoidance of sexual contacts with harlots, widows and unmarried women. All sexual contacts, except the fair ones, with one's own wife should also be avoided. This applies to females as well.

Flaws: Company of prostitutes or other women, arranging marriages of others children, perverted sexual practices or use other parts of body for sexual satisfaction, use sexually provocative language, excessive craving for the company of other gender.⁴⁰

Non-Possession: To limit possessions and acquisitions of all types of entities as per the needs.⁴¹ The Jain scriptures often define *Parigraha* as the *Murccha* or attachment for possessions. This vow condemns holding the external and internal i.e. possessions. External possessions are ten - land, house, silver, gold, livestock, grain, maidservants, menservants, clothing, and miscellaneous goods such as furniture and so on. The attachment to these is internal possession.

Flaws: Acquiring new lands, disguising excess accumulation of gold and silver, going beyond the volume limit on grain/foodstuffs by repackaging these commodities in more compact containers, not counting on newborn of the livestock as an increase in overall holdings.⁴²

Secondary vows / Sheelvratas⁴³: divided as three *Gunavrats* (enhancing vows)⁴⁴ and four *Shikshavrats* (training vows)⁴⁵

1. ***Digvrata*** or vow for limiting movements in specified directions.
2. ***Anarthadanda Viraman*** or not indulging in activities that are useless or without purpose.
3. ***Bhogopabhoga Pariman*** or limit use or desire of things used once (food) and many times (clothes etc).
4. ***Deshavakashika*** or limiting movements with respect to cities / countries / continents.

5. **Samayika** or Periodic contemplations on the attributes of the self / soul or venerating the auspicious beings or reciting mantras / hymns.
6. **Proshadhopavasa** or fasting regularly on specific days every fortnight.
7. **Vaiyavriya** or Taking a vow to take one's food only after feeding the ascetics, or in their absence the pious householders.⁴⁶ **Dana** or charity i.e. to share / donate part of one's possessions, like food, medicines or health care, living quarters / security and education or implements is also described as a part of this vow.⁴⁷

There are five flaws of each also indicated in the texts on conduct of householders.⁴⁸

Vows are observed to stop accrual of bad karmas, earn good karmas and support the process of annihilation of already bonded karmas. To start the process of annihilation they also observe penance / austerities *tapa* of which fasting and control of palate are extremely important. Self study, meditation, repentance are other major activities performed.

Sallekhana or the pious death

A layman is expected not only to live a disciplined life but also to practice a holy pious peaceful death by gradually withdrawing from all kinds of attachments and aversions and foods / drinks. The practitioner neither wishes to die early nor to prolong their life by abnormal means. The vow is accepted by a householder when one feels that one's own body is not able to support his religious activities. This vow is normally administered by a monk / *Guru* after obtaining permission of the family members and the practitioner is deemed to be fit for the practice of *Sallekhana*.⁴⁹ This is dying bravely and religiously i.e. completely detached death.

Jain Way of life

Jainism is a religion of nonviolent and peaceful way of life. The Jain identity can be summed up as "A Jain while performing his

worldly activities never forgets his ultimate goal i.e. attainment of the transcendental life or eternal bliss / liberation / *Moksha*.”⁵⁰

Jains for thousands of years have been practicing strenuous efforts (conscious self suffering) for improvement of their worldly and trans-worldly life, vegetarianism, meditation and contemplations, conservation and sharing their bounties with others to contribute for the betterment of the society they live in. In spite of these, most of their lifestyle activities are predominantly similar to the Indian social customs-culture prevalent in the region / state of India they live in. It is not necessary to be born in as a Jain to practice Jain way of life as the same is evident from the life of eleven principal disciples of Mahavira who were all Brahmins to Emperor Chandragupta Maurya and even today to Srimad Rajchandra (spiritual guru of Gandhi) and Acharya Sushil Muni who were not Jains by birth.

The three cardinal principles of Jain way of life are: *Ahimsa* in conduct, *Anekant* in thought and *Aparigraha* as way of life. We now briefly discuss each one of these.

1. Ahimsa (Nonviolence)

Ahimsa is the basis of code of conduct for worldly and trans-worldly happiness. Basis of *Ahimsa* is equanimity towards all living beings.⁵¹ Mahavira says “*Ahimsa* the almighty is the shelter and protector for all worldly beings, like the sky is for the birds to fly, water is for thirsty, food for the hungry.”⁵² Jainism equates violence (*Himsa*) to sin (*Papa*), a fact that gives special status to *Ahimsa* in Jainism.⁵³ In an unprecedented way Mahavira defined *Ahimsa* as:

....none of the living beings ought to be killed or deprived of life, ought to be ordered or ruled, ought to be enslaved or possessed, ought to be distressed or afflicted and ought to be put to unrest or disquiet. He then conclusively pronounces that after understanding the importance of kindness to beings, the enlightened person should preach, disseminate and applaud it at all places in East-West and North-South directions.⁵⁴

This strong proclamation by Mahavira is the foundation of the

doctrine of *Ahimsa* in Jainism. He goes on to say that *Ahimsa* is essential not only for happiness in this life but in future lives as well. He further said, “like earth is the base on which all living beings exist, similarly the essence of experience of all wise men, of past, present and future, is that *Ahimsa* is the essence of life i.e. the highest attainment as a *Tirthankara* state is achieved only through the practice of complete *Ahimsa*”.⁵⁵

The one who supports hurting / killing the life vitalities can never be free from the pain.⁵⁶ This *Ahimsa* is the God which provided shelter / solace to all scared beings and as well as provides auspicious results to all immobile and mobile living beings.⁵⁷

In the same text, prior to making the above proclamation, he defined the living beings (i) immobile i.e. with one sense organ like plant bodied, air bodied, water bodied, fire bodied and earth bodied, and (ii) mobile with two to five sense organs like ants, mosquitoes, animals, birds, human beings, heavenly and hellish living beings.

He further says “Knowing them, a wise man should not act sinfully towards the living beings, nor cause others to act so, nor allow others to act so. He who knows these causes of sin related to living beings is called reward knowing sage.”⁵⁸

The coverage of *Ahimsa* is so vast that it does not refer only to our external activities (like hurting or killing by physical means only) but it refers more strongly to the internal activities of mind.⁵⁹ Such acts can be performed knowingly or unknowingly. Activities involved in committing violence (3): intention to commit, preparation to do and actual doing. While performing the violent activities, the three factors and means affecting the level of violence are:

Motive behind violence (4): anger, pride, deceit and greed.

Intensity of motive behind violence (4): intense, mild, moderate or gleaming like line drawn on rock, mud, sand and water respectively.

Media / instruments of committing violence (3): i.e. mind, speech and body.

When we think of the source or origin of violence, we come to our thought process first. Jains say that the thinking of violence is directly related to our feelings of attachment or aversion to those for or against whom we wish to be violent. Hence we first use our mind and then to inflict violence by body and speech. We thus see that if we think of violence we have committed it already even if we do not implement / express it by body or speech due to our inadequacies or other circumstances. Similarly the motive behind our thoughts and the intensity thereof also are instrumental in our acts of violence.

Talking of the results of violence, karma doctrine of Jains say the one who commits violence will also be caused pain suitably either immediately or in future. We observe this in our own life as ‘when we think of committing violence we are preoccupied with the cruel thoughts as love, compassion etc disappear and our body starts showing ill effects like trembling- loss of breathe and thought faculty, hypertension, anxiety, sleeplessness etc’.

Spiritual aspects of Ahimsa

In Jainism practice of *Ahimsa* is primarily for self purification to enhance our levels of attainment of knowledge and happiness and leading to bliss ultimately. Practice of *Ahimsa* helps the soul in eliminating or minimizing attachment and aversion which manifest as greed and deceit; and anger and arrogance. These are the causes of bondage of karmas as well. Similarly in our social interactions, *Ahimsa* implies not causing pain to others as we are the sufferers first. According to Jainism, Internal *Ahimsa* is not possible without developing equanimity, universal love, selfless service (of meritorious activities), compassion etc.⁶⁰

Ethical Practice of Ahimsa

The divine and yet pragmatic philosophy of non-violence in day-to-day life has been beautifully elaborated by Mahavira: “I cannot give back life to dead. No one can give back life to dead. So no one should take it. In happiness and suffering, in joy or

grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self. We should, therefore, refrain from inflicting upon others such injury, suffering or pain as would be undesirable or unbearable if inflicted upon ourselves.”

The first requirement to start practicing *Ahimsa* is to be spiritually awakened with characteristics like being awake i.e. careful all the time, develop compassion, unconditional love or total detachment, service of meritorious and ever eager to advance on the path of spiritual purification. This is followed by the practice of prescribed ethico-spiritual practices of Jains (basic virtue, abstinence from vices, six essential duties, and five minor vows) discussed earlier to maintain equanimity.⁶¹

The question now arises about what activities are worthy (good) to be adopted and unworthy (inauspicious) to be avoided. Jains say that the GOOD is total *Ahimsa* or *Ahimsa* of all living beings that is synonymous with Godhood or pure soul / state of bliss and pure knowledge. This GOOD can be mathematically expressed as a sum of *Ahimsa* components like detachment, eliminating passions (anger, arrogance, deceitfulness and greed), compassion, love, fearlessness, equanimity and so on simultaneously. Total *Ahimsa* is practiced by an *Arihanta /Jina*.

Convergent validation for this non-killing thesis can be found in the first global survey by the World Health Organization of deaths by suicide, homicide, and war which conclude that “violence is a preventable disease.” (WHO 2005)

For practice by householders, violence is classified as of four types⁶², namely:

- 1 Violence associated with lifestyle.
- 2 Violence associated with professional activities, e.g. agriculture.
- 3 Self-defence against violence committed by others i.e. to protect oneself from the enemies.
- 4 Intentional / premeditated violence committed due to attachment and aversion towards others.

The last one is totally prohibited for Jain votary. The first two types are such that a common man cannot avoid them completely. Based on the classification of living beings, violence against to-five sensed living beings is not allowed while extreme care is to be protected in avoiding violence against one sensed living beings in all their lifestyle and professional activities. The third type is primarily for self-defence and for correcting the violent or wrong tendencies of others and is allowed in a limited manner. Perhaps some wars, like supporting the government of the day in activities conducted against it can be considered as defensive or just wars (like Gandhi's support to British force to World War II). A classical example in Indian history is of Bhamashah, the Jain chief minister of Maharana Pratap who gave everything to his king to fight the mighty *Mughals*.

The fourth type is completely prohibited as it is simply to satisfy one's ego or interest and committed due to ignorance or wrong knowledge and attachment / aversion. In the judicial system, the law awards severe punishment for pre-planned or intentional crimes and at times even lets the accused free if it is accidental or just circumstantial.

In order to avoid and reduce violence, we have to keep in mind the three deterring forces to *Himsa* namely:

- 1 Expression of violence by body is punishable under the law.
- 2 Expression of violence by speech is deterred by the society.
- 3 Expression of violence by mind is deterred only by you i.e. the individual because it hurts the individual the most. Therefore Jain scriptures lay emphasis on mental purity and repentance / self criticism the most.

Social Practice of Ahimsa

Mahavira designates social *Ahimsa* by sixty synonyms⁶³ like tolerance, forgiveness, love, service, liberation, equanimity etc. It is love that sustains the earth. Life without love is death. *Ahimsa* is nothing but equanimity, universal love or absence of attachment to someone. *Ahimsa* teaches that we have to behave

with others as we would like to be treated by others and this is the essence of Mahavira's teachings.⁶⁴

A unique feature of Jainism is the definition of society comprising all living beings, be they human-subhuman-heavenly-hellish or even one sensed living beings like air bodied-water bodied-fire bodied-earth bodied or plant bodied thereby making the society as not just of human beings but of animals, birds, plants and the entire eco-system itself. *Ahimsa* is nothing but to treat all living beings as equal i.e. each and every form of life as equal with equal right to lead a peaceful life and develop their potential completely as explained in *Acharang*:⁶⁵

That which you consider destroyable is (like) yourself.
That which you consider disciplinable is (like) yourself.
That which you consider worth harming is (like) yourself.
That which you consider worth subjugating is (like) yourself.
That which you consider worth killing is (like) yourself.
The result of action done by you has to be borne by you, so do not destroy anything.

The directive principle of living is not 'Living on others', or 'Living by killing', but 'Living with others' as enunciated in the sutra- *Parasparopagrahojivanam*.⁶⁶ This Jain slogan is best explained by a symphony (musical orchestra) where each and every member of 1000 or so strong musicians play their own music and create an experience which is more than 1000 times of the individual musician. The problem arises when one values his independence (selfishness / ego / arrogance) and ignores the same of others resulting in increased terrorism, vandalism, sexual / racial or economic exploitations etc.

Vegetarianism- An Instrument of Nonviolence

Vegetarianism is the foremost manifestation of *Ahimsa*. It is simply a logical extension of the habit of looking upon other life forms with tenderness and compassion. The basic reason is that once we are cruel to animals, it is not difficult for us to be cruel to fellow human beings also. Life of 22nd *Tirthankara* Neminath offers an excellent example of renouncing his luxurious life for

the sake of animals brought to be served as food for his wedding party.

A major objection to vegetarianism is that there is life and soul in every kind of food that we consume, and eating any kind of food is clearly an interference with the course of life. Therefore, according to this point of view, there is no difference between interfering with the vegetable kingdom and the animal kingdom for the sake of obtaining food. However, the proponents of this view fail to see that there is world of difference between the two cases. The difference relates to the sensitivity to pain, the possibility of compensation and degree of interference. When an innocent animal is slaughtered, man definitely causes pain and agony by putting an end to life. But in the case of plants and trees we survive by nature's surpluses i.e. what the plants and trees give themselves and not eating the source by killing it. Using animals for food has to be discouraged because we have no right to take away that which we cannot give.

Vegetarian diet can be seen as another example of practicing social non-violence which takes the benefit not only to us vegetarians but to others as well (like the animal kingdom, ecology, economics and in the reduction of cruel activities rampant in the society).⁶⁷ In recent times we find the number of people switching over to vegetarian and even vegan diet is exponentially on the rise and people in western world who are adopting this as matter of educated and well informed choice. Jain diet not only propagates vegetarianism but also eating a balanced wholesome healthy food in right quantity and at right times. So Jainism puts a lot of emphasis on fasting, eating less than normal, giving up a different taste (like oils and fats, sugar, salt, greens etc) every day, not eating after sunset etc⁶⁸.

Practicing vegetarianism can play havoc to terrorism, insecurity, intolerance, environmental degradation etc which have long term adverse impact on our very existence as humans.

Other Considerations of Ahimsa

Parasparopagraho jivanama or living beings help each other is the doctrine leading us to practice peaceful co-existence and development. We thus see emergence of special interest groups like non-violent communications, ecology-preservation, human and animal rights, and setting up departments in universities all over the world to teach and research on *Ahimsa* and even setting up a university on *Ahimsa*. The United Nations has declared October 2nd as the World Non Violence Day to be celebrated all over the world.

We can thus conclude that there are no choices left except to understand, preach, practice and put all efforts to make this world a non-killing society. This is in line with Mahavira's conclusive pronouncement that after understanding the importance of kindness to beings, the enlightened person should preach, disseminate and applaud it at all places in East-West and North-South directions, is very timely for us who understand *Ahimsa*. Gandhi also said TRUTH is GOD and *Ahimsa* is the means to TRUTH.

2. *Anekantavada* (Non-Absolutism)

Anekantvada is the basic attitude of mind which expresses the fundamental principle that reality is complex and it should be seen from different viewpoints.

The word '*Anekanta*' can be split up into three parts viz., *an*, *Eka* and *Anta* which means not, one and a side or an end respectively.⁶⁹ Etymologically the word *Anekanta* stands for a many-sided exposition of the nature of reality. Therefore it is implied that it is a statement made keeping in mind the existence of other aspects of the reality as well rather than insisting on one view point as the complete knowledge of the reality. This is the reason why it is designated as *Anekanta* or non-one-sidedness. In a different language it is also interpreted as versatility of aspects or versatility of viewpoints.

Anekantavada, the doctrine of pluralism / multiplicity of viewpoints, is one of the unique contributions of Jains to Indian thought and logic as discussed earlier.

For Jain thinkers, reality is thus constituted of apparent contradictions and hence its one-dimensional exposition is not possible. This can be extended to say that reality is an inalienable complex of permanence and change, existence and non-existence, oneness and many-ness, universality and particularity etc.⁷⁰ Because of this complexity reality is styled as with many folds or *Ánekantika*. It is thus multidimensional possessing antagonistic dimensions of permanence and change, one and many etc. These antagonistic dimensions are infinite in number, of which we know only a few of them at any point of time. The Jains advocate change to be as much ontologically real as permanence. Prominent Jain scholars have accordingly defined it in many ways.⁷¹

To treat a state or mode (me as grandfather or husband only; crown or necklace only) or thought as absolute or inclusive is absolutism and to treat the same as relative and incomplete is non-absolutism. In other words we can say that first view is synthetic i.e. substance is losing all its modes and when our approach is analytical the second viewpoint starts looking at all modes in a relative term. Hence to determine real, one should have non-absolutistic approach i.e. use both synthetic and analytical approaches at least. Hence, *Anekanta* itself can be said to have two basic viewpoints namely absolute to determine the substance and non-absolute to determine the relations / modes.

Anekantavada thus gives us two types of TRUTH namely absolute and relative and their existence simultaneously. The Absolute Truth (or the permanence aspect of the reality with origin destruction and permanence) is not a subject for different views by observers. This stays always in all the modes forming this universe singly and jointly. Absolute Truth does not attract any arguments as it is absolutely true. While the relative truth addresses the modes (represented by origin and destruction aspects of reality) is continuously evolving and hence is

dependent on time, place and the observer. This is in accordance with the theory of relativity propagated by Einstein which can be understood from the following example.

Suppose a part of planet or star several billion light years away from us undergoes disintegration causing lighting, thunder etc today. However we the observers on earth will know the same only after several years due to the speed with which light and sound travel from the disintegrated planet to us. Thus there is a big difference in what is experienced by the observed (disintegrated planet) and the observer (US) and the views expressed by us are dependent on our knowledge, place and time etc.

While explaining the doctrine of *Anekanta*, Jain preceptors discovered some principles of logical concomitance namely; universal and particular; permanent and momentary / impermanent; being and non-being, identity and differences; one and many; and lastly speak-able and unspeakable.⁷² These principles will be handy when we look at the social implication of *Anekanta* doctrine. All these discussions about *Anekanta* lead us to identify the following three pillars of *Anekanta* namely:

Relativity i.e. our knowledge is relative to our own capability, objective, time, place, knowledge of others etc.

Co-existence of opposites like universal and particular, being and non-being etc

Reconciliation: It implies flexibility to accept other's viewpoint and our own as partial truths only. This also implies a change in our attitude from confrontation / rigidity to collaboration or flexibility.

***Anekantvada* and Truth**

Truth as a positive term has prominent place in Jainism. *Ahimsa* is considered as true essence of the whole universe⁷³ and is even more profound than the ocean and more stable than Mount *Meru*. It is also conceived as God⁷⁴ as Gandhi conceived it. This is the metaphysical Truth and is highly important in the Jain scriptures. As a moral principle also it is considered very significant, e.g. "The ground under the feet of those who speak Truth rooted in

right knowledge and right conduct becomes holy”.⁷⁵ Truth, it is said, does not only pertain to our faculty of speech but to mind and body as well.⁷⁶

The nature of Truth can be understood by having a clear idea of falsehood. “Falsehood is that which originates from saying ‘*Asat*’, and not from ‘*Sat*’ or reality.”⁷⁷ ‘*Asat*’ may mean three things- Firstly, to speak about that which is not; secondly, to speak out something by changing and manipulating the facts; and lastly, to speak out something with a wrong intention. This wrong intention emanates from our tainted emotions (anger, arrogance, deceit and greed) clubbed as selfish tendencies or attachment and feeling of hatred. A speech is false when spoken with any of these motives.

Anekantavada in Society

We see tremendous diversity in the society we live in, be it at community- neighbours-city- state- country levels or even the world at large level. In our own family we see children, adults, of different sex, different education and economic levels and above all objectives continuously changing. So diversity is a fact of life and corresponds to the definition of reality by Jains. Like spiritual progress, the society constituted by its individual members is also continuously aspiring to move up the scale of perfection for all of its members in terms of peace and harmony, better infrastructure for health, education, amusement, security, personal liberties, interactions within and outside the society and realizing everyone’s full potential. This quest cannot be based on the basis of the permanent only and hence change is to be affected. The most important change needed is the change in personal belief/s as they signify selfishness, if taken independently, and lack concern for the welfare of others. This is explained beautifully by Samantbhadra through the example of a milkmaid churning the curd to take butter out. He says the milkmaid has to take one hand front and keep the other back and then bring the other hand in front and take the earlier front hand back. Then only she can churn the curd to take butter out.

The coexistence of such diversities is not possible without relativity of each other's views, beliefs, needs and objectives. What is true from one point of view is open to question from another. Absolute Truth cannot be grasped from any particular viewpoint alone because absolute Truth is unchangeable and relative Truth is continuously changing and each view point is relative to a particular instance / individual.

According to the theory of relativity in modern science two observers at different distance and time will observe a thing differently. Further an observer's views may be partial view only of the observed entity. *Anekanta* implies a rational method of knowing complete, real Truth after analysis and synthesis of all viewpoints.

Anekantavada says that we have absolutely no right to reject or discard or declare other points of view about religious or philosophical or matter of day-to-day concern, as entirely false; since they may be true from observer's angle or aspect, space or state of being. We therefore must have an attitude of respect of other's views and not of stoic indifference in any case.

Anekantavada emphasizes the many-sidedness of Truth. Reality can be viewed from various angles. The function of philosophy is not merely an academic pursuit of reality. It is a way of life.

We can summarize the basis of *Anekanta* to resolve the conflicts associated with diversities in the societies as follows:

Acceptance of relativity of our knowledge, co-existence of opposites (existent and non-existent, ruling and opposition parties, rich and poor, gender differences, intellectual differences and so on) simultaneously and reconciliation or resolution of conflicts arising out of diversities rather than confrontation based on rigidity of viewpoints.

We can address issues like governance, business, society and religious harmony using *Anekantavada* to come to a most acceptable solution.

***Aparigraha* or Non-Possession**

Etymologically *Parigraha* means to be bound from all sides. Absence of *Parigraha* is *Aparigraha*. *Parigraha* (infatuation or *Murchha*) is attachment to possessions.⁷⁸ Attachment by its name itself takes us away from our inherent nature. Such a person perpetually chases with full energy in the acquisition of other things first, then hoarding and protecting them. In such a case, the individual is obsessed with attachment to possessions completely and forgets his own inherent nature and enhances his pains.

The first discourse of Mahavira in *Sutrakritanga* (second limb of the twelve fold Jain canons having sermons of Mahavira) starts with a directive, namely: One should know what causes the bondage and what removes it.⁷⁹ Then in the subsequent four verses⁸⁰ Mahavira replies:

He, who owns even a small property in living or lifeless things or consents to others holding it, will not be delivered from misery. If a man kills living beings or causes other men to kill them, or consent to their killing them, his iniquity will go on increasing.

A sinner, who makes the interest of his kinsmen and companions his own, will suffer much; for the number of those whose interest he takes to heart constantly increases.

All his wealth and his nearest relations cannot protect him (from future misery); knowing this and the value of life, he will get rid of karma.

Thus owning of even the smallest possessions is a cause of unhappiness as the same serves as a fuel to ignite desire for more. Even human body itself is possession of soul. The well known story of a saint is a good example to understand this concept.

Once a saint went to the forest and left behind everything including clothes to meditate on his true self in the forest. After some time his closest follower came and requested him to please use a

Langoti (loincloth) at least to cover his private part. The saint agreed but later on found that he needs two, one for wearing and the other for washing. One day he saw the loincloth kept for drying was being eaten away by a rat. So to protect the loincloth from rat/s, he kept a cat to keep the rat/s away. Subsequently he realized that the cat needs milk. So he kept a cow and on a field and back to square one i.e. to live like a farmer, the situation which he had long ago renounced. So he gave up even the loincloth.

Possessions are of two types namely-

Internal - the tainted state of soul i.e. attachment (greed and deceitfulness) and aversion (anger and arrogance) termed as psychical.

External - own physical body, family and friends, moveable and immovable property, food grains, servants and even social status.

Basically *Parigraha* arouses from within. It pertains more to one's thoughts and attitudes than to objects. On the other hand, apparent *Parigraha* is aroused from without. External objects are more obvious causes of apparent *Parigraha*. Both types of possessions are classified into two and fourteen types respectively.⁸¹ These include all external objects of attachment, which hinder liberation and happiness as the individual is always possessed of a feeling of owning (mine) and acquiring more to fan his greed for possessions.

Desires are endless like the sky and they can never be satisfied for any person fully"⁸². The more you get, the more you want, desires increase with every gain. Even Mahatma Gandhi said "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs but not for even one man's greed".

Attitude of possessiveness / greed also gives rise to the feeling of acquisitiveness i.e. to acquire more or to maintain and enhance possessions that creates disturbance in the mind of the individual and a taint on the soul.⁸³

We find that all acts of mundane people are related to body first i.e. to make it enjoy comfort / pleasure by satisfying its needs for food, shelter, wellness, keeping it attractive etc. Such acts

continue in a never ending cycle. Perhaps this is the reason that even women were considered as possessions in pre-Mahavira times due to the perception that women were just objects of service and lust. This was the basis why 23rd Tirthankara Parshwanath talked of *Chaturyam Dharma* (fourfold vow) by keeping *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) as a part of *Aparigraha*⁸⁴. We shall talk of celibacy later.

The principle of *Aparigraha* is not a rigorous principle of self control or an ascetic way of life that may entail self-torture of some kind. It is a realistic, practical and rational principle with a solid foundation in the social system. It has individual moral growth as its basis, with direct relevance for the society of which the individual is a part. Its main thrust is on a balanced society consisting of balanced individuals.

Like all ethical ideals, *Aparigraha* has certain presumptions that are essentially psychological than metaphysical or religious in any traditional sense. Some of these are:

1. The source of happiness and peace lies within and not outside.
2. External possessions are only meant to be used and not to be owned. The ownership of everything of the world lies with nature which is the true caretaker of everything, ownership as 'mine' and 'yours' is meaningless and is a source of conflict.
3. The human individual has tremendous energies and potentialities which are not based on external possessions. Thus their role is limited in the life of the individual.
4. All human passions, such as anger, conceit, crookedness, attachment, ego, etc. have root in external objects or possessions which create disturbance in the mind of the individual. Therefore, self-restraint of one's possessions and consumptions is necessary.⁸⁵

Aparigraha is the fifth vow of monks and householders alike in the Jain code of ethics as enunciated by Mahavira by dividing

the earlier vow of *Aparigraha* in two namely *Brahmacharya* and *Aparigraha*.

Aparigraha as the minor vow for householders is the vow of limiting possessions and desires. Consequently the practitioner controls his limitless desires to acquire more and more.⁸⁶

This theory of limited possessions for householder is extremely important and valuable to the present world conditions. Thus Jain preceptors, who formulated the ethical code for householders in the 1st century AD, imposed this principle of voluntary limitation to one's own property and income with the object of securing complete economic stability to society. The social order based upon that principle will certainly prevent unnecessary accumulation of misery, poverty and wretchedness in many others in society. Therefore, the economic conflict will be automatically solved adjusting in matters of wealth, health and prosperity.

Aparigraha as the enhancing vow (*Gunavrata*) is called *Bhogopabhoga-parimana* or limiting the possession of material objects which are to be used once (like food) and of repeated use (like house, cloths, jewels, transport means etc).

***Aparigraha* as the Basis of Social Wellness**

Non-possession or non-attachment is said to be a corollary of a natural consequence of *Ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* cannot be implemented without discarding possession or attachment. If one feels attached to a certain object, one wants to harbor the feeling of possessing it with the notion that 'it is mine' or 'I should hold it for ever'. Everybody in this world wants to possess and keep the best available object in the world for him and this leads to conflicts. So in order to possess such objects, one will have to manipulate and take recourse to fair or foul means, involving anger, pride, deceit or greed.

Aparigraha can be practiced in varying degrees. Simply stated it is the practice of self-restraint and voluntary control of wants, abstinence from over-indulgence and elimination of aggressive

urge for more. The basic culture of self-restraint is highly relevant in the contemporary world. To make non-possession applicable in social field, Mahavira defines it in a way that suits householders. He says that for a social living being, total freedom from desires is not possible, so he starts reducing desires gradually by limiting them. This is the social form of non-possession.

Mahavira said that the root cause of all social ills is inequality, be they economic or educational or health or opportunities to excel or to use one's potential fully. To remove this inequality, the HAVES i.e. rich, educated and powerful people of society should limit their desires, put a limit to their indulgences, and free the abundant wealth and money for use by others. This involves:

Creating a surplus of wealth by strenuous effort,
Conserve use or expenditure through self restraint,
Share the surplus with the society for their wellness.

The first principle i.e. create a surplus by strenuous effort is the very essence of Jains. A human being is expected to be free from laziness and disinterest in the vows, else one binds harmful karmas and causes violence. One of the characteristics of a spiritual awakened is his incessant efforts for progress to enhance the level of his spiritual awakening till the state of *Jina* state is attained. Then *Jina*⁸⁷ starts sharing his experience and wealth (knowledge and Bliss) with others, feeling himself as a custodian / trustee of wealth i.e. bliss and omniscience.

Therefore, implicit in the Jain concept of *Aparigraha*, is the philosophy of conservation of natural environment and avoidance of their over exploitation and wasteful consumption. Mahavira clearly says that all human races of the world are having similar infinite individual souls. So none is superior or inferior, all the social and sectarian divisions are the creation of the perverted mind. To sum up non-possession is –

1. Control of desires i.e. acquisitiveness / Desire / Greed of worldly objects

2. Abandonment of ownership over socially useful resources, i.e. develop a feeling of trusteeship rather than ownership of possessions.
3. Establishment of exploitation free-society i.e. minimize consumption of material objects and waste of natural resources,
4. Sharing of resources with desire-free mind for the welfare of the people
5. Spiritual piety.

These factors lead us to shift from consumerism to conservationism and what Gandhi perhaps talks of self-reliance / *Swaraj*.

Brahmacharya / Celibacy / Chastity

Etymologically *Brahmacharya* is to contemplate and stay in the state of pure soul (*acharana*) as the ultimate objective i.e. pure soul or *Brahma*. A monk who becomes detached even with his own body can actually practice complete *Brahmacharya*. So a monk who by activities of mind body and speech has given up indulging in inclinations of his body and other inclinations is said to be observing ten types of *Brahmacharya*.⁸⁸

Householders practice limited celibacy i.e. restricts their sexual activities with their own religiously wedded spouse. The vow of *Brahmacharya* for householders is called *Sva-dara-santosh vrata* or contentment in the company of his own religiously wedded wife. In this vow also he gradually reduces sexual activities with his wife and ultimately vows to stay with her as a friend or consider her as a sister. Such a householder does not indulge in listening to sexually arousing stories / shows, does not look at the body parts of other women, does not indulge in sex by organs other than naturally meant for, does not reminiscence or look forward to sexual activities and avoids use of stimulating foods and clothes and avoids arranging marriages of others⁸⁹.

One who is not observing this vow may get involved in anti social activities like prostitution, rape, using toxic and stimulating foods / drinks and perform anti social activities, spend all his time in extravagant display of wealth and personal charms, ruin his own health and wealth by being preoccupied in

lustful activities all the time mentally or otherwise. Besides he loses his own mental and physical vitalities to focus on his own spiritual and worldly progress and feels weak or disinterested in. Even though all religions of India propagate practice of celibacy to preserve one's vital energies and channelize them to achieve their worldly and transcendental objectives; Jainism emphasizes it most, first through the abstinences from vices then the minor vows followed by the 7th stage of householder's self purification path.

Conclusion

Thus salient features of Jain philosophy can be summarised as follows:

All BEINGS are real. Real is indicated as substance (*dravya*) which is eternal as well as is continuously changing. Substances are classified as living beings (*jiva*) and non-living beings (*ajiva*). There are infinite *jivas* / souls. Living beings help each other.

- *Jivas*, called empirical souls, are an amalgam of pure soul and matter particles called karmas. They exist from beginning-less time. Nature of pure soul is just consciousness and bliss with infinite energy to enjoy it. All *jivas* are equal as per their inherent nature. No *jiva* wants pain. Every *jiva* can attain the state of pure soul by its own effort and is responsible for all its actions and the results thereof.
- Empirical soul goes through the cycle of birth-death until it attains pure soul state. Right belief-knowledge-conduct together is the path of attaining complete self realization / *moksa*.
- Non-violence (*Ahimsa*) is the heart of Jain ethics to solve all worldly as well as spiritual purification problems. Live and let live and living beings help each other are directives for enhancing social wellness.
- Attachment and possessions (*Parigraha*) be they psychic or material are the root cause of all pains in this, past and future lives.

- Truth is infinite. Only omniscient lords can know it all. We try to know it in parts by looking at it from different viewpoints. Doctrine of *Anekanta* or multiplicity of viewpoints is essential to resolve conflicts and to know the whole truth.
- Human beings practice institution of vows including fasting in various degrees, repentance, meditation and self study to progress on the path of self realization.

The Jain way of life is said to be based on *Ahimsa* (non violence), *Anekanta* (multiplicity of viewpoint or many sided truth) and *Aparigraha* (limiting possessions) with *Ahimsa* as the most important principles. The practitioner needs to be ever observant and careful in all the activities so as to minimize *Himsa*. One need not be born in a Jain family to practise these values.

Romain Rolland said “The sages, who discovered the law of Nonviolence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton, greater warriors than Wellington. Nonviolence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute.”⁹⁰

Samantbhadra in 3rd century A.D. said: O Lord (Mahavira)! Your *Tirth* is all inclusive, is based on relativity of viewpoints and eliminates all pains regardless of their gender, race or realms of their existence (hell / heaven / human or sub human). Hence it is *Sarvodaya tirth* or enlightenment of all.⁹¹

Notes and References

¹ The discovery of the Indus Civilization seems to have thrown a new light on the antiquity of Jainism. The evidence suggests that Jainism as even known among the people of the pre Indus Valley around 3000-3500 B.C. Buddhist and Vedic literature also strongly suggest that Jainism existed when they were present and even before.

² Pt. Daulatramji, *Chahadhālā*, Trans. Dr. Kirit P. Gosalia, (Aligarh: Teerthdham Mangalayatan, 2007), pp 1.1-1.3
Tīna bhuvana meṃ sāra, vītarāgavijñānatā.
Śivasvarūpaśivakāra, namahumṭriyoga saṃhārikeṃ.1.

- Je tribhuvana meṃ jīva ananta.Sukha cāheṃ dukha teṃ bhayavanta.*
- Tāteṃ dukhahārī sukhakāri. Kahēṃ sīkha guru karuṇā dhāri.2.*
- ³ TS, Umāsvāti, V.29,op. cit, p.192
Sad dravyalakṣaṇaṃ
- ⁴ Ibid, V.1, 2, 3, pp. 167-8
Ajīvakāyādharmādharmākāśapudgalāḥ.1
Drvyāṇi. 2. Jīvāśca.3.
- ⁵ Ibid, V.30, p.193
Utpādavyayadhraubyayuktaṃ sat.
- ⁶ Ibid V.31, p.193 *guṇaparyāyabad dravya.*
- ⁷ *Jīva*, and *ajīva* further classified as matter, medium of motion, medium of rest, space and time
- ⁸ Ibid, I.1, p.6
Samyag-Darśana-jñana-cāritrani mokṣa margah.
- ⁹ Dr. Kamal Chand Sogani, *Spiritual awakening and other essays* (Jaipur: Prakrit Bharati Academy, 2008), P. 2
- ¹⁰ *Uttarādhyayana*, 28.30 (Saurashtra: Sri Harshapushpamrit Jain Granthamala, 1975)
Nissankiya-nikkankhiya-nivvitigicchaṃamūḍhadiṭṭhīya.
Uvavūhathirīkaraṇaṃ, vajchallapabhāvaṇo 'ṭṭhete.
- ¹¹ Dr. Kamal Chand Sogani, op. cit, P. 3
- ¹² *Uttarādhyayana*, 28.31, *Charitra Pahuda*, 7
- ¹³ Svāmi Kārtikeya, *Kārtikeyānupreṣā*, 4/78, Quoted in *Dharmāmṛta (anāgāra)* Translated by Pandit Kailash Chandra Shastri, (New Delhi: Bharatiya Jnanapith Publication, 1977), p.12.
Dhammovatthusahavokhamadi-bhavoya das viho dhammo
Rayanattayamcadhammojivanamrakkhanam dhammo.
- ¹⁴ TS, Umāsvāti, IX.6, English translation by Shugan Jain, *Jainism, Key to Reality* (Hastinapur: Digambar Jain Trilok Shodh Sansthan, 2011), p.326
Uttamakṣamāmārdavārjavaśaucasatyasaṃnyamatapastyāgākiñcany a-brahmacaryāṇi dharmah.
Supreme forbearance, modesty, straightforwardness, purity, truthfulness, self-restraint, austerity, renunciation, non-attachment and celibacy constitute virtue or duty.
- ¹⁵ Ibid, I.1, p.6
Samyag-Darśana-jñana-cāritrani mokṣa margah.
- ¹⁶ DKS, I.1, (Beawar: Agam Prakashan Samiti, 1985)
Dhammo maṅgalamukkiṭṭhaṃ ahiṃsā sañjamo tavo.
Devā vi taṃ namaṃsanti jassa dhamme saya mano.
- ¹⁷ Ibid, VI. 1-4, pp.204-10

- Kāyavānmanaḥkarma yogaḥ*. 1. The operation of the body, the organ of speech and the mind is called *Yoga* (activity).
Saāsravaḥ. 2. It (this threefold activity) is influx or *Āsrava*.
Śubhaḥpuṇyasyāśubhaḥ pāpasya. 3. Virtuous activity is the cause of *Puṇya* (merit) and wicked activity is the cause of *Pāpa* (demerit); *Sakaṣyākaṣyayoḥ sāmparāyikeryāpathayoḥ*. 4. (There are two kinds of influx, namely) that of persons with passions, which extends transmigration, and that of persons free from passions, which prevents or shortens it.
- 18 Ibid, IX.1,3, pp.322-3
Āsravanirodhaḥ saṃvaraḥ.1.
Tapasānirjarā ca.3.
- 19 Ibid, IX.2, p.322
Sagupti-samiti-dharmānupreksā-parīśahajaya-cāritraih
- 20 Ibid, IX.19-20, pp.340-2
Anaśanāvamaudaryavṛttipariśaṅkhyānārasaparityāgaviviktaśayyā sanakāyākleśā bāhyaṃ tapaḥ.19.
The external austerities are fasting, reduced diet, and special restrictions for begging food, giving up stimulating and delicious dishes, lonely habitation and mortification of the body.
Prāyaścittavinayavaiyāvṛttyasvādhyāvyutsargadhyānānyuttara.
20.
Expiation, reverence, service, study, renunciation and meditation are the internal austerities.
- 21 *DM*, 4, op.cit, p.6
Uvaogo Duviyappodaṃsaṇaṇāṇaṃcadaṃsaṇaṃcadudha.
Cakkhuacakkhūhīdaṃsaṇaṃadhakevalaṃṇeyaṃ.4.
Upayoga, i.e. the function of understanding is of two kinds, *Darśana*, i.e. vision and *Jñāna*, i.e., cognition. *Darśana* is of four kinds i.e., *Cakṣu*, *Acakṣu*, *Avadhi* and *Kevala*.
- 22 *TS*, Umāsvāti, I.6, op. cit, p.11
Pramāṇanayairadhigamaḥ.6.
- 23 Please see Appendix II
- 24 Somdev Suri, *Yaśastilaka-campū*, kalpa 34 verse 22, (Aligarh: Bharatvarshiya Anekanta Vidvat Parishad, 1989-90), p.379
Sarvaeva hi jainānāṃpramāṇaṃlaukikovidhiḥ.
Yatrasamyaktvahānirnayatranavrataduṣaṇaṃ.
- 25 *Svayambhūstotra: Tattvapradīpikā*, 119 (Varansai: Shri Ganesvarni Digambar Jaina Sodha Samsthana, Nariya)
- 26 *Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvākācāra* by Samantabhadra, 155, (Veer Seva Mandira, Delhi).
- 27 *Kārttikeyanuprekṣā*, 335, (Rajachandra Ashrama, Agas).

- 28 TS, Umāsvāti, IX.2, op. cit, p.322
Saguptisamitidharmānupreṣāpariṣahajayacāritraih.2.
- 29 Jinasena, *Mahāpurāṇa*, xxxviii.24
*devapujagurupastihsvadhyayahsadyamastapah/
danamcetigrihasthanamsatkarmani dine dine//*
- 30 RKS, Samantabhadra, 3.5, (Tikamagarh, MP: Vitarag Vani Trust, 2006), p.116
*Gr̥hiṇām̐tredhātīṣṭhatyaṇu-guṇa-śikṣāvratātmakam̐caraṇam̐.
Pañca-tri-caturbhedam̐trayaṇyathāsāṅkhyam̐ākhyātam̐.*
- 31 Svami Kartikeya, op. cit., 305, *Shravaka-dharma-dohaka-* 10
- 32 RKS, Samantabhadra, 3.6, p.117
- 33 Ibid, 3.7, 119
- 34 Ibid, 3.8, p.122
- 35 Ibid, 3.9, p.125
- 36 Ibid, 3.10, p.127
- 37 Ibid, 3.11, p.130
- 38 Ibid, 3.12, p.131
- 39 Ibid, 3.13, p.134
- 40 Ibid, 3.14, p.136
- 41 Ibid, 3.15, p.137
- 42 Ibid, 3.16, p.139
- 43 Ibid, 3.21, p.170
- 44 The Jaina Agamas prescribe separate code of conduct for ascetics and householders, which are known as *Śramaṇācāra* and *Śrāvaka-cāra* respectively. For *Śrāvakas* or householders they prescribe twelve vows to undertake which contains five *Aṇuvratas* (minor vows) + three *Guṇavratas* (multiplicative vows) and four *Sikṣāvratas* (disciplinary vows). Out of these twelve, seven vows including three *Guṇavratas* and four *Sikṣāvratas* are jointly called *Śīla*. Each constituent of *Śīla* is further divided into required divisions. Observance of the *Śīla* is very important for the lay-followers in order to purify their conduct. The *Śīla* enhances the effect of *vratas* to be observed by the *Śrāvaka-Śrāvikas* (lay-followers) treading on the path of salvation.
- 45 Ibid, 4.1, p.205
- 46 For detail see RKS, Samantabhadra, 3.21-4.31, op. cit, pp.170-262
- 47 *Dāna* is the chief characteristic of *Vaiyāvṛtya*
- 48 TS, Umāsvāti, VII.31-36; RKS, Samantabhadra, 3.27, 3.35, 3.44, 4.6, 4.15, 4.20, 4.31
- 49 TS, Umāsvāti, VII.22, op. cit, p.263
- 50 Somdeva Sūri, *Yaśastilaka-campū*, kalpa 34 verse 18 (Aligarh: Bharatvarshiya Anekant Vidvat Parishad, 1989-90), P.378

dvau hi dharamau grhasthānām, laukikah, pārlaikikah! Lokaśrayo bhavedadyah parah syadagamaśrayah.

and kalpa 8 verse 34

Sarva eva ji jainānā pramāṇaṃ laukiko vidhiḥ, Yatra samyaktvavanirna na cāpi vrataduṣaṇaṃ.

⁵¹ Sūtrakṛtāṅgasūtra 1.1.4.10

Evam khu nāṇiṇo sāraṃ jaṃ na hiṃsai kiṃ kiñcaṇa.

Ahiṃsā samayaṃ ceva etāvantaṃ viyāṇiyā..

⁵² *Praśnavyākaraṇa, Samvaradvāra, 108, Shri Agam Prakashan Samiti, beawar, Edn. II, 1993, pp.165*

Ahiṃsā kī mahimā-

Esā sā bhagavaī ahiṃsā jā sā bhīyāṇa viva saraṇaṃ, pakkhīnaṃ viva gamaṇaṃ, tisiyāṇaṃ viva salilaṃ, khuhiyāṇaṃ viva asaṇaṃ, samuddamajjhe va poyavahaṇaṃ cauppayāṇaṃ va āsamapayaṃ duhatthiyāṇaṃ va osahibalaṃ aḍavīmajjhe visatthagamaṇaṃ etto viṣiṭṭhatariyā ahiṃsā jā sā puḍhavī-jala-agaṇi-māruya-vaṇassai-bīya-hariya-jalayara-thalayara-khahayara-tasa-thāvara-savvabhūya-khemakarī.

⁵³ *PS - verses 42, 43 tainted state of soul and acts of minds cause of Hiṃsā.- Amṛtacandra Sūri, PS, 42,43 (Indore: Amar Granthalay, 2009), p.104-5*

⁵⁴ Ref *Acārāṅga* Translated by H Jacobi and Max Mueller Sacred Texts of India LPP 3332 Part 1-Fourth lecture titled 'Righteousness'. "The *Arhats* and *Bhagvats* of the past, present, and future, all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, explain thus: all breathing, existing, living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away, This is the pure unchangeable, eternal law, which declared: among the zealous and not so zealous, among the faithful and not so faithful, among the cruel and not so cruel, among those who have worldly weakness and those who do not have, among those who like social bonds and those who do not; 'that is the truth, that is so, that is proclaimed in this creed. Having adopted the law, one should not hide it, nor forsake it. Correctly understanding the law, one should arrive at indifference for the impressions of the senses, 'and not act on the motives of the world'. He who is not of this mind, how should he come to the other. What has been said here, has been seen (by the omniscient beings), heard (by the believers), acknowledged (by the faithful) and thoroughly understood by them. Those who acquiesce and indulge (in worldly pleasures) are born again and again. 'Day and night exerting thyself, steadfast', always having ready wisdom, perceive that the careless (stand) outside liberation; if careful, thou

- wilt always conquer. Thus I say.”
- ⁵⁵ Amar Muni ji Maharaj, “Ahimsā ke Preraṇā Sūtra”, in *Ahimsā Darśana* (Agra: Shri Sanmati Gyanpeeth, 2012)
Je ya buddhā atikkantā je ya buddhā aṇāgayā.
Santi tesimṇ paiṭṭhāṇaṃ bhūyāṇaṃ jagāi jahā..
- ⁵⁶ Utrādhyayana Sūtra, 8.8
Na hu pāṇavahaṃ aṇujāṇe muccejja kayāi savvadukkhāṇaṃ.
- ⁵⁷ Amar Muni ji Maharaj, op. cit., *Ahimsā Darśana*
Esā sā ahimsā bhagavaī bhīyāṇa viva saraṇaṃ,
tasathāvarasavabhūyakhemakarī.
- ⁵⁸ First lecture called knowledge of the weapon in *Acārāṅga*, English translation by Herman Jacobi and Max Mueller.
- ⁵⁹ Amṛtacandra Sūri, *PS*, Gatha- 42, 43, Trans. Vijay K. Jain (Dehradun: Vikalp Printers, 2012), p.33
Ātmapariṇāmahimsanahetutvātsarvamevahimsaiyat.
Anṛtavacanādikevalamudāhṛtaṃ śiṣyabodhāya.42
 All subdivisions (injury, falsehood, stealing, unchastity, and attachment) are *himsa* as indulgence in these sullies the pure nature of the soul. Falsehood etc. have been mentioned separately only to make the disciple understand through illustrations.
Yatkhalukaṣāyayogātpṛāṇānāṃdravyabhāvarūpāṇām.
Vyaparopāṇasyakaraṇaṃsuniścītābhavatisāhimsā. 43
 Acting under the influence of passions, an injury caused to physical or psychical vitalities is deliberate *himsa*.
- ⁶⁰ Jaina Ācāryas have given certain individual and social characteristics that accompany *Samyagdarśana* (spiritual awakening) and the same can be classified as individual and attitude towards others. The individual characteristics are doubtless in kindness / compassion to all creatures, impose upon him restraint in the realm of possessive desires, becomes free from follies (*Mūḍhatā*) i.e. superstitions and develops virtuous dispositions of honesty, gratitude, forgiveness, modesty. The social characteristics are not hating a meritorious being owing to certain diseased bodily conditions and the like, develops universal love to all creatures to provide equal opportunities for progress to all, rehabilitates the fallen or misguided and to publicize the righteous creed / path. there are other characteristics also, These are-Reduction of passions to the extent of acquiring mental peace, i.e. PRAŚAMA, Turning away from the causes, which enhance worldly career, i.e. SAMVEGA, Expression of the non-skeptical attitude towards the spiritual nature of Reality, i.e. ASTIKĀYA, Manifestation of universal compassion, i.e. ANUKAMPĀ.
- ⁶¹ Amṛtacandra Sūri, *PS*, Gatha- 97, 124, op. cit. Vijay K. Jain, p.64, 80

Chedanabhedanamāraṇakarṣaṇavāṇijyacauryavacanādi.

Tatsāvadyaṃyasmāprāṇivadhādyāḥpravartante. 97.

Sinful (*Sāvadya*) speech comprises statements which may be prompting others to engage in piercing, splitting, beating, ploughing, trading, or stealing, as such activities lead to the destruction of life.

Tattvārthāśraddhāneniryuktamprathamamevamithyātvam.

Samyagdarśanacaurāḥprathamakaṣāyāśca catvārah. 124.

At the outset, wrong belief (*Mithyātvā*), the cause of delusion in the substances (*Tattvas*), and the four passions (anger, pride, deceitfulness, and greed) of the first order (*Anantānubandhi*-leading to endless mundane existence), which rob one of right faith, should be got rid of.

⁶² RKS, Samantabhadra, 3.7, (Tikamagarh, MP: Vitarag Vani Trust, 2006), p.119

Saṅkalpātkr̥takāritamananādyogatrāyasyacarasattvān.

Na hinastiyattadāhuḥsthūlavadhādviramaṇamnipuṇāḥ.

Also in, *SD*, 2.82 (Bharatvarshiya Anekant Vidvat Parishad, 1995), p. 135

⁶³ Sixty names of Ahimsā bhagavaī- *Praśnavyākaraṇa*, Samvaradvāra, 107, op. cit, pp.161-62

Tattha paḍhamam ahiṃsā jā sā sadevamaṇuyāsurasā loyassa bhavai dīvo tāṇam saraṇam gaī paiṭṭhā 1. ṇivvāṇam 2. ṇivvū 3. Samāhī 4. Sattī 5. Kittī 6. Kantī 7. Raī ya 8. Virāī ya 9. Suyaṅga 10. Tittī 11. Dayā 12. Vimuttī 13. Khantī 14. Sammattārāhaṇā 15. Mahantī 16. Bohī 17. Buddhī 18. Dhū 19. Samiddhī 20. Riddhī 21. Viddhī 22. Ṭhī 23. Puṭṭhī 24. Ṇandā 25. Bhaddā 26. Visuddhī 27. Laddhī 28. Viṣiṭṭhaditṭhī 29. Kallāṇam 30. Maṅgala 31. Pamoo 32. Vibhū 33. Rakkhā 34. Siddhāvāso 35. Aṇāsavo 36. Kevālīṇa ṭhāṇam 37. sivaṃ 38. Samū 39. Sīlam 40. Saṅjamottī ya 41. Sīlapariḥharo 42. saṃvaro ya 43. Gittī 44. Vavasāo 45. Ussao 46. Jaṇṇo 47. Āyayaṇam 48. Jayaṇam 49. Appamāo 50. Assāso 51. Vīsāso 52. Abhao 53. Savvassa vi amāghāo 54. Cokkha 55. Pavittā 56. Sū 57. Pūyā 58. Vimāla 59. Pabhāsā ya 60. Ṇimmalayara tti evamāṇi ṇiyayaḥṇamimmiyāim pajjayaṇāmāṇi honti ahiṃsāe bhagavaīe.

⁶⁴ *BB*, 3rd Uddeshak, 4584, Chatur Vijay / Punyavijay, ed. (Bhavanagar: Shri Atmanand Jain Sabha, 1933)

Jam ichhasiappanto, Jam cha naichhasiappanto, tam ichhaparassa vi, ettiyagamjinasasanayam.

⁶⁵ *Āyāro*, 1.2.3.63 32, (Ladnun: Jaina Vishva Bharati)

Savve pāṇā ṇa haṃtavvā, ṇa ajjāvetavva, ṇa ajjāvetavvā, ṇa pariḥhettavvā, ṇa paritāveyavvā, ṇa uddveyavvā.

⁶⁶ *TS*, Umāsvāti, *V.21*, op. cit, p.184

- 67 Shugan C Jain, 'Jain Diet', in *Study Notes*, www.isjs.in
- 68 Six types of external austerities have first three as fasting, eating less and avoiding a taste (one at a time daily).
- 69 *Abhidhāna Rājendra Kośa*, vol.1 p.423
- 70 *Āptamīmāṃsā*; 15, 34, 56
- 71 Reality is *Anekāntika* i.e. with infinite aspects-Samantabhadra. The object of knowledge is the real thing which is not one-sided. Nothing in this universe can be understood in its true nature in one single aspect-Siddhasena Divākara. A thing or real is *Anekāntātmaka* which means that the nature of reality is many-sided when we adopt a comprehensive view of all things found in this world. In other words according to the doctrine of *Anekānta* the truth is relative and not absolute-Akalaṅka. A thing or real has endless attributes. It is not possible to explain the nature of reality otherwise-Hemcandra. Ācārya Amṛtacandra starts his famous tenth century work *Purusārthasiddhyupāya* by paying obeisance to the doctrine of *Anekāntavāda*.
- 72 Acharya Maha Prajna, *Anekant: views and Issues* (Ladnun: JVBI, 2001), p.1-3
- 73 *Praśnavyākaraṇa, Samvaradvāra*, 120, op. cit., p.185
- 74 *Acārāṅga*, 1/5/5, op.cit, *Aṅgasuttāṇi*
- 75 *Yoga-Śāstra*, 2/63, Translation, Munishri Padmavijayji, (Delhi: Shri Nirgranth Sahitya Prakashan Sangh, 1975)
- Jñānacāritrayormūlaṃsatyamevavadanti ye.*
Dhatrīpavitrikriyateteṣāṃcaraṇareṇubhiḥ.
- 76 *Sthānāṅga*, 3.1.96, in *Aṅgasuttāṇi-1*, ed. (Ladnun: Jain Vishwa Bharati, V.S.2031), p.549
- 77 *TS*, Umāsvāti, VII.14, op. cit, p.253
'*Asadabhidhānamanṛtam*'
- 78 Umāsvāti, *TS*, VII.17, op. cit, p.256
Murchāparigrahaḥ.
- 79 *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, 1.1.1, in *Aṅgasuttāṇi-1*, ed. (Ladnun: Jain Vishwa Bharati, V.S.2031), p.253
Bujjhjatiuttejjā, bandhanaṃparijāṇiyā.
Kimāhabandhanaṃvīro?Kiṃvājāṇaṃ tiuttai.1.
- 80 *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, op. cit., 1.1.2, 3, 4, 5,
Chittamantamacittaṃvā, parigijjhakisāmiva.
Aṅṇaṃvāaṇujāṇāi, evaṃdukkhāṇa muccai.2.
Sayaṃtivāyaepāṇe, aduvāṅṇehimghāyae.
Haṅṇantaṃvā'ṇujāṇāi, veraṃvaddhei appaṇo.3.
Jassimkulasamuppaṇe, jehimvāsamvaseṇare.
Mamāiluppaibāle, aṅṇamaṅṇehim mucchie.4.
Vittaṃsoyariyāceva, savvameyaṃṇatāṇae.

Saṅkhāejīviyaṃceva, kammuṇā u tiuṭṭai.5.

- ⁸¹ The two types of *Vāhya Parigraha* are- *Cetana* and *Jaḍa*. *Jaḍa Parigraha* means attachments to all lifeless objects such as clothes, house, etc. and *Cetan Parigraha* means attachments to all living beings such as wife, children, servants, etc. the fourteen types of *Abhyāntara Parigraha* are- wrong notion, attachment for sex, laughter, affliction, fear and disgust, four passions of anger, conceit, crookedness and greed and also four stages of these passions of *Anantānubandhi*.
- ⁸² *Uttarādhyayana*, 9.48
“If there were numberless mountains of gold and silver as big as mount Kailash, they would not satisfy any avaricious man; for avarice is boundless like the sky.”
- ⁸³ Dulichand Jain, *Universal Message of Lord Mahavira* (Varanasi: Parshwanath Vidyapeeth, 2005), p.17
- ⁸⁴ *Sthānāṅga*, op. cit., 4.1.266
- ⁸⁵ Dr. Kamala Jain, *Aparigrah-The Human Solution*, (Varanasi: Parshwanath Vidyapeeth, 1998), p.64
- ⁸⁶ Dr. Kamala Jain, *The concept of Panchashila in Indian Thought*, (Varanasi: Parshwanath Vidyapeeth, 1983), p.231
- ⁸⁷ The three characteristics of the *Arihanta / Tīrthaṅkara* are total detachment, omniscient and delivering the sermons of spiritual beneficence.
- ⁸⁸ Ācārya Śivārya, *Bhagvatī Ārādhanā*, 873-876 (Solapur: Shri Jain Sanskriti Sanrakshak Sangh, 2006), pp. 514-515
Desire for women, eating stimulating food, use the bed of females, to look at the beautiful parts of women, to show extraordinary respect to women, to offer gifts due to lust for them, to reminiscence old acts of lust, to look forward to acts of lust in future, use stimulating things like scents, garden, cloths etc, and to develop wrong habits or inclinations in one’s own organs.
- ⁸⁹ *RKS*, Samantabhadra, 3.13-14, op. cit., pp.134-136
- ⁹⁰ Quote of Romain Rolland,
http://www.veganworldnetwork.org/topics_ahimsa.php, accessed on 17 January 2014.
- ⁹¹ Dr. H. C. Bharill, “Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahaveer”,
<http://www.jainworld.com/education/tat8.asp>, accessed on 17 January 2014.

Appendix II

Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

In the philosophical and religious realm; Gandhi mentioned the names of Rajchandra, Leo Tolstoy, John Ruskin, and occasionally Henry David Thoreau for the spot of a *Guru*.¹ Gandhi's criterion of a religious *Guru* was 'one who advised the disciple on all matters of daily conduct and living and helped him achieve perfection in life, self-realization of soul, and the goal of *Moksha*. That could be done only by someone who was himself pure and inspiring, perfect in spiritual knowledge, self-realized, non-sectarian, infallible, free from wants and flaws, capable of guiding by word and example, and practiced what preached.'² That was a tall order and difficult to match. However Gandhi ranked Rajchandra/Raychandbhai at the highest spot of his religious Guru.

In his Autobiography, Gandhi devoted three pages to introduce Rajchandra and refer him at number of instances during his sojourn in South Africa.

Brief Life-Sketch of Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

Rajchandra was born in 1868 in Vavana, Kathiawad India, only one year before Gandhi was born. Both Rajchandra and Gandhi belonged to *Bania* families, shared Gujarati culture, and had strong religious backgrounds. Rajchandra's father Ravjibhai was a Vaishnava and mother Devabai, a devout Jain. When still young, his grandfather took him (Rajchandra) to guru Ramdas, who initiated him as a Vaishnava by putting a *Kanthi* around his neck. Little did the guru or others knew that the boy later would not believe in such rituals.³

At the tender age of seven a Jain householder named Amichand who showered affection on him, died of a snake-bite. Secretly Rajchandra went to the cremation ground and was shocked and

saddened to see the body of Amichand being cremated on the pyre. This incident put Rajchandra in a deep reflective mood. The veil of ignorance suddenly lifted from his inner sight and he was able to see his previous births and eventual death in this life. This was an eye opening experience for a boy at the tender age of seven.⁴

He studied in a Gujarati school where he surprised everyone through his brilliance and extremely high capacity to learn the lessons quickly. He completed his junior level classes (first four grades) within two years. At the age of thirteen, he was sent to Rajkot to study in an English medium school, but was called back to help his father in his business.⁵

Rajchandra's spiritual inclinations/interests started very early in his life. His mother was a deeply religious Jain votary. A large number of Jain families constituted his neighbourhood. A number of Jain monks visiting the area and their *Chaturmas* (rainy season halts) added a lot to his knowledge and practice of Jain way of life. As a result, he developed a strong conviction that no religion other than Jainism advocated the ideals of *Ahimsa*, love, detachment, harmony, tolerance, forgiveness, self-realization and renunciation so scientifically and in details.⁶

Highlights of Rajchandra's life

i. A Born Poet and was known as Kavi (Poet) later on

At the tender age of eight, Rajchandra started composing poetry in Gujarati language. He composed the entire texts of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in verse form within a year's time.⁷ He composed a book of 180 pages called '*Mokshamala*' having 108 discourses in just three days at the age of sixteen years and five months.⁸ He composed his most popular text '*Atmasiddhi*' with 142 verses within 1.5 hours at the age of 29.⁹ In his life, starting

from a very young age, he wrote several masterpiece works in philosophy.¹⁰

Besides the above, he wrote several other texts. About his writings, Gandhi said:

“One rare feature of his (Rajchandra’s) writings is that he always set down what he had felt in his own experience. There is in them no trace of unreality. I have never read any line by him which was written to produce an effect on others...”¹¹

Gandhi also found great solace in Rajchandra’s writings and letters, and he wrote, “I have always felt that Rajchandra’s writings breathe the spirit of Truth. He did not write a single word in order to show off his knowledge. His aim in the writings was to share his inward bliss with his readers. I am sure that anyone who wishes to free himself from inner conflicts and eager to know his duty in life will gain much from Rajchandra’s writings, whether such a reader is a Hindu or belong to another faith.”¹²

ii. Extraordinary Memory and Touch Sense

From 1883 he started demonstrating his extraordinary capability to repeat words / verses instantaneously. Gradually he reached the stage of repeating hundred words. At the age of 19, Dr. Peterson in a public meeting in Bombay awarded the titles “Golden wheel and *Sakshat Saraswati* or Goddess of Knowledge”. Similarly he had an extraordinary faculty by which, through his touch, he could identify the objects completely. In the same public meeting in Bombay, he could tell the names & authors of twelve religious texts blindfolded just by his touch of these books.¹³ Gandhi tested these traits of Rajchandra by reciting a long list of local and foreign words to Rajchandra. Rajchandra’s limited education had been in the vernacular language and he had little knowledge of English or other foreign languages, yet slowly and steadily he was able to

repeat back all the words spoken by Gandhi in the order uttered. That feat of Rajchandra impressed Gandhi, but he was in for greater surprise later due to Rajchandra's non-orthodox orientations, independence of thought, simple and detached life, wide knowledge of scriptures, spotless character and burning desire for soul liberation.¹⁴

However Rajchandra considered these capabilities as an obstruction to his practice of self-realization. Hence he did not continue with them further.

iii. Detached Life as a Householder

At the age of twenty, he married Zabakbai, talented daughter of Popatlal Jagjiwan Das Mehta, the youngest brother of Revashankar Jagjiwan Das Mehta. He also consummated his marriage and raised family. In this alliance also, he said that it was done more due to wishes and insistence of family members. After one year of his marriage, he wrote "I do not have the slightest inclination to develop any attachment or aversion towards women. But I am married as a result of my past karmas" (Letter 78). In letter no. 113 after one year, he wrote, "After experiencing the intricacies of reality (*Tattva*), as a householder, he lived the life of a completely detached person and a true *Mumukshu* (Seeker of God). Once wrote in his diary: "Do your business in a spiritual manner and maintain unattached attitude. Do whatever is necessary for it. As far as possible, do not annoy the person you have to deal with and should your renunciation be unpleasant to him, part with him without harming him in any way, benefiting him to your utmost capacity, and nursing such desire forever for the future."¹⁵ About living the life of detached householder, he said, "Oh, there is nothing difficult in it. It is quite simple, just like sitting under the shadow of a tree, one, who sits under the cooling shade, does not get attached to it and

does not remain sitting under it. Similar is the case with worldly sojourn and its affairs.”¹⁶

He was inclined more to free himself from the life of householders.

iv. A Successful and Trust Worthy Trader

At the age of twenty one, he came to Bombay to work as a partner in the diamond trading firm of the Revashankar Mehta. Even during his business life, he was always more inclined towards self-realization. Hence he used every spare moment to contemplate on the self, read holy texts or talk / write to satisfy his inquisitiveness.

He was considered as the most trustworthy diamonds and pearls merchant. Once a younger brother of an Arab pearls merchant sold his pearls to Shrimad (a title used for Rajchandra) at a certain rate. When his elder brother knew this he scolded the younger brother for selling the pearls at a much lower rate than expected. Thereon the younger brother returned to Shrimad and narrated to him what his brother thought about the transaction. Shrimad immediately returned the pearls and cancelled the deal as it was done by mistake by the younger brother of the pearls merchant.¹⁷ Once another Arab trader made a big deal (to sell diamonds) to Rajchandra and the same was even documented. However the prices of diamonds went up significantly even before the delivery could be affected. Knowing this, Rajchandra himself went to the trader and tore the contract document saying that the contract would cause havoc (Rs. 60-70,000 at that time) to you. He further said to the trader, ‘I can desire milk but not the blood.’¹⁸ This shows his honesty and compassion towards all.

Shri Maneklal Ghelabhai while appreciating Shrimad’s business acumen writes that even foreign customers used to praise the

excellent business organization and exactness of Shrimad.¹⁹ Gandhi also watched him deal with his customers and his impression was that Rajchandra was always upfront in the dealings and the terms and conditions were firm and clear. If the other party tried to be clever with him, Rajchandra saw through it instantly and would not tolerate such behaviour. On such occasions, he used to knit his brows and one could see a flash of redness in his eyes.²⁰

v. High Level of Intellect and Detachment

He developed extra ordinary power to forecast future events on the basis of their present status, e.g. in 1897 he saw thick black clouds at 4 PM in Morvi. Seeing the same he forecasted dry-spell during the coming rainy season and the same actually happened.

He accepted whatever he was served for meals. His dress was simple (*Dhoti, Kurta, Angarakhan* and a turban). His dress was not strikingly clean and was same everywhere. He used to walk slowly and anyone could see he was deeply absorbed in his own thoughts.

Even though, he was introvert from his childhood (i.e. one who was always interested in experiencing and knowing the entity which causes activity and the individual exists, knows and acts), still he performed external activities diligently. Some of his thoughts are:

- i. Except one eternal being and his wealth of life, I have no other inkling. It is difficult for me to realize whether I am with body or without it. (letter no. 225)
- ii. I have firm experience that one can be totally detached even with his body because I am also going to attain this state. This is what the eternal soul says and it is so. (letter no. 334)

- iii. Bear all things, seeing them always under the aspect of soul, of *Atmabhava*. Keep yourself engaged in religious devotion, in spiritual meditation, *Dharmadhyana*.²¹
- iv. One should not feel either happiness or unhappiness about the objects or relatives or family ties or friendship in this world.²²
- v. The one religion, *Dharma*, in which we all believe, enjoins us to be led by the sole desire to attain the state of absolute tranquility and rest assured that this state will most deeply felt desire.²³
- vi. I do not dwell in this or that sect; I abide only in the soul, the *Atma*. Never forget this.²⁴
- vii. Strain your physique to seek its inner essence and walk away throwing aside this external frame. Drive out the thief called attachment to the objects of the senses and passions, burnt it, blast it, and attain peace, be free, be tranquil. Let there be abiding peace. Hurry up; do not waste any time.²⁵

He used to find time from his business in Bombay to go secretly to secluded places (like Edar, Khambat, Nadiad etc) for meditating on his self. Still his followers would reach there to listen to his discourses. Such discourses are published in *Updeshchhaya*, *Updeshanandth*, *Vyakryansar* etc.

vi. A Great Practitioner of Ahimsa

He was a person of sound principles and followed *Ahimsa* in all walks of life while continuing his search for Truth. His *Ahimsa* was not of the crude type observed by Jain votaries who set up sheds for aged cattle and protect insect life. On the contrary his *Ahimsa* included the entire humanity and the tiniest insects as well. All his actions, be they in business, family or personal life reflected his adherence to *Ahimsa*.

vii. Liberation / Moksha

He said, “*Moksha* or liberation is the absolute liberation of self from anger, conceit, greed, and other nescient propensities that bind the soul with earthly coils and other limitations. There is a natural urge in life to be free from all bondages and limitations. A close consideration of this urge makes truth of the above saying of the wise men to be self-evident.”²⁶

Jina / Arihanta / Tirthankara attains this state immediately on his *Nirvana* (death). The *Jina*, while still alive, has his soul already enjoying that state and such a person is called *Muktapurusha* as he will not suffer any flaws including sickness. Based on this description, Gandhi said that Rajchandra had not yet attained that state but was very close to it.

Rajchandra became a profound thinker and a great teacher of Jain philosophy through his penance, scriptural readings and recitations and self-reflections. According to Gandhi Rajchandra had gained an inner vision through which he could discriminate between soul and matter.²⁷ Gandhi again wrote, “Yet, I never could regard Rajchandra as perfect man, but, of all the men I know, he appeared to me to be nearer perfection than the rest.”²⁸

‘Atmasiddhi’, His Most Popular Book

The great Jain scholar Pandit Sukhalal, in his article to *Prabuddha Jivan*, dated 01.01.1954, rightly calls *Atmasiddhi* ‘*Atmopanishad*’.

Atmasiddhi Shastra, a compact and profound composition in 142 verses of Shrimad Rajchandra (1868-1901) in Gujarati, explains the fundamental philosophical truths about the human soul and the method of its liberation. There is no sectarianism in it, its appeal is universal. It analyses the causes and effects of the soul’s delusion and it suggests the way to dispel it and attain the

state of self-realization. It does not talk of heaven and hell or of mythical nothings. It records the facts as they are and suggests the ways to improve them. It is thoroughly realistic and practical for all who have the courage and patience to follow its teaching. That a spiritual *Sadhak* is many a times misled by his own prejudices and by the overpowering effect of the beliefs and practices of the people around him, that real spiritual inwardness and the help of a proper Guru to guide the spiritual aspirant to his goal are Soul's liberation, are some of the facts clearly stated in the *Atmasiddhi*.²⁹

It is very difficult to complete one's say in spiritual matter in a short composition, but Shrimad Rajchandra has achieved it with mastery in *Atmasiddhi*. He knew well that silence is more eloquent than speech, that language is inadequate to express fully the spiritual experience and teaching; such compositions are prepared by great souls to advise the people around them in the language they are accustomed to understand. *Atmasiddh Shastra* is one such composition. Shrimad Rajchandra lays special emphasis on personal effort and Guru's guidance in the path of Self-realization. He assures the spiritual aspirant of the success in his struggle, provided that he follows the correct method of self-purity laid down in *Atmasiddhi*.

The pattern of *Atmasiddhi* differs from other writings of Rajchandra. This work, composed in short and simple words, devoid of logical concepts and inferences and filled with the beneficial and useful matter to everyone from child to the aged, became very popular.

In this way, we may say that, in modern times, Shrimad Rajchandra had taught the path of Self-realization to the aspirants in a simple language, who had strayed from the true path of Lord Mahavira. He had almost attained self-realization

and his living was saintly without any attachment not only for a position, wealth, and fame but for his body. He was friendly to all. In 142 stanzas of the *Atmasiddhi*, he has taught the path, the way to self-realization i.e. the true meaning of life.

Rajchandra renounced the worldly life in 1899 after seeking permission from his mother and other family members. He lost weight very fast from 132 pounds to 45 pounds only while he was observing *Santhara* (pious rituals for end of life in Jainism) as per Jain vows. When he was lying on his deathbed in extreme agony, he was not mindful of his extreme pain and only eagerly awaited a vision of God.³⁰ Even during this period, he used to give solace to his brother and family saying, Mansukh (his younger brother): ‘Be peaceful and composed, the soul is eternal. I am in deep meditation of my soul.’ He died at a very young age of 33 only in 1901 AD. The admirers of Rajchandra started asserting that he was a *Muktapurusha* and the twenty fifth *Tirthankara*.³¹

Rajchandra was a prominent Jain philosopher, practitioner and hence a true teacher. He left behind a rich spiritual legacy that shines to date. His life was his message and he served as a role model to many seekers of Truth, including Gandhi. As a memorial to him series of holy texts are being published. Also an *Ashram* in Agas was established in 1911 A. D. which has now become almost a village. His followers have set up a number of organizations throughout India and even abroad to propagate his legacy.

Thus anyone who looked up to his life, found that it was easier to control worldly yearnings, avoid sensual pleasures, live a life away from body needs, and devote concertedly to the spiritual pursuits.³²

Rajchandra's Interaction with Gandhi

Upon his return from England in 1891 after finishing the degree in law, Gandhi met Rajchandra for the first time in Bombay. Rajchandra was twenty three and Gandhi was twenty two years old then.³³ Gandhi narrated that the ship from England arrived late in the night (on 6 July 1891) and Gandhi's elder brother had come to receive him at the dock in the Bombay. Since it was late hour, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, a family friend, suggested that Gandhi and his brother should stay with him for the night at his residence (now, the Bombay Gandhi museum, Manibhavan). It was there that Rajchandra was introduced to Gandhi with the remarks that he was a poet, a *Shatavadhani* (one who can recite hundred words after listening for the first time), a partner in the family jewellery business, a wise man of spiritual knowledge, one who could attend to numerous tasks simultaneously, and who had a remarkable memory.

While living in Bombay Gandhi used to visit Rajchandra frequently at his place of business and at home. Gandhi noticed that young people showered upon Rajchandra considerable respect and reverence. Amidst his business and at home Rajchandra stayed calm and conducted work and home life in the spirit of detachment and without the least of agitation. In his spare time he was busy reading scriptures, writing prose, poetry, songs and spiritual comments in his diary,³⁴ or simply meditating on matters of spiritual importance. Gandhi mentioned that there was no business or other selfish tie that bound him to Rajchandra and yet he enjoyed the closest association with him and found his talks of absorbing interest. Gandhi was convinced that Rajchandra would confide in him his innermost thoughts and would never willingly lead him astray.³⁵

Rajchandra could converse with Gandhi with ease on matters pertaining to religion and philosophy. Initially the relation

between them was that of friends, but gradually it changed to that of a teacher and a disciple. On many occasions Gandhi sought Rajchandra's advice on religious / spiritual matters of importance to him and was satisfied with his responses and the advice he received from him. Of particular note was the advice Gandhi received from Rajchandra when he was in South Africa and his Christian and Muslim friends were pressing him to convert to Christianity or Islam. Gandhi was bewildered and had started wondering if Hindu religion was suitable enough to meet his religious needs. He corresponded with his friends in England and India to seek their advice. He made a questioner of 27 questions (these 27 questions and their answers by Rajchandra are given in Appendix-IV) and mailed to his friends from different religions in India and England. He also expressed the difficulty to Rajchandra in a letter and got his response promptly. Thereafter Gandhi wrote two more letters to Rajchandra. Gandhi says: "...I entered into correspondence with every person in India in whom I had some trust, Raychandbhai being the chief among them."³⁶ The concluding remark in Rajchandra's letter was: "On a dispassionate view of the question I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity,"³⁷ that remark cleared all doubts of Gandhi and he decided to remain within the folds of Hindu religion in which he was born.³⁸

Rajchandra gave Gandhi 'peace of mind' in his time of spiritual turmoil and gave him the reassurance that Hinduism could give him 'what he needed'. He no longer had to consider changing his faith. Gandhi says, 'I became convinced that those (religious ideas) we can accept are found in Hinduism. Raychandbhai was responsible for bringing me to this position. The reader can thus imagine how much my respect for him must have increased.'³⁹ In a letter to his friend Henry Polak, Gandhi recommended that everyone at the Phoenix Settlement should read Tolstoy and that

the Gujaratis among them should also read Rajchandra because: “The more I consider his life and his writings, the more I consider him to have been the best Indian of his time. Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. The books I have read have afforded me the highest solace. They should be read over and over again. So far as English book was concerned, Tolstoy is incomparable in my opinion in chastity of thought. His definition of purpose of life is unanswerable and easy to understand. Both *Kavi* and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached.”⁴⁰ At first Gandhi felt superior to Rajchandra because he had not gone to college studied abroad, just as in Calcutta a few years earlier Narendranath Dutt (later Swami Vivekananda), a student of Western philosophy at Scottish Church college succumbed to the superior wisdom and spiritual magnetism of the self-educated mystic Sri Ramkrishna, so the anglicized young Gandhi felt himself irresistibly attracted to the saintly Rajchandra.⁴¹

Rajchandra’s influences on Gandhi’s life, thought, spiritual pursuits, and reform endeavors are many; however the primary ones are:

- a. Vow of *Brahmacharya*
- b. Dietetic Experiments
- c. Simplicity
- d. Religious Equanimity
- e. *Aparigraha*
- f. Compassion
- g. *Dharma*
- h. Spiritual Yearning
- i. Service to Humanity and Self

The impact of Rajchandra will be discussed at appropriate places. The influences of Rajchandra on Gandhi’s life and endeavours have been many more. Hardly there is any area of

Gandhi's life and pursuit which were not directly or indirectly impacted by Rajchandra and such influences have been deep, profound, and encompassing.⁴² He died at a very young age of 33 only; Gandhi had ranked him the highest for the spot of a religious *Guru*.

Gandhi's Twenty seven Questions to Rajchandra and his Replies⁴³

Rajchandra was the spiritual mentor/solace of Mahatma Gandhi. Whenever Gandhi was in doubt and unable to contact Rajchandra personally, he used to write his queries in a letter seeking Rajchandra's views and guidance. Prominent twenty seven questions Gandhi asked during his stay in South Africa and England along with Rajchandra's responses are given below:

Q.1.0 What is the Soul? Does it perform *Karmas* (actions)? Do past actions impede its progress or not?

A.1.1 As there are physical objects like a pot, piece of cloth, etc., so there is an entity called the *Ātmā* (Soul) whose essence is consciousness. The former are impermanent. They cannot exist through all time in the same form. On the other hand, *Ātmā* is an imperishable entity which exists eternally in the same form. Anything which is not the product of a combination of other elements is imperishable. We cannot think of the *Ātmā* as being such a product, for, no matter in how many thousand different ways we combine material substances, such combinations cannot possibly produce life and consciousness. Every one of us can know from experience that by combining several elements we cannot produce in the compound a property which is not present in any of those elements. The differentiator of physical substances is the absence of consciousness in them. If we change the forms of such substances and combine them, or if they change and combine by chance, the products will be of the same kind as they are; that is, they will be of a material nature and will

not have consciousness as their essence. It is not possible, then, that the *Ātmā*, which the seers describe as having consciousness as its essential character, can be produced by any combination of the elements (earth, water, air, space) of which physical substances like a pot, a piece of cloth, etc., are composed. *Ātmā* has consciousness as its essential character, whereas material substances are characterized by its absence. These are the distinguishing natures of the two. This and a thousand other reasons prove *Ātmā* to be imperishable. Further reflection on the subject enables us to realize that the *Ātmā* from its nature is imperishable. There is, therefore, no error or logical difficulty in believing that *Ātmā*, the existence of which is the cause of our experiencing happiness and suffering which also withdraws itself from either, and which is conscious of something which thinks and impels, is characterized by awareness as its essential nature and that, in virtue of this nature, it is an imperishable entity which exists eternally; on the contrary, belief in the *Ātmā* has this merit of accepting truth.

A.1.2 *Ātmā* in its pure conscious state, i.e. in the state of self-realization, is the *Kartā* (creator) of its own inherent characteristics of knowledge, perception and *Samādhī*. In a state of ignorance, it is the *Kartā* of the emotions of anger, love of honour, attachment, greed, etc., and when enjoying the fruits of these emotions, becomes, as the occasion may require, the *Kartā* of physical objects like a pot, a piece of cloth etc., that is, it is not the creator of the original substance of those objects, but is only the *Kartā* of the action of imposing some form on it. This latter state is described in Jainism as *karma*, and in *Vedānta* as illusion or in other similar terms. If we reflect carefully on the matter, we shall clearly see that *Ātmā* cannot be the *Kartā* of physical objects or emotions like anger, that it is *Kartā* only of the state of self-realization.

A.1.3 The *Karmas* performed while in the state of ignorance are like seed in the beginning and grow into a tree in course of time; in other words, *Ātmā* has to suffer the consequences of those *karmas*. Just as contact with fire produces the experience of heat, the natural end of which is pain, so *Ātmā*, being the *Kartā* of emotions of anger, etc., has to suffer as consequence i.e. pain in the form of birth, old age and death. You should ponder well over these problems with a detached mind and if you have any doubts please rewrite to me. It is the detached mind which gives strength for abstinence and control and ultimately guides *Ātmā* to *nirvana*.

Q.2.0 What is God? Is He the creator of the universe?

A.2.1 You, I and others are souls suffering from the bondage of *karmas*, i.e. our souls are in bondage of foreign matter and foreign impulses. The soul's existence in its natural state, that is, in freedom from *Karmas* and purely as *Ātmā* is the state of being *Īśvara* (God). That which has the *Aiśvarya* (wealth) of knowledge, etc., may be described as *Īśvara* (God). This *Īśvara-hood* is the natural state of the *Ātmā*, which is not revealed when it is engaged in *Karmas*. When *Ātmā* however, realizes that being engaged in *karma* is not its real nature and fixes its attention on itself, then alone do omniscience, power etc., manifest themselves in it and we can see nothing among all the objects in the universe with greater power than *Ātmā*'s. It is, therefore, my positive belief that *Īśvara* (God) is another name for *Ātmā* and does not signify a different being of greater power.

A.2.2 *Īśvara* is not the creator to the universe. All elements of nature, like atoms, space, etc. are eternal and uncreated. They have got their own substratum. They cannot be created from substances other than themselves. If it is stated that they came into being from *Īśvara*, that, too, does not seem sound because if we believe that *Īśvara* is a spirit, how can atoms, space, etc.,

come into being from Him? It is impossible that matter can come into existence from that which is spirit. If *Īśvara* is regarded as material, He will then lose His *Īśvara-hood*; also, a spiritual entity like the soul cannot come into being from such an *Īśvara*. If we regard Him as being both matter and spirit, that only means that we are pleased to call the world, which is both matter and spirit, by another name, *Īśvara*. Instead of doing that, it is better to call the world the world: If we hold that atoms, space, etc., are imperishable entities, and that *Īśvara* only awards the fruits of *Karma*, this too, cannot be proved. Convincing reasons have been given in support of this view in *Ṣaḍdarśana-Samuccaya*.

Q. 3.0 What is *Mokṣa* (liberation)?

A.3.0 While *Ātmā* is in the state of ignorance, characterized by anger, conceit, and greed etc. that bind the soul with earthly coils and other limitations. There is a natural urge in life to be free from all bondage and limitations. This state of total freedom from bondage and limitations is described by seers as *Mokṣa*. A close consideration of this urge makes truth of the above saying of the wise men to be self-evident.

Q.4.0 Is it possible for a person to know for certain, while he is still living, whether or not he will attain *Mokṣa*?

A.4.0 If our arms have been tightly bound with a rope wound several times round them and if the twists of the rope are loosened one after another, we feel the loosening of each twist and in the end become conscious of the rope having been removed. Similarly *Ātmā*, which is bound with various kinds of nescient emotions (the products of ignorance), being slowly and slowly released from them, the latter becomes conscious of progressing towards *moksha*, and when the bonds are about to fall off, then *Ātmā* shines in its luster untarnished by ignorance. As soon as there is complete extinction of these nescient forces, *Ātmā*, while still dwelling in this body, becomes conscious of its

pure essence and of its absolute otherness and freedom from all relations. In other words, it is possible to experience the state of *Mokṣa* even while living.

Q.5.0 It is said in scriptures that after his death, a man may, according to his actions, be reborn as an animal, a tree or even a stone. Is this a fact?

A.5.0 After death the soul leaves the body. It attains a state according to the merit it has earned through its actions. In that state it may be born even as a lower creature, or may have even to assume a body of earth and, devoid of the other four senses suffer the fruits of its *Karma* through the sense of touch alone. It does not mean, however, that it becomes pure stone or earth. The soul assumes a body of stone, but, even then, it exists as soul, though its existence is not manifest to us. Since in that condition soul does not possess other senses besides the touch sense, it is called *Pr̥thvī-kāya-jīva* and it is *Eka-indriya*. In the course of time, the soul leaves such a body after it has enjoyed the fruits of its *karmas* and then the stone material exists merely as an magma of atoms and, because the soul has left it, does not possess the instincts of hunger, sex, fear and accumulation. In other words, the idea is not that stone which is pure matter, becomes a soul. It is in order to enjoy the fruits of those *Karmas* which, because of their hard nature, compels the soul to take on a body possessing *Eka-indriya* (only one sense), the sense of touch the other senses remaining unmanifest, that it is born in *Pr̥thvī-kāya* (an earth-body); it does not, however, become pure earth or stone. The body is like a garment to the soul, and is not its essence.

The answer to **Q.6.0** is contained in the reply given above as also the answer to **Q.7.0** which is that earth or stone as such cannot be the *Kartās* of any *Karma*. It is the soul which has entered them and lives in them that is the *Kartā* of *Karmas*, and even so,

the relation between the two is like milk and water. Just as, even when they are mixed, milk is milk and water is water, so also the soul through the binding effect of its *Karmas* which confines it to the possession of one sense only, seems to have become stone or mere matter, but, in its essential nature, it is a soul and even in that state it possesses the instincts of hunger, fear etc., though they remain unmanifest.

Q.8.0 What is *Ārya Dharma*? Do all Indian religions originate from the *Vedas*?

A.8.1 In defining *Ārya Dharma*, everyone has his own religion in view. Commonly a Jain describes Jainism, a Buddhist describes Buddhism and a *Vedānti* describes Vedanta as *Ārya Dharma*. Thus it has become a common practice. But seers describe only that *Arya* or noble path as *Ārya Dharma* which enables the soul to realize its true nature, and rightly so.

A.8.2 It is impossible that all religions had their origin in the *Vedas*. I know from experience that great souls like the Jain *Tirthankars* have revealed knowledge of a thousand times deeper import than what the *Vedas* contain. I, therefore, believe that, since something imperfect cannot be the origin of a perfect thing, we are not justified in asserting that all religions had originated from the *Vedas*. We may believe that Vaishnavism and other sects had their origin in the *Vedas*. It seems that the latter existed before the time of the Buddha and Mahavir, the last teacher of Jainism; it also seems likely that they are really ancient works. But we cannot say that only that which is ancient is true or perfect, or that what came later is necessarily untrue or imperfect. Apart from this, the ideas propounded in the *Vedas* and in Jain doctrines have existed from the beginning of time; only the outward forms changed. There is no totally new creation or absolute destruction. Since we may believe that the ideas propounded by the *Vedas* and in the doctrines of Jainism and

other religions have existed from the beginning of time, where is the room for controversy? All the same, it is only right that you and I and others should reflect and consider which of these systems of ideas has more power to make us achieve our aspirations of life.

Q.9.0 Who composed the *Vedas*? Are they *Anādi* (eternal)? If so, what does *Anādi* (eternal) mean?

A.9.1 The *Vedas* were probably composed a long time ago.

A.9.2 Any scripture in the shape of a book cannot be *Anādi* (eternal); but with respect to the ideas propounded in them, all scriptures are eternal, for there have been souls at all times who taught them in one form or another. It cannot be otherwise. The emotions of anger, etc., are eternal and so are those of forgiveness, etc. The way of violence, too, is eternal, as is the path of non-violence. The point worth consideration is its value, i.e. how far it is useful for the living beings. Undoubtedly both are eternal, truth as well as untruth, but sometimes untruth takes upper hand and at others truth comes out triumphant.

Q.10.0 Who is the author of the *Gītā*? Is God its author? Is there any evidence that He is?

A.10.1 The replies given above partly answer this question; if by God we mean a person who has attained illumination i.e. perfect illuminations then we can say that the *Gītā* was composed by God. But if the conception of God is taken to mean eternal, inactive, and all-pervading entity like the space, then of course it becomes quite impossible to conceive that such a God ever composed the *Gītā* or any other book. For, writing a book is an ordinary activity undertaken at a particular point in time and is not eternal.

A.10.2 The *Gītā* is believed to be the work of Veda Vyas and, since Lord Kṛṣṇa had propounded this teaching to Arjuna, He is said to be its real author. This may be true. The work is indeed great and whatever teachings are contained in it those come down to us from eternity, but it is not possible that these same verses have existed from the beginning of time. Nor is it likely that they were composed by God who does nothing. They have to be composed only by an embodied soul, who acts. In light of the above discussion, there is no harm, therefore, in saying that a perfectly illuminated person is God, and that a *Śāstra* taught by him is one revealed by God.

Q.11.0 Does any merit accrue from the sacrifice of animals or other things?

A.11.0 It is always sinful to kill an animal whether to give it as an offering in sacrifice or to injure it in any way, even if this is done for the purpose of a sacrifice or living in the very abode of God. The practice of giving gifts at the time of a sacrifice does earn some merit, but since this is accompanied with violence it, too, deserves no commendation.

Q.12.0 If a claim is put forward that a particular religion is the best, may we not ask the claimant for proof?

A12.0 If no proof is required, or if any such claim is made without proof in its support, reason and unreason; then both *Dharma* and *Adharma* will have to be accepted as “the best”. Only the test of proof can show what the best is and what is not. That religion alone is the best and is truly strong, which is most helpful in destroying the bondage of worldly life and can establish us in the state which is our essence (realizing pure and peaceful state of being).

Q.13.0 Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think of it?

A.13.0 I know something in general about Christianity. Even a little study of the subject will show that no other country has gone so deep as India and discovered a religious path which can rival the one discovered by the great seers of India. Among the other religions, Christianity asserts the eternal subjection of the soul, even in the state of *Mokṣa*. It does not give a true description of the eternal state of the soul, of the law of *Karma* or of the cessation of *Karma*, and I am not likely, therefore, to accept the view that it is the best religion. It does not seem to offer a satisfactory solution of the problems which I have mentioned. I am not making this statement in a sectarian spirit. If you wish to ask more questions on this, you may, and then it will be possible for me to resolve your doubts still further.

Q.14.0 The Christians hold that the *Bible* is divinely inspired and that Christ was an incarnation of God, being his son. Was He?

A.14.0 This is a matter of faith and cannot be proved rationally. What I said above concerning the claim that the *Gītā* and the *Vedas* are divinely inspired may be applied to the *Bible* too. It is impossible that God, who is free from birth and death will incarnate Himself as a human being; for it is the changes of attachment, aversion, etc., which are the cause of birth and it does not appeal to reason that God, who has no attachment and aversion, will take birth as a human being. The idea that Jesus is, and was, the son of God may perhaps be acceptable if we interpret the belief as an allegory; otherwise, tested by the canons of reason, it is difficult to accept. How can we say that God, who is free, has or had a son? If we assert that He has or had one, what was the manner of the son's birth? If we believe that both God and His son are eternal, how can we explain their being father and son? These and other objections deserve

examination. If we reflect over them, I think the belief will not be found acceptable.

Q.15.0 Were all the *Old Testament* prophecies fulfilled in Christ?

A.15.0 It does not alter the position. It may be so. Still we have to judge the validity of testimony of both the Testaments. Nor is the act of the prophecies having been fulfilled a sufficiently strong reason to justify us in asserting that Jesus was an incarnation of God, for the birth of a great soul can also be predicted with the help of astrology. It is also possible that Jesus' birth might have been prophesied by some person by intuition, but in the absence of cogent proof it cannot be accepted. And such soothsayers cannot be held to be omniscient teachers. Such a prophecy appears to be based more on faith than any reasoning, for there are so many difficulties in the way of its being accepted as true.

Q.16.0 There are so many miracles about Jesus narrated in *Bible*. What do you say about them?

A.16.0 In this question you ask about the miracles attributed to Jesus Christ. If it is said that he put a soul back into the body which it had left, or that he put another soul in its place, this could not possibly have been done. If it could be done, the law of *Karma* would lose its meaning. Apart from this, mastery of yoga techniques enables a person to perform certain miracles, and if it is claimed that Jesus had such powers we cannot assert that the claim is false or impossible. Such yogic powers are of no consequence compared to the power of *Ātmā*; the latter is infinitely greater than the powers attained by yoga. Glory and grandeur of soul is infinite. You may better discuss this point when we meet.

Q.17.0 Can anyone remember his past lives or has an idea of his future lives?

A.17.0 Yes, this is quite possible. One whose knowledge has become pure may be able to do so. We can infer the possibility of rain from certain signs in the clouds: similarly, from the actions of a soul in this life, we can understand, perhaps partially, their causes in its previous existence. We can also judge from the nature of the actions what results they are likely to have. On further reflection, we can also know what kind of a future existence the soul is likely to have or what kind of a past existence it had. The more minutely we go into the details of life, the more vivid picture of future and previous births would come to light.

Q.18.0 If yes, who can?

A.18.0 So far this question is concerned; the answer to this is contained in the reply above.

Q.19.0 You have given the names of some who have attained *Mokṣa*. What is the authority for this statement?

A.19.0 If you have addressed this question personally to me, I would like to answer this way: “A man who has risen above his mundane state develops in him such a divine life that his very words, looks, and presence inspire in others the same sort of feelings of peace, bliss, and excellence as felt by him.” By this it is natural to infer that he has attained *Mokṣa*. Besides my own experiences, in most cases, we can also get from *Śāstras* reasons in support of our conclusion.

Q.20.0 What makes you say that even Buddha did not attain *Mokṣa*? (This question is not given in Satish Sharma’s book “Gandhi’s Teachers: Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta”)

A.20.0 On the basis of the teachings in Buddhist scriptures. If his views were the same as these, then they seem to have been

inconsistent with one another, and that is not a mark of perfect illumination. If a person has not attained perfect illumination his attachments and aversions are not likely to disappear so long as he is in such a state; earthly existence is a necessary consequence. One cannot, therefore, claim such a person to have attained absolute *Mokṣa*. Moreover, it is impossible for you and me to know from independent sources that the Buddha's views were different from those contained in the teachings attributed to him. Even so, if it is asserted that his views were in fact different and proof given in support of the assertion, there is no reason why we should not accept that as possible.

Q.21.0 What will finally happen to this world?

A.21.0 It does not seem rationally possible to me that all souls will attain absolute *Mokṣa* or that the world will perish completely. To me, the universe is a running concern. It is a system of double traffic of birth and death, of integration and disintegration. It will go on to be what it is today. Some aspect of it may undergo transformation and almost disappear, and another may grow; such is the nature of the world that, if there is growth in one sphere, there is decline in another. Having regard to this fact, and after deep reflection, it seems impossible to me that this world will perish completely. By "world" we do not mean this earth only.

Q.22.0 Is there anything like total destruction (*Pralaya*) of the world?

A.22.0 If by *Pralaya* is meant total destruction that is not possible, for complete destruction of all that exists is impossible. If by *Pralaya* is meant the merging of everything in God, the belief is accepted in some doctrines but that does not seem possible to me. For, how can all objects and all souls arrive in an identical state so that such a thing may happen? If they ever do, then diversity cannot develop again. If we accept the possibility

of *Pralaya* on the supposition of un-manifest diversity in the souls and manifest sameness, how can diversity exist except through connection with a body? If we believe that such connection exists in the state of *Pralaya*, we shall have to believe further that all souls will have one sense only and in doing so we shall reject, without reason, the possibility of other modes of existence. In other words, we shall have to suppose that a soul which had attained a higher state and was about to be free for ever from the contingency of existence with one sense only had none the less to be in such a state. This and many similar doubts arise. A *Pralaya* involving all souls is impossible. In short, the conception of total extinction of the universe is altogether untenable.

Q.23.0 Will the world be morally better off in the future?

A.23.0 It would not be proper to encourage any soul which loves immorality to take wrong advantage of the answer to this question. All modes in this world, including morality and immorality, have existed from the beginning of time. But it is possible for you and me to eschew immorality and accept morality, and it is the duty of the *Ātma* to do that. It is not possible to assert that immorality will be given up by all and morality will prevail, for such an extreme state cannot come about.

Q.24.0 Can an illiterate person attain *Mokṣa* through *Bhakti* alone?

A.24.0 *Bhakti* is a cause of knowledge and knowledge of *Mokṣa*. If by an illiterate person we mean one without knowledge of letters, it is not impossible that he may cultivate *Bhakti*. Every soul has knowledge as its essence. The power of *Bhakti* purifies knowledge, and pure knowledge becomes the cause of *Mokṣa*. I do not believe that, without the manifestation of perfect knowledge, absolute *Mokṣa* is possible. Nor need I point out that

knowledge of letters is contained in perfect (spiritual) knowledge. It cannot be true that knowledge of letters is a cause of *Mokṣa* and that, without it, self-realization is not possible.

Q.25.0 Rama and Krishna are described as incarnations of God. What does that mean? Were they God Himself or only a part of Him? Can we attain salvation through faith in them?

A.25.1 I, too, am convinced that both were souls of great holiness. Each of them, being an *Ātmā*, was God. If it is a fact that all the coverings over their *Ātmā* had fallen off, there need be no dispute about their having attained absolute *Mokṣa*. I do not think that any soul can be a portion of God, for I can think of a thousand reasons against such a belief. If we believe a soul to be a portion of God, the belief in bondage and *Mokṣa* will have no meaning. For then God Himself will be the cause of ignorance, etc., and if that is true, He ceases to be God. In other words, in being regarded as Lord of the soul God actually loses something from His status. Moreover, if we believe that the soul is a portion of God, what motive will a person have to strive for anything? For in that case the soul cannot be regarded as the *Kartā* of anything. In view of this and other objections, I am not prepared to believe any soul to be a portion of God; how, then, can I believe that such was the case with great and holy souls like Rama and Krishna? There is no error in believing that these two were un-manifest states of God, but it is doubtful whether perfect Godhood had become manifest in them.

A.25.2 The question whether we can attain *Mokṣa* through faith in them can be easily answered. *Mokṣa* means absence of or deliverance from all forms of attachment, ignorance, etc. It can be attained when we cultivate faith in a person whose teaching will enable us to win such freedom from attachment and ignorance, and, reflecting on our true essence, come to have the

same faith in our *Ātmā* that we have in the teacher and identify ourselves with his personality. Worship of any kind other than this cannot win absolute *Mokṣa*. It may help one to win the means of *Mokṣa*, but even that cannot be asserted with certainty.

Q.26.0 Who were Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva?

A.26.0 It is possible that these might be representatives of the three fundamental functions of the universe namely; creation (Brahmā), maintenance (Viṣṇu) and disruption (Maheśa / Śiva). If so, their personification as deities is well and good. Or they might be allegorical names of some other trinity (such as, the three aspects of primeval Lord Vṛṣabha: first as Viṣṇu – the great ruler who laid down the foundation of state and society, secondly as Mahesh – the Mahayogi who destroyed the worlds of birth, death and old age, and thirdly as Brahma- the omniscient sage who gave the knowledge of great truths of the eternal drama of life). Taken in this way, the idea becomes intelligible. But the accounts as given in the *Purāṇas* do not at all appeal to me. My interpretation finds support for this fact also that there are many great truths which have been described in the *Purāṇas* in allegorical forms for teaching by lessons. We should try to derive the benefit from the lessons of this allegory without entering into the controversial matters about Brahma etc. To me, the allegorical interpretation looks very nice.

Q.27.0 If a snake is about to bite me, should I allow myself to be bitten or should I kill it, supposing that that is the only way in which I can save myself?

A.27.0 If I reply this question in the affirmative and simply say that let the snake bite, it would of course become a great problem. But, anyhow, for those who have realized the truth that body is a transient thing, it would not be at all reasonable to kill the creature. So my reply to this question is that those who are anxious for their spiritual good, should, when confronted with

such a situation, offer their body to the snake rather than take its life. You may well ask, well, what about those who care little for spiritual good? For such people, my simply reply is that let them wander in wretched forms like hell etc. How can one, like me, advise them to kill a snake? It is the non Aryan attitude of mind which teaches the killing of serpents or other creatures. We should ever aspire to be free from this attitude, even in dreams. Such are my answers to your questions in short and here I close my letter. *Ṣaddarśana-Samuccaya* and ponder over these questions a bit more seriously. In case you need any further information, you may please just write to me and I shall try to elucidate. The best thing of course is that we should meet and have a personal talk about these questions.

ATTACHMENT

What Gandhi said about Rajchandra

(Speech on birth anniversary of Rajchandra, Ahmedabad November 16th 1921)

Today's occasion is twice welcome as affording an opportunity for reflection over the meaning of compassion. We revere the person for honouring whose memory we have gathered here. I, too, rank myself among his adorers. A critic can never be this. - - - I assume, therefore, that only those who love the poet and hold him in reverence have come to this meeting. It is to these persons that I say that today's occasion is twice welcome.

The man in whose hallowed memory we have gathered here was the living embodiment of this religion of compassion. He understood it well and had perfected it in his life. This same compassion inspires our present activities in the country. It is not anger which prompts them. The situation as it has developed has given us sufficient reason to be angry and has hurt us deeply. But, even at this unhappy hour we pause and think how we may act so as not to hurt the opponents; how, on the contrary, we may do a good turn even to them. Non-cooperation springs from compassion and not from anger. Afraid that we may be in

the wrong, we refuse to be angry with the opponent and, instead, ourselves flee from him.

- - - I have often declared that I have learnt, and learnt much, from the lives of many persons. But it is from the Poet's life that I have learnt most. It was from his life that I understood the way of compassion. There can be no act which will not hurt the feelings of someone or another, but the pain must have been inflicted out of compassion. Two conditions have to be satisfied for this purpose:

1. We can do something which hurts someone only if it hurts us more than it hurts him.
2. Our motive must be absolutely pure. We should have no other thought in our mind than the welfare of the other person.

Let us suppose that my son is a drink-addict and a smoker and is given to dissolute ways. He asked me for some money. Till now I used to give him whatever he asked for, because I was a blind father. From my association with Raychandbhai, however, I learnt that not only should I myself not drink and smoke and live an immoral life, but that I must save others too from these things. It is, therefore, my duty to refuse to give a penny to my son, even to snatch away a wine-glass from his hand if I see him holding one. If I come to know that he keeps his liquors in a particular chest, I must burn it. If I see a wine bottle, I must smash it. The son will certainly be hurt, and he will look upon me as a heartless father. But a father who understands the meaning of compassion is not afraid of hurting his son or of being cursed by him. The way of compassion and benevolence dictates that, in such circumstances, one should snatch away the wine-bottle from the son's hand. I would not do this forcibly but, if I come to know that he keeps his liquor bottle at a particular place in the house, I would seize it from there and smash it.

Raychandbhai suggested an excellent rule of guidance in following this way, that we may not displease others in ordinary matters, may not start reproaching people over trifles in the name of the path of compassion. If we understand this simple rule, many things, which otherwise puzzle us, we would do out of deference to others. It may be I do not

understand why we should wear khadi and am in love with fine muslin; but, then, it happens that in the society in which I live all wear khadi, and we commit no wrong in wearing it. I should, then, follow society. Raychandbhai taught me this simple rule.

Once, in Bombay, we were discussing the path of compassion. The point was whether one may use leather. In the end, we both agreed that we cannot do without leather. Professions like agriculture must go on. However, if we cannot do without it altogether, we should certainly refrain from wearing on the head anything containing leather. I have always been a man who would not miss a chance for a jest. I asked him to examine the cap on his head. He was a man ever wrapped in contemplation and never thought about what he wore and how he covered himself. The fact that there was a leather-strip in his cap had entirely escaped him. But as soon as I pointed it out, he tore the piece off. I don't suppose that my argument was so cogent that it convinced him instantly. He did not argue at all. He simply thought that my motive was good and that I held him in reverence. So why should he enter into an argument with me? All he did was quietly to pull out the leather-strip and I am sure he never again thereafter wore any head-dress containing leather. - - - In this lies the greatness of great souls. Such behaviour shows that they are free from egotism. They are ready to learn even from children. It is the characteristic of great men not to mind difference of views in small matters. To those who, in the name of the religion of compassion, always differ with others in every small matter and claim to be guided the voice of conscience, I would say that they hear no such voice, or that, as in animals, the *atman* in them is not yet awake.

This is so with most of us. The difference between man and the brute is that in the former, the *atman* can wake up to the full. If we follow the world in ninety-nine things, in regard to the hundredth thing we may tell it that its way is not right. But how can a man who is at daggers drawn with the world from his birth can act with love for the world?

In most cases, we should behave as though we were inert things. The difference between wholly inert matter and living matter as practically nil. The entire world seems to be inert matter, the *atman* shines but

rarely. Those who live on a higher plane act on this principle. I saw that Raychandbhai did this.

Had he been living today, he would have certainly blessed the present movement. It is based on dharma. No man who is imbued with compassion can but join it. - - - -

Raychandbhai often used to say that he could bear being transfixed with spears, but could not bear being stabbed with the spear of the lies, the hypocrisies and the oppression which prevail in the world and of irreligion masquerading as religion. He was full of indignation over oppression and I often saw him boil over. The whole world was his kith and kin. The grief which we feel at the death of our own brother or sister, he used to experience at the existence of suffering and death in the world. If somebody argued that the people suffered for their own sins, he would ask what drove them to sin. We call the time the Age of Kali when the path of virtue is not easy but lies through hills and valleys. During this Age, virtue is a rare sight in the world and vice flourishes, masquerading as virtue. If, in such a state of affairs, we wish to follow the path of compassion, our hearts must be filled with unendurable pain. Far better, we should feel, that the body should become feeble and perish than that we should go on living in these conditions.

This seems to me the real reason why Raychandbhai died at such an early age. It is true indeed that he suffered from a disease, but the pain he felt at the sight of suffering in the world was unbearable to him. If the physical disease had been the only cause, he could have won the battle against it. But he was troubled with the thought how in these evil times one could realize the *atman*. Such a feeling is an indication of the spirit of compassion.

It is not the height of compassion to avoid killing a bug. True, a bug may not be destroyed, but, at the same time, one should see that one does not permit bugs to breed. Letting them breed is more cruel than destroying them.

All of us let them breed. Jains do that and so do I, a *Vaishnava*. - - - - -
- - The Poet used to say at times: “Had Jainism not fallen into the hands of those who are called Jains, it would have filled the world with marvel at its truths. The *Vanias* [Community |traditionally engaged in trade and commerce. Most Jains belong to this community.] Bring discredit on the truths of Jainism. They scatter corn over ant-hills. If any preparation of potato chances to get into their |mouth, they feel pricks of conscience. In such small matters, they are ever punctilious. They are welcome to be so, but those who imagine that this is the height of Jainism really stand on the lowest level of dharma. That level is for the fallen, not for the pure in heart.” Many Jains, therefore, say that Rajchandra knew nothing about dharma, that he was a hypocrite and an egotist. I know, however, that he had not a trace of hypocrisy and egotism.

Though it is true that bugs and other insects should not be killed, that is not all that the spirit of compassion means. That is only the first step. During some past age, the belief must have come to prevail that there was no sin in destroying insects to save human life. A sage may have then arisen who must have laid stress on protection of insects and proclaimed: “O fool! Do not destroy insects for preserving the transient body. Pray fervently, rather, that it may perish today rather than tomorrow.” From this sentiment arose ahimsa.

But the man who beats his wife or child, though he shrinks from killing a tiny bug, is not a Jain, nor a Hindu, nor a *Vaishnava*. He is a cipher. On this sacred day of the Poet’s anniversary, let us give up the narrow meaning of compassion and interpret the word in the broadest sense. It is a sin to hurt the feelings of a single person or to regard him as an enemy. Anyone who wants to see General Dyer hanged, or Sir Michael O’ Dwyer burnt alive, is neither a Jain, nor a *Vaishnava*, nor a Hindu. He is nobody and nothing. The very essence of ahimsa lies in burning our anger and in cleansing the soul. Who am I to judge General Dyer? I know that I am myself full of ill will. How many persons I may be murdering in my mind! What right have I to judge General Dyer? I have, therefore, resolved not to retaliate if anyone attacks me with a sword. This is the path of compassion and the underlying principle of the non-co-operation movement.

- - - There is greater sin in killing a serpent or a tiger in a human form than in killing a real serpent. We kill a tiger out of fear, not in anger. If there really is a Dharmaraja who judges our sins and good deeds, he will perhaps have pity on the person who may have killed a tiger and forgive him, because he will have only followed the natural instinct of the beast in him. One beast will have killed another. But behind the murder of a human being, there is the spirit of revenge and anger, of pride and hypocrisy. - - -

I tell Jains, and others too, that compassion does not merely mean not killing bugs, ants and other insects, though certainly they should not be killed. It also means that no soul born as a human being must be cheated. And yet what else do the businessmen do? If any Jain would show his account books to me, I would immediately prove that he was no Jain. How is the cloth, which we trade, produced? Dealers ought to consider whether the manufacture of cloth is not tainted, whether it is not true that animal fat is used in sizing cloth. It must be, besides, repugnant to businessmen to charge exorbitant rates of interest. This is not worthily done by a Jain. Dealers may reasonably add to the cost of an article one pice or two pice for their services. But why is all this cunning haggling and lying? And the interest which is charged for money lent is so cruelly high that it kills the debtor. Wherever I go, I hear complaints against *Vanias*, both Jains and *Vaishnavas*. - - -

We must cease to be unscrupulous *Vanias* and become Kshatriyas. The Vaisya's dharma does not mean doing no manual work, no ploughing, no heroism and no consideration for right and wrong. The true Vaisya, rather, shows himself heroic in his generosity and discrimination in his business; he follows the Brahmin's dharma, too, by exercising his discrimination and deciding that he may not sell liquor or fish, that he may deal only in pure khadi. We shall fall into sin if others slave for us and we merely lend money and earn interest. At least by way of *yajna*, we should do some bodily labour every day.

Primarily, the *Vania's* sphere is business, but he must also possess the qualities of the other castes. - - - But what do we find many *Vanias* doing? Most of them have engaged North Indians and Pathans as

watchmen. You may do even that; I do not mind it. If, however, you lack the strength to protect your wife and children, you had better retire into a hermit's cottage and live there as befits your dharma. It will not, then, be your duty, as *Vanias*, to come forward to protect the world. The Kshatriyas will do that whenever and wherever they find people suffering.

The biggest lesson I learnt from Rajchandrabhai's life is that a *Vania* should always live as befits a *Vania*. At present *Vanias* are not true *Vanias*. It is not necessary, for becoming true *Vanias*, to be a great pundit or read bulky volumes. Anyone who does not let himself be defiled, who observes the rules of *yama* and *niyama* [Rules of moral and ethical discipline and external religious observances], who keeps away from untruth and takes care never to do anything contrary to dharma, who has not a trace of lust in his heart and is full of the spirit of compassion, such a person will be fit for the Absolute state; the realization of that state will not be beyond his reach. That is why I do not ask you to learn Sanskrit or to read the *Bhagavati-sutra*. Whether or not you read it, I am indifferent in the matter.

- - - - Please carry home with you what you heard here today and translate it into practice in your life. You may leave here what seemed to you questionable, but forthwith start acting upon whatever you found acceptable, what pleased your ears and your heart." [From Gujarati] *Navajivan*, 24-11-1921, CWMG 21:427-35]

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- ¹ CWMG, , M. K. Gandhi , Vol. 32, p.4 and Vol. 37, p.261
 - ² M. K. Gandhi, "Foreword", in Mansukhlal Mehta, *Shrimad Rajchandra* (Bombay: Revashankar Zaveri, 1935), p.9-11
 - ³ *MGKR*, Govardhandas Brahmachari, (Ahmedabad: Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1989), p.1
 - ⁴ Mukul Kalarthi, *Shrimad Rajchandra A Biography Abridge*, Book-1, translated by Digish Mehta, (A gas: Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram, 2010), pp.5-6
 - ⁵ Mukul Kalarthi, *Shrimad Rjchandra A Biography Abridge*, op.cit, pp.8-10

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- ⁶ *MGKR*, Govardhandas Brahmachari, op.cit., pp.3-4
- ⁷ Ibid, p.2
- ⁸ Shrimad Rajchandra, *The Self Realization*, Translated by Govardhandas Brahmachari, (Agas: Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram, 1994), pp.18-19
- ⁹ Shrimad Rajchandra, *The Self Realization*, Translated by Manu Doshi, (Koba: Shrimad Rajchandra Adhyatmik Sadhana Kendra, 1994, in soft copy), p.XIV
- ¹⁰ Some of his most prominent works are: *Atmasiddhi*, *Amulya-tattva-vichar*, *Bhaktina-visa-dohra*, *Parampadprapti ki Bhavana* (*Apurva Avasar*), *Mulamarg* and *Trshanani Vichitra*. Of these *Atmasiddhi* was a masterpiece.
- ¹¹ *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. 32, op.cit, p.6
- ¹² Ibid, pp.2-3
- ¹³ Shrimad Rajchandra, *The Self Realization*, Translated by Govardhandas Brahmachari, op.cit., pp.24-27
- ¹⁴ *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 2011), p. 80
- ¹⁵ *MGKR*, Govardhandas Brahmachari, op.cit, p.6
- ¹⁶ Ibid, pp.6-7
- ¹⁷ Shrimad Rajchandra, *The Self Realization*, Translated by Govardhandas Brahmachari, op.cit., pp.34-35
- ¹⁸ Mukul Kalarthi, *Shrimad Rjchandra Inspiring Episodes of Religious Teachings, Book-5*, translated by Digish Mehta, (Agas: Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram, 2010), pp.8-9
- ¹⁹ Shrimad Rajchandra, *The Self Realization*, Translated by Govardhandas Brahmachari, op.cit., p.35
- ²⁰ *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. 32, op.cit, p.48
- ²¹ Mukul Kalarthi, *Shrimad Rjchandra A Biography Abridge*, op.cit, p.36
- ²² Ibid
- ²³ Ibid
- ²⁴ Ibid
- ²⁵ Ibid, p.28
- ²⁶ *GTR*, Satish Sharma, (Ahmedabad: Gujarat Vidyapith, 2005), p.54
- ²⁷ *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. 32, op.cit, p.2
- ²⁸ Ibid, Vol. 99, op.cit, p.99

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- ²⁹ Dinubhai Muljibhai, 'Introduction' in Shrimad Rajchandra, *The Self Realization*, Translated by Govardhandas Brahmachari, op.cit., pp.4-5
- ³⁰ M. K. Gandhi, "Foreword", in Mansukhlal Mehta, *Rajchandra*, op.cit, pp.9-11
- ³¹ S. Radhakrisnanand C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1957), pp.250-271; *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. 32, op.cit, p.2
- ³² *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. 32, op.cit, p.2
"....We are all worldly creatures, whereas Shrimad was not. We shall have to wander from existence to existence, whereas Shrimad may have only one life more to live. We are perhaps running away from *Moksha*, while Shrimad was flying towards it with the speed of wind...His writings are the quintessence of his experiences. Anyone who reads them, reflects over them and follows them in his life will find the path of *Moksha* easier; his yearnings for sense-pleasures will become disinterested in the affairs of this world, will cease to be attached to the life of the body and devote himself to the welfare of the *Atman*."
- ³³ *GTJ*, Satish Sharma, (Ahmedabad: Gujarat Vidyapith, 2011), pp.xii-xiii
- ³⁴ *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, pp. 82-83
- ³⁵ *Ibid*, p.83
- ³⁶ *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol. 32, op.cit, p.4
- ³⁷ *My.Ex.*, M. K. Gandhi, op.cit, p. 127
- ³⁸ *GTR*, Satish Sharma, (Ahmedabad: Gujarat Vidyapeeth, 2005), p.vii
- ³⁹ *Gandhi and Shrimad Rajchandra*, p.9 cited in Stephen N Hay, 'Jain Influences on Gandhi's Early thought', (New Delhi: Promilla Publishers, 1993), p.35
- ⁴⁰ Letter to H.S.L. Polak, 26 April 1909, *CWMG*, M. K. Gandhi, Vol.9 , op.cit., pp.212-3
- ⁴¹ *Mahatma Gandhi ane Srimad Rajchandra* (Mahatma Gandhi and Shrimad Rajchandra) (Ahmedabad: Oza Ayurvedic Pharmasi, 1993), p.11 cited in Stephen N. Hay "Jain Influences on Gandhi's Early Thought" in Sibnarayan Ray, ed., *Gandhi India and the World* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1970), p.31

⁴² *GTR*, Satish Sharma, op.cit, p.89

⁴³ I am grateful to the authors and publishers of the following two books which have been quoted in TOTO to prepare this appendix.

- i. Shrimad Rajchandra's Reply to Gandhi's Questions (Hindi & English Translation from Gujarati), published by Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram, Agas, 2008
- ii. Satish Sharma, Gandhi's Teachers: Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta, published by Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad, 2005

GLOSSARY OF NON-ENGLISH TERMS USED

<i>Acharya</i>	Preceptor, Head of a religious group/sub-group
<i>Ahimsa</i>	Nonviolence
<i>Ajiva</i>	Insentient beings, Non-living beings
<i>Anasakti</i>	Without infatuation, selfless
<i>Anathashram</i>	Orphanage, home for orphans
<i>Anekanta</i>	Non-Absolutism, Multiplicity of viewpoints
<i>Anekantavada</i>	Doctrine of Non-Absolutism
<i>Antaratma</i>	Inner self / inner voice, conscience, spiritually inclined human being
<i>Anuvrata</i>	Minor Vow
<i>Aparigraha</i>	Non possession, Non-acquisitiveness
<i>Asakti</i>	Infatuation, Attachment
<i>Ashram</i>	Hermitage
<i>Ashramites</i>	Inhabitants of hermitage
<i>Asteya</i>	Non-stealing
<i>Asvada</i>	Control of palate
<i>Atma</i>	Soul, Self, Sentient being, Spirit
<i>Atmadarshan</i>	Seeing the pure soul
<i>Atmanubhuti</i>	Self-realization, experience the existence of the nature of pure soul
<i>Avatar</i>	Incarnation
<i>Ayurvedic</i>	Medical science based on Vedas
<i>Bahirtama</i>	External oriented living being
<i>Bania</i>	Trader
<i>Brhmacharya</i>	Celibacy, Chastity,
<i>Chardham</i>	Four religious abodes
<i>Chaturyama</i>	Regime of four-fold vows
<i>Dharma</i>	Religion, faith, duty, nature, spiritual values

<i>Ekadash Vrata</i>	Regime of eleven vows propagated by Gandhi for Ashramites
<i>Ghi</i>	Purified butter
<i>Girmitiya</i>	Indentured, working as per an agreement/contract
<i>Harijan</i>	Lower caste people termed as untouchables
<i>Hartal</i>	Strike, stop working to enforce demands
<i>himsa</i>	Violence
<i>Ishwar</i>	God, embodied God
<i>Jina</i>	Spiritual conqueror that is completely indifferent to sensual inclinations
<i>Jiva</i>	Living being, Sentient being
<i>Khilafat</i>	Caliphate
<i>Maharambha</i>	Major Violence
<i>Mahatma</i>	Enlightened soul,
<i>Mahavrata</i>	Major Vow
<i>Moksa</i>	Final beatitude, salvation, emancipation, liberation
<i>Moksamarga</i>	Path to achieve liberation
<i>Naya</i>	Viewpoint
<i>Nayavada</i>	Doctrine of viewpoints
<i>Niggantha</i>	Recluse, Gymnosophist
<i>Nirvana</i>	Emancipation, liberation
<i>Paramatma</i>	Supreme soul embodied in human body
<i>Pratikramana</i>	Procedure for self criticism and repentance in Jainism
<i>Sadhak</i>	Seeker
<i>Samata</i>	Equanimity
<i>sammies</i>	Representation for indentured Tamils in South Africa.
<i>Sanyam</i>	Self-restraint
<i>Sanyas</i>	Retirement from householder's life, accepting life of recluse

<i>Sarvodaya</i>	Uplift of all
<i>Sat</i>	Essence, Truth, Being, reality
<i>Sati</i>	Female monk
<i>Satya</i>	Truth
<i>Satyagraha</i>	Insistence for Truth
<i>Shashtra</i>	Holy texts, canons
<i>Shram</i>	Self effort
<i>Shramana</i>	Believer of the doctrine of self-effort and practices the same, monks
<i>Siddha</i>	Liberated soul
<i>Sthitprajna</i>	Self-collected / immersed in the experience of the nature of soul
<i>Svadharmā</i>	Nature/of the soul/self, duty of the self
<i>Svādhyay</i>	Self education, self-study
<i>Swadeshi</i>	Made in own country
<i>Swaraj</i>	Self rule
<i>Syadavad</i>	Conditional dialectic
<i>Tapa</i>	Penance, Observing austerities
<i>Tirthankara</i>	Ford-maker, one who attains illuminations and guides others as well
<i>Vairagya</i>	Detachment
<i>Vanprastha</i>	Semi detached life, living in home like a semi recluse
<i>Varna</i>	Caste
<i>Vartya</i>	Practitioner of vows
<i>Vitaragata</i>	State of complete detachment from worldly inclinations

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I have perused through it. It is a classical work of literature covering in-depth a very wide range of historical / philosophical subjects, issues and ideas, and can become an important source of reference.

Dr. Y.P. Anand
former Chairman, Railway Board (Indian Railways) &
former Director, National Gandhi Museum, New Delhi

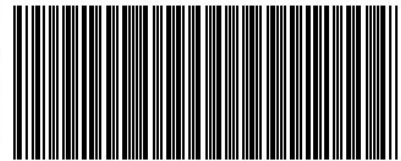
Dr. Shugan C. Jain's book clearly brings out the complex and evolutionary relationship between values and way of life propagated by Gandhi and Jainism. The book also underlines the fact that Gandhi did not accept Jainism uncritically and was vocal about the shortcomings of its ethical practices. Gandhi and Jainism is a major work enriching academic sub-disciplines of Gandhian as well as Jain Studies and would be useful to a wide array of scholars.

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