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Abstract

The present thesis summarises the argument of Satyagrahi Samajwad; attempts a critical assessment of the ideology and looks for its emancipatory potentials.

The thesis begins with a review of the historical context in which Satyagrahi Samajwad emerges. The dissertation undertakes study of the ideology of Satyagrahi Samajwad. It does not extend its scope to the overall political thought of Acharya Javedkar. Therefore Javdekar's life and work; and his overall contribution is discussed in short in the first chapter itself. It serves as a background to the discussion of the ideology. The main part of the chapter, however, consists of the review of historical context in which Javdekar's thought took shape and its influence on him as well as on the argument of Satyagrahi Samajwad. It is stated that the nationalist project; in which Javdekar wholeheartedly participated; left a deep impact on his thought. It defined the task of nation-building for him. The historical context in which Javdekar worked; helped him in defining his nation. 'Aadhunik Bharat'; the most prominent book by Javdekar, is discussed as a case in point. The book writes a history of colonial India. While defining the nation Javdekar utilises the insights of Agarkar, Tilak, Gandhi and Marx. Marx comes as the last one of the influences. Javdekar mainly appropriates the insights of Tilak and Gandhi to define the task before him. Tilak's influence is more profound in the initial stages. Javdekar relates both Agarkar and Gandhi to Tilak's politics to define the nation. Javdekar's nation is a modern nation celebrating the cultural superiority of the East. It is obvious that his concept of nation; as developed in Aadhunik Bharat; is
largely influenced by the colonial; essentialist discourse. Javdekar celebrates the vedic philosophy as the essence of Indianess and treats Satyagraha as a category that emerged out of it. Aadhunik Bharat doesn't mention the contribution of Non-Brahmin or Ambedkar movements in Maharashtra. It neglects the overall critique of caste system and thus gets limited to orientalist framework. The point proves to be crucial in overall understanding of the ideology of Satyagrahi Samajwad. It is argued in the present chapter that the influence of nationalist project on Javdekar sets major limits to Satyagrahi Samajwad.

The second chapter of the dissertation discusses the therotical framework utilised by Javdekar in developing the ideology. The framework makes use of Gandhian and Marxian thought systems. Satyagrahi Samajwad is developed as a synthesis of the two thoughts at various levels. To develop the argument Javdekar relies mainly on the Marxist analysis of the present capitalist system in the light of its materialistic interpretation of history. However Marxian formulation suffered with certain limitations according to Javdekar. He identifies them in the form of a system of relative morality and the use of violence. Gandhian concept of Satyagraha plays a corrective role towards these limitations of Marxism. Javdekar analyses the terms Satya, Ahimsa and Satyagraha in a specific moral basis to the ideology of change. Satyagraha is discussed by Javdekar as a moral-spiritual category. It is based on the elevated concept of Dharma; reinterpreted by Gandhi; as universal moral order. The ideals of 'Dharma' are incorporated in the Vedic Philoasphy also; if the Vedic Philosphy is reinterpreted to suit to the present world. Both Tilak and Gandhi perform the task by relating the ideal of Moksha to social action. Satyagraha therefore is also rooted in the vedic framework according to Javdekar. The philosophy of Gita (as
interpreted by Tilak and Gandhi) helps in situating Satyagraha within the Vedic framework. The moral spiritual category of Satyagraha; gets related to the material message of Marxism in Javdekar's Satyagrahi Samajwad. In this process, Javdekar opens up the possibilities within Marxist materialism to accommodate the elements of spirituals. Thus Satyagrahi Samajwad attempts to synthesise material and the spiritual elements. The synthesis takes place at various levels and becomes a major point in Javdekar's political thought.

In the context of the theoretical framework; the third chapter of the dissertation presents outline of the argument of Satyagrahi Samajwad. The argument consists of the theoretical statement and politics of Satyagrahi Samajwad. Javdekar's understanding and interpretation of Gandhism utilises socialist insights. The argument of Satyagrahi Samajwad reviews shortcomings of the ideology of Marxism. It attempts to overcome these with the help of Satyagraha. In this sense Satyagraha plays a corrective role in Javdekar's scheme. On the other hand Javdekar insists that Gandhism has to relate itself to the material-structural problems. He therefore attempts to develop 'Satyagrahi Krantishastra' (Satyagrahi Science of revolution) on the Marxist lines. Javdekar talks about Satyagrahi dialectics; Satyagrahi interpretation of history and a nonviolent class struggles, Satyagrahi Samajwad believes that the combination of essential insights of Gandhi and Marx would benefit both the ideologies to a large extent. Besides, it would develop an appropriate tool for achieving the immediate ideal of a decentralised society based on nonviolence and the ultimate ideal of Atmarajya-rule by autonomous individuals over themselves.
'Atmarajya' symbolises the end of state, as an external machinery of coercion over the individual. However Satyagrahi Samajwad appropriates the state agency to function against the private coercion of the capitalist economic system. For that purpose state power has to be internally as well as externally controlled by nonviolent Satyagrahi workers. Javdekar imagines two separate groups of Satyagrahi workers in the form of weak and pure Satyagrahis. Satyagrahi Samajwad allows the weak Satyagrahi workers to participate in power politics. The pure satyagrahis; or the Yatis; however would remain outside the field of power politics and would try to increase the influence of nonviolence in the overall social relations. These two agencies would rely on the spiritual strength or Atmabal within the individual.

Satyagrahi Samajwadi politics would initially result in formulation of a decentralised; socialist democracy based on nonviolence. State laws would play a crucial role at this stage both because of the imperfect human nature and the faulty social structure. On the economic front it would attempt equal distribution of social wealth. Javdekar doesn't completely approve of the ideal of self-sufficient villages imagined by Gandhi as a negation of the entire industrial framework. Javdekar doesn't fully share the Gandhian critique of industrialism. Therefore the socialist; Satyagrahi democracy would work within the industrial framework. However the ownership of economic resources would be decentralised as far as possible. Satyagrahi democracy would uphold the noble values of Brahmanya. Javdekar believed that caste system in India has already ended and the need was to end the class-divisions. Satyagrahi democracy would thus be a classless society where every person would incorporate the noble values of Brahmanya. Within himself/
herself. Javdekar does not specify any process of realisation of such democracy. However he discusses and whole heartedly approves of the Bhoodan movement initiated by Vinoba as the most important Satyagrahi experiment towards realisation of this ideal.

Javdekar in fact identified the Gandhian and the socialist workers as carriers or leaders of the Satyagrahi Samajwadi revolution. He expected that Gandhians would play the role of pure Satyagrahis and should support the politics of socialist groups; who were identified as weak Satyagrahis by Javdekar. That is the initial reason why Satyagrahi Samajwad is compared in the fourth chapter with formulations of later Gandhians and socialists in India. The comparison helps in the present exercise of critical assessment of the ideology. It discusses understanding of Gandhi and Marx and their socio-political, economic ideals. This comparison also emphasises on the two crucial issues of understanding of state and of tradition. The three ideological formulation compared in the fourth chapter have different perspectives regarding the role of the institution of state. It is argued that socialists treat the state as being neutral. The socialist formulation relies on the agency of state to realise social and economic change. On the other hand later Gandhians attempted to bypass the state agency as they advocated complete withdrawal for themselves from the sphere of power politics. Satyagrahi Samajwad on the other hand has a distinctive perspective regarding the state. It is aware of the centrality of the institution of state. At the same time it uses both Gandhian and Marxian insights to treat the state as evil. Therefore its understanding of state becomes different from that of the socialists.
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All these formulations share a common platform as far as their understanding of the tradition is concerned. It is argued that all of them celebrate the Vedic framework either directly or indirectly. Gandhians search the ideal community through the Vedic discourse and Javdekar goes along with them. Socialists in India condemn the caste system but do not condemn the Vedic philosophy as providing the basis to the working of caste system. Such an understanding and use of tradition sets major limits to the cultural politics of these ideologies. These two issues raised by the fourth chapter set an agenda for the critical assessment of the ideology of Satyagrahi Samajwad.

The last chapter of the thesis presents critical assessment of the ideology. Initially the strengths and weaknesses of the ideology are discussed. Javedkar's specific interpretation of Gandhi and Marx, is taken as the factor deciding the nature of the ideology. Javdekar's use of Satyagraha for confrontation with the state becomes a major contribution of Satyagrahi Samajwad. Similarly its position on the centrality of state is taken as providing theoretical spaces for its relevance in contemporary situation. The politics of Satyagrahi Samajwad suffers because it operates within the fold of dominant cultural politics. The politics gets limited due to the nationalist influences on Javdekar, his own class position and the ambiguous nature of Gandhian legacy. However, it is argued that the strength of Satyagrahi Samajwad lies in its subtle understanding of the political problem through its interpretation of Gandhian framework. The emancipatory potentials lie in its insistence on constant and intense opposition to the state and simultaneous change in the civil society. The thesis finally concludes on the note that these strengths of Satyagrahi Samajwad can be developed and utilised by emancipatory thought in India. The limitations of the politics of Satyagrahi Samajwad must be removed and it must be supported by radical cultural politics.