CHAPTER TWO

THE TENETS OF GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY
CHAPTER II

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"The greatest fact in the story of man on earth is not his material achievements, the empires he has built and broken, but the growth of his soul from age to age in its search for truth and goodness. Those who take part in this adventure of the soul secure an enduring place in the history of human culture. Time has discredited heroes as easily as it has forgotten everyone else; but the saints remain. The greatness of Gandhi is more in his holy living than in his heroic struggles, in his insistence on the creative power of the soul and its life-giving quality at a time when the destructive forces seem to be ascendant.

S. Radhakrishnan. ¹

PART A1

Philosophy of Education

1. What is Philosophy?

Every individual has his own individual philosophy of life. Every nation, therefore, has a different philosophy. And, therefore, different philosophies result in different ways of life. Then, every individual wants to influence the other one, and so naturally, he tries to influence and convert

others to his own philosophy. The main question remains to be answered is - what this Philosophy is?

Plato in his 'Republic' defined philosophy as, "He who has a taste for every sort of knowledge and who is curious to learn and is never satisfied, may be justly termed a philosopher. He is a lover, not of a part of wisdom, but of the whole; his desire is to see life steadily and see it whole." Thus reality is the subject of philosophical inquiry.

2. **What is Education?**

When individuals start their efforts to influence others and try to convert them to what they feel like, to their own personal ideas; it may be treated as education. For by way of influencing/converting others to one's own beliefs, he is definitely educating them his beliefs and faiths; which, in other words is the modification of natural development.

3. **Philosophy and Education**

"Education", in the words of Sir John Adams, "is the dynamic side of philosophy." It is the active aspect of philosophical belief, the practical

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means of realizing the ideals of life.

James Ross has clearly defined education and philosophy in the following words, when he says:

"Philosophy and education are like two sides of a coin: the former is the contemplative side while the latter is the active side. Education is the influence of a person, who holds a vital belief brought to bear on another person with the object of making him also hold that belief."

Education is fundamentally, rather invariably, dependent on philosophy, is proved by the fact that the great philosophers have also been great teachers. Educational movements are the working out of the philosophical positions. Examples are clear that from Socrates down to John Dewey and Bertrand Russell in the West and from Yajnavalkya down to Buddha and to Mahatma Gandhi in the East, were not only great thinkers but teachers also.

It could, therefore, be safely admitted that both, philosophy and education are inter-dependent. Whereas, philosophy is dependent upon education for its formulation, education is dependent on philosophy for its guidance.

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This interconnection could easily be traced out in the works of Aristotle, when he said, "virtue lies in the attainment of happiness or goodness." It includes well doing in addition to well being. His Ethics is a study of well-being and his politics of well doing. Socrates saw the need of an enduring standard against which moral judgments might be measured. He believed that ideas of universal validity existed in the very nature of things. He made it his main task of life to bring such ideas to light in the minds of those with whom he was associated. Plato, the disciple of Socrates, wrote 'Republic' which, though, is a political theory, yet is accepted on all lands as a classical treatise on education.

Jesus Christ also rose and fought against the then rules of the society and lived his life in accordance with the fundamental idea that God is the Father of all men. He was a living example of such a relationship between God and Man.

What is true of Christ, is true of all great teachers. All great thinkers and teachers, like, Gautam Buddha, Mohammed Sahib, Shankradharya and the 20th Century saint Gandhi, have propounded their own philosophies; which, though are different, yet aim at
the same goal, that God is one, Truth is God, All
men are equal, Universal brotherhood and Non-violence.

4. The Nature of Philosophy of Education

"The philosophy of education is more general
philosophy of life. An educational philosophy
is primarily concerned with the aim of education,
the programme of education needed for the
achievement of the aim, and the examination and
evaluation of the educational organisation,
content, methods, teacher-preparation, measurement
and the life in terms of the goals and ideals of
life." 5

Therefore, every good philosophy of education
should comprise the following three essential elements: 6

(a) A philosophy of education should not
be mere theorising about education.

(b) There should be a formulation of
educational aims and purposes.

(c) The evaluation of the essential principles
and their organisation into a scheme of
educational procedure.

The consideration of the above points leads us

5 F.W. Thomas and A.R. Lang, Principles of Modern

6 M.S. Patel, The Educational Philosophy of
Mahatma Gandhi, Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House,
to the conclusion that a philosophy of education must be based upon an adequate knowledge of the fundamental facts of the sciences, the formulation of the aims and purposes towards which educational activities are to be directed and the evaluation of the essential principles and practices and their organization into a scheme of an educational programme.

PART B

Gandhi As A Philosopher

Philosophy is concerned with a systematic and reasoned-out view of relevant facts and their interpretations and implications for solving the problems of life. With the above point of view, the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi could easily be termed as his Philosophy. He believed in oneness of God, preached universal brotherhood, peace, secularism etc. He had said in one of his early writings about the nature of Reality in the following words, "I believe in the absolute oneness of God and, therefore, also of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source".?

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For him, God is one by whatever name you prefer to call Him with - Rama or Rehman, Ishwar or Allah; but His essential unity do not change.

1. Truth

"Ahimsa is my God, and Truth is my God; when I look for ahimsa, Truth says, 'Find it out through me.' When I look for Truth, ahimsa says, 'Find it out through me.'" 7a

From the above words of Mahatma Gandhi it is quite clear that he laid great emphasis on Truth and Non-violence. His 'Autobiography' is known by the name i.e. 'My Experiments with Truth'. This is due to the fact that he laid greatest stress on 'Truth' which is interlinked with 'Ahimsa' i.e. 'Non-violence'.

Gandhi spent whole of his life in search of Truth. He believed that 'Truth is God, and God is Truth'. According to him, Truth is the ultimate God and the goal for all the humanity to achieve. Different religions, according to Gandhi, were the different roads leading to the same goal, i.e., Truth, or God.

7a Gandhiji in 'English Weekly Journal' edited by Mahatma Gandhi. 'Young India' dated 4.6.1925.
When the worldly people are suffering from ignorance and delusions, and are in a great fix in finding out: (1) What is right and what is wrong? (2) What is Truth and what is untruth? (3) Which is the real source of Bliss? Gandhian Philosophy brings us to an immortal and spiritual programme, based on non-violence and lead us from: (i) darkness to light; (ii) untruth to truth; (iii) ignorance to knowledge; (iv) materialism to spiritualism; (v) death to life; (vi) violence to non-violence; (vii) intolerance to tolerance; (viii) wars to peace; (ix) mortality to immortality; and (x) unreal world to real divinity.

Electricity is a powerful force, but all cannot get full benefit from it. Only those who will start scientific researches and electric engineering will get exact clue of it from water-falls, dams etc., after a very hard labour. Similarly God, the Supreme Divinity is the ultimate Truth. For realization of this Ultimate Truth, one has to undergo through systematic stages of Spiritual discipline.

Gandhian Philosophy teaches us that God is Truth. Just as a tree has one trunk, but many branches; similarly God is one and for realizing God there are so many religions and faiths. Sun is one but through different
mirrors, we see Sun in so many forms. "To me God is Truth and Love."

From the above words of Gandhi, it is quite clear that God is Truth, Truth is God; God is Love and Love is God. This Love refers to Love towards Mankind and is supreme in nature. This Love, which is a Universal Truth, shall break down all barriers (regional, provincial, national, religious etc.) and shall establish 'Kingdom of Heaven' on the earth.

2. Non-violence

"This world is not something evil in itself, for only an active life in the world can help us to attain the goal of God-realization. This activity must be directed to the good of others. Selfish activity is fit only to be condemned and should be given up." 9

From the above words of Gandhi, activity should, especially be directed for the good of others', it is clear that his philosophy of non-violence lays great stress on religion of Humanism, i.e. 'Serve Humanity irrespective of caste, creed, colour, religion, nationality etc.' Non-violence is the quality of the soul, according to Gandhiji, and so it helps us in self-realization. This

8 Bhartan Kumarappa, op.cit., 1925, pp.8-10.

is supported by Mr. Jag Pravesh Chander,\textsuperscript{10} who affirms that:

"Non-violence is a quality, not of the body but of the soul."

About non-violence Gandhi once said:

"The three wise monkeys, which are before me, are my Gurus. These three monkeys symbolise the three non-violent precepts: (1) Speak no evil (2) See no evil (3) Hear no evil." \textsuperscript{11}

Non-violence of Gandhian Philosophy is a great spiritual force, it is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is more powerful than the atom and hydrogen bombs. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised so far. Non-violence is the law of Humanity, while violence is the law of brutes and devils. According to Gandhi, life persists in the midst of destruction and so there must be a higher spiritual and divine law than that of spiritual Government. The tenet of non-violence in Gandhian Philosophy is the torch-bearer, showing the path of Peace and True Happiness to the present suffering Humanity.

Gandhian philosophy of Non-violence is the education for Peace, Love, Self-surrender etc. This is


\textsuperscript{11} Gandhi in, \textit{"Indian Opinion, Golden Number of 1914"}, p.200.
quite clear from the following teachings of Gandhi:-

"It should be an essential of real education that a child should learn that, in the struggle of life, it can easily conquer hate by love, untruth by truth, violence by self-surrender." 12

All Prophets and Saints have taught "Non-violence" to mankind. Man by nature has animal instinct and is therefore violent; but as Spirit, is Non-violent. He finds himself part and parcel of Over-Soul and Universal Mankind. He seeks the supreme Truth. He finds himself in harmony with other human beings.

In the present nuclear age, it is only the Philosophy of 'Non-violence' that can save this world from wholesale destruction. While inaugurating the Seventh Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the ex-President of India, had warned Mankind and advised it to "eschew hatred and intolerance and to cultivate the virtues of brotherly love, compassion and understanding." 13

Quoting Gandhi, Dhebar 14 explains Non-violence as,

"Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of the physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law i.e., to the strength of the spirit."

13 S. Radhakrishnan, "Inaugural Address at Sarnath (India) on 29.11.1964 on the occasion of the VII Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists."
From the above, it is clear that "Non-Violence" is a great spiritual Philosophy and it leads us to "Self-Realisation", which is the highest and ultimate aim of human life. Non-violence is a higher divine law. In Non-violence lies the dignity of human being and human soul.

Gandhian Philosophy, focussing on "Self-Realization", enables human beings to understand that they are above animal level. This philosophy fully makes them to understand the exaltation of Human Personality, when they start crushing their animal tendency of bruteness and violence. By dint of this Philosophy they come to know that they are Human Souls and in this way sons of immortality with Non-Violence as their guiding principle.

While keeping his Non-violent-Philosophy before the world, Gandhi said to his critics to enter with him into the midst of Human Sufferings, not only of the people of India but of the whole World. The devilish tendency of the thirst of nations for war and bloodshed is dragging humanity towards slaughter and this is below dignity and nobility. The principle of Non-violence leads us to Humanism, i.e., spiritual understanding, which makes us free from the sufferings of the World and leads us to Supreme Bliss and everlasting Peace.

Gandhian principle of Non-violence is synonym to
Moral courage. It is the summit of bravery. It does not permit us to run away from aggression, danger, injustice, cruelty and to leave innocents unprotected. Gandhian Philosophy of Non-violence directs us to leave the world a little better than what we had found it. It seeks an active spiritual force which wants to redress of moral grievances of Humanity.

Just as 'Knowledge is Power', so is Non-violence an immortal and everlasting power, which can lead all of us towards 'immortality'.

"Ahimsa is a unifying force. It discovers unity in diversity."15 According to Gandhi, Ahimsa, i.e., Non-violence is a unifying force because it lays great stress on 'Tolerance' and 'Morality'. Morality is interlinked with Religion. Just as water is essential to the sowing of the seed, Ahimsa is also essential for universal brotherhood and world peace. Non-violence leads to Morality and Morality leads to "Humanism", which, according to Gandhi, is the true religion. This Humanism lays great stress on Universalism and Emotional Integration in human beings. Non-violence implies reverence for all life, kindliness towards all things that live, a sensitiveness to human pain and suffering. According to Gandhi, Non-violence is not a mere philosophy, it is a social principle. It is

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the rule and the breath of one's life.

Non-violence is a great spiritual philosophy and
is common in all the religions of the world. The only
weapon which Gandhi had during freedom struggle was
'Non-violence', i.e., 'Satyagraha'. In short 'Non-
violence' was the soul of Gandhi's all political
movements. Non-violence is a clear path towards world
peace. Non-violence is eternal. This is clear from the
following words of Gandhi:

"My path is clear. Any attempt to use me
for violent purposes is bound to fail. I
have no secret methods. I know no diplomacy
but Truth. I have no weapons but Non-violence." 16

Non-violence is a great spiritual force. Whereas,
vioence is the path of animals and beasts of forests,
Non-violence is the path of human beings. It teaches
us to love mankind irrespective of caste, religion,
nationality, colour etc. It leads us towards 'Self-
Realisation', i.e. realization of God.

3. _Sarvodaya_

"There is a great necessity of unity of
'True religion', i.e. 'Non-violence' with
'Science' for avoiding unnecessary violence.
You must unite (1) Spiritualism and (2) Science
and separate religion from politics, in the
interest of World Peace."

- Acharya Vinobha Bhave 17

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16 M.K.Gandhi, _Non-violence in Peace and War_,
17 Acharya Vinobha Bhave's address to teachers
at Jullundur on March 5, 1969.
Sarvodaya means the welfare of all. This is Acharya Vinobha's mission. Acharya Vinobha is the disciple of Gandhi and he undertook to complete the mission where it was left by Gandhi. Acharya Vinobha says, "Jai-Jagat", which means the welfare, prosperity and long life of the whole world. The world is one. Humanity is one. We are all the members of One-World-Society. The World is our Home and to serve Mankind should be our first and the foremost duty. We should break all the bonds of narrow Nationalism, Provincialism, Casteism etc.

Gandhi is not dead. He is living. He is advising, guiding and leading us through Vinobha, who is strongly advocating the unity of Spiritualism and Science. While mentioning about Spiritualism, he is referring towards Gandhi's Philosophy of Non-Violence, which is based on "True Morality" and "Service to Humanity". The unity of "Spiritualism", i.e. "True Religion" with Science should surely make this World happier. Science should reform Religion by removing its prejudices, blind faiths in dogmas and narrow-mindedness and by laying great emphasis on "Common Fundamentals." The True religion "of serving Humanity" should reform Science by enabling its inventions to lead a life of most useful, helpful and constructive non-violent activities. The Atomic Energy should be used for constructive purposes i.e. for the good of Humanity and not for destructive purposes.
Miss Hon. Isabel Catto, the President of the World Y.M.C.A. is a follower of Gandhian Sarvodaya. In spite of being the daughter of a British Millionaire, she has made her mission to provide a better living for all, particularly women, throughout the world. She is the strong advocate of "Mutual Service" and "Mutual Aid" among different nationalities of the World. Her mission is "service to Mankind".

According to Gandhi, Love and Non-violence are the stronger forces than Atom Bomb. Love and Non-violence have spiritual power. These are such powers which should be used and utilised for the betterment of the humanity.

Sarvodaya, by way of: (1) Service to Humanity and (2) To live for others, infuses the rule of brotherliness, love and peaceful co-existence in all human beings. It means upliftment of all in all ways.

Gandhian Sarvodaya Mission, which is nowadays being propagated by Acharya Vinobha Bhave, is an international peace mission and should prove very useful in the long run in this nuclear age because its guiding principle is 'Atoms For Peace'. Atomic energy, if used for constructive purposes can give many benefits to the human society. Atoms when split relieve tremendous energy which should be canalized towards peaceful purposes through the
propagation of Gandhian philosophy of peace.

4. Gandhian Philosophy of Humanism

"Gandhi's humanism was a spiritual humanism. He gave a call to humanity to rise above the level of animal life and live like human beings without exploitation, and with mutual respect and dignity for all. He set the greatest value on human evaluation along spiritual lines. He hated slavery to the senses and their objects and he believed that no civilisation based on mere materialistic considerations would survive and be capable of rising above the animal life." 18

Gandhi was a Mahatma (the Great Soul) not only to individuals and to the Indian nation, but to the whole of humanity. He was first addressed as Mahatma in a public reception accorded to him in Rajkot after his return from South Africa. Later on this title was confirmed, when Doctor Tagore also addressed him as 'the Mahatma'. Charity begins at home. So far his peace mission is concerned, he made a start from India. He was against narrow feelings of nationalism. He laid great stress on world citizenship. He worked for world peace and international prosperity. His main teachings were:-

(1) Serve mankind irrespective of nationality, religion, caste, race etc.
(2) Live for others.
(3) All men are brothers.
(4) Lover of mankind is the lover of God.

Gandhian humanism is the outcome of his spiritual philosophy based on "Self-Realization", which according to him, is the highest and ultimate aim of education. This self-awareness i.e., 'Know Thyself' is one of the chief fundamentals of all world religions. All the present conflicts of this materialistic world should be solved the moment worldly people successfully attain this goal of human life.

Gandhi's greatest and strongest faith was that love is the law of the human species as violence is the law of the jungle. Man started with, tooth for a tooth and a nail for a nail; but when he saw that this would lead to mutual annihilation, he began to emphasise, 'do not kill' as killing is a result of hating and fear. So the next slogan was 'do not hate'. In this way Gandhian humanism leads us from the animal level to human level, from violence to non-violence, from war-mentality to peace-mentality, from mutual hatred to 'love each other', from separatism to 'peaceful co-existence' etc.
Gandhian humanism is another name of 'Gandhian Sarvodaya', which means welfare of all human beings i.e., welfare of mankind irrespective of religion, nationality or race. Shri G. Ramachandran\textsuperscript{19} has defined this Gandhian Humanism while addressing an audience in the U.S.A. in the following way:

"Sarvodaya is political and economic democracy in one, ensuring equal freedom and justice to every citizen including the last and least in society and based on the maximum decentralisation of power consistent with unity and on non-violent sanctions in which the people would be given full training by the state."

Gandhian humanism lays great stress on 'equal opportunity to all' irrespective of caste, creed, nationality etc. It saves the people of under-developed countries from the imperialistic cut-throat competition among capitalistic countries. The mankind has suffered a lot from the social inequality, discrimination, unemployment and exploitation of human labour in the past. Gandhian humanism guarantees economic freedom and social equality to all human beings.

During his life time Gandhi had always kept the whole humanity in his view. He had once said "while

serving India I am serving the whole of mankind."20
His nationalism was not of narrow type. He believed
in broader nationalism. His ideal was, "The world is my
home and to serve mankind is my religion."21 In real
sense he was a nationalist as well as an internationalist.
His philosophy has brought the whole world closely together
and has stressed on human integration, racial integration,
international integration, inter-regional integration etc.

Gandhian humanism teaches us that all the religions
of the world are equal. No religion is bad. No religion
is superior than the other. Different religions are
different ways to reach one God. Ways are different; but the
goal is one. According to Gandhi, humanism is the main spirit
of all the religions. This humanism is the true interpretat-
ton of religion. Gandhi's religion was humanism. He once
said, "I can serve God only by serving humanity".22

Gandhian humanism lays great stress on the fact that
we should crush devilish tendency and religious fanaticism.

21 Ibid.
During 1947 (during the days of partition of India),
the spirit of humanism was dead, Pakistan came into
existence as a result of religious fanaticism and two-nation-
theory. Not only this much, slaughter of humanity took
place in Punjab and Bengal. This religious fanaticism
converted human beings into devils; who, in the name of
religion, killed followers of other faiths, looted property
of other people belonging to other religions. Hindus killed
Muslims, Muslims killed Hindus. Communal disturbances,
communal disharmony, communal riots, wholesale fires,
stabbing cases etc. became common. During those critical
days, Gandhi started peace marches and national integration
campaigns. He went on regular fasts till perfect communal
harmony came into existence. On 30th January, 1948, he
permanently nourished the secular plant of communal harmony
and humanism with his blood.

Gandhian humanism guarantees food, clothing, shelter,
education, medical aid etc. for all, irrespective of
nationality, religion or race. It lays great emphasis on
economic freedom. There are at present 214 countries in
the world, of which about 110 are colonies and are not at
present enjoying economic freedom. They comprise a population
of about 20 crores and occupy about one-fifth of the entire
area of the globe. In these colonies exploitation of the
have-nots by the haves is at present in full swing. The
freedom movement started by Gandhi from India was a humanistic mission for the welfare of these oppressed people.

Gandhian humanism is a spiritual law which regulates everything under spiritual discipline of divinity. It is that Love which binds each and every human being in the spirit of human integration and peaceful co-existence. It is that humanistic philosophy which makes us ultimately understand that we are part and parcel of one integrated divinity. Divinity is one, Mankind is one, Humanity is one, World is one, God is one, and Truth is one. There is essential unity found in all the World religions. Realization of this fact, realization of this truth and realization of this one - integrated humanism is the highest and ultimate aim of all human beings, according to Gandhi.