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4.1 Gandhi and Marx: Some Basic Differences

Many, however, have discovered so great a similarity between the Gandhian and the Marxist ideas and ideologies that to them Marxism is *Sarvodaya* minus God. To put it in another way, they would have us believe that *Sarvodaya* is Marxism plus God. This is oversimplification *par excellence*. An attempt will be made in the following pages to bring out some of the basic differences between the Gandhian and the Marxist thought.¹ Gandhi does not agree. He does not accept “the view which denies the existence of any entity transcending the physical world”. Its existence, he admits, “cannot be proved through the evidence of the senses”. “It is”, he declares, “self-evident. It can be realized only through the inner experience of man in my view the trend of human nature is essentially upward.” The ideal of *Ramarajya* spoken of by Gandhi is to be made a reality by purifying the heart of man. The spirit will wake up in a purified heart and will transform the owner of the heart. The awakened spirit, like the philosopher’s stone, makes gold of base metals. Gandhi thus starts from the soul within and works his way out to the environment.² “Mechanical makeshifts and external structure by themselves cannot achieve spiritual results. Changes in the social architecture do not alter the minds of people. Institutions are of little avail unless we are trained to obey our conscience and develop brotherly love. Unless the leaders of the world discover their human dignity in themselves, not in the freedom of their conscience, there is no hope for the ordered peace of a world community.”

The failure of democracy in not a few of the new states of Asia and Africa
shows how useless mechanical devices alone are. Gandhi, therefore, sought to bring about a genuine inner change and prescribed truth, non-violence, self-denial, the service of “Daridranarayana” (God in the poor man’s garb) and constructive work as the means of inner change and consequent transformation of the human personality. Any attempt to change the material conditions without inner change will make the confusion-Vorse confounded.

Marxism, like so many schools of socio-political thought, believes that the end justifies the means. Marxists do not hesitate to fight for a cause by all the means—fair and foul—at their disposal, if they are convinced that the cause is a just one. To them, the cause is more important than the means. Lenin openly declared, “It is necessary to use any ruse, cunning, unlawful method, evasion, concealment of truth” for the attainment of the end in view. It must be admitted in fairness to the Marxists that the world at large also believes that any means may be adopted for the realization of a noble object. Some lawyers, for example, argue that to establish truth in a court of law, falsehood has sometimes to be resorted to. Truth, they seem to suggest, is pure gold and can serve a useful purpose only when an alloy has been added to it. They miss the all-important point that alloyed gold is no gold in the truest sense of the term. To adopt unfair means to achieve an object, however, noble and laudable, is to taint the object itself. Equally bad, if not worse, is the very real danger of the ultimate degradation of those who adopt unfair means for the attainment of their objects, even noble ones. Practice of deceit and lies may in the long-run result in these vices being ingrained in the character of those who practise them. The “theory that the good end justified all means, even violent means”, observes a student of Gandhian philosophy, “is dangerous in practice and unsound ethically. The theory permits recourse to
violence.⁴ fraud, untruth, opportunism, etc. provided that the end is just. But these means, instead of helping us on the path of progress, lead us to regard human beings as means rather than ends, deaden our finer feelings and result in oppression and cruelty. Besides, there can generally be no certainty that a violent action is always motivated only by a good end. The tyrant and the terrorist invariably plead laudable ends when perpetrating the most dangerous crimes. Further, it is dangerous ethics to make the success of an action or policy the criterion of its propriety.”⁵ Marx did not believe in God or religion. Religion was to him “the sob of the oppressed creature”, “the head of a heartless world” and “the opium of the poor”. To Engels, “the first word of religion is a lie”. “Religion”, declared Lenin, “is one of the aspects of spiritual oppression”. Religion, we are told, is a fraud which asks the people to mortgage their life here on earth against one in the next world, which does not exist. Marx argued that people believed in an unseen and unknown agency, i.e. God, because they find themselves powerless and helpless against the social forces, forces over which they have no control.⁶ Under Communism, man will master the social forces. Belief in God will be superfluous and religion will “wither away”. It must be admitted, however, that we ourselves have given a handle to Marx and Marxists by dogmatizing and institutionalizing religion by the “artificial, greasy and dishonest way in which we practice our religion”. To Gandhi, on the other hand, God and religion were the very breath of his nostrils. Religion, he believed, “sustains a person as nothing else does. It is the rock-bottom of fundamental morality. When morality incarnates itself in a living man, it becomes religion, because it binds, it holds, it sustains him in the hour of trial.” “My Life”, Gandhi declared, “is governed by religion even my politics are derived from my religion. I never
lost sight of the principle that governs my life when I began dabbling in politics.” Gandhi, observes Remain Rolland, “introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the last two thousand years”. He asked the skeptic “to reinstat[e] religion in his heart.” It is, we hope, clear from what has been said in the foregoing pages that Gandhi and Marx stand poles apart, similarity of their objectives notwithstanding. Their differences are basic and fundamental and hence unbridgeable. Gandhi did not mince matters and openly declared: “Socialism and Communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally different from ours. One such conception is their belief in the essential selfishness of human nature. I do not subscribe to it for I know that the essential difference between man and the brute is that the former can respond to the call of the spirit in him, can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute and, therefore, superior to selfishness and violence, which belong to the brute nature and not to the immortal spirit of man.” Vinoba Bhave is one of the very few Indians whose opinion on Gandhian philosophy may be regarded as authoritative. He is on record as having said, “The fact of the matter is that these two ideologies (i.e. the Gandhian and the Marxist) are irreconcilable; the difference between them is fundamental it is as clear as day that they are opposed to each other. The two ideologies stand face to face, each bent on swallowing up the other. I believe that ultimately it will be Gandhism with which Communism will have its trial of strength.” Marxists themselves have been long aware of the probability—shall we say the inevitability?—of a showdown between their ideology and Gandhi’s for the capture of the minds of men. They declared more than thirty years ago in 1928: “Gandhism is more and more becoming an ideology directed against mass revolution. It must be
The Communist vendetta against Gandhi continued even after his assassination. As recently as in 1954, a new edition of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia vulgarly attacked him as a “reactionary, a descendant of usurers”, and “exploiter of religious prejudices”, who “aped the ascetics in a demagogic way” and actively helped British imperialism against the Zulus in South Africa. (I understand that these and similar objectionable expressions have been removed from a subsequent edition of the said work). A question has been asked again and again since Gandhi’s appearance on the Indian political scene and more particularly since his martyrdom. Can mankind rise to the dizzy heights of moral perfection which a full acceptance of the Gandhian philosophy presupposes? A categorical answer is difficult, if not impossible. All we dare say is that this world of ours may not be a natural home for perfection, “which Gandhi felt in his best moments, was not a mere moralist’s fad. It may be something of an illusion, but it is by such illusions that men rise to greatness.”

4.2 Basic differences between Gandhi and Jawaharlal

(1) On Religion

On religion, neither Gandhi nor Jawaharlal was a conformist. Gandhi was basically a sage, a man of God who was a true Hindu in every fiber of his being and proud of the spiritual sustenance and support he could derive from his faith. But he had his own understanding of Hinduism and was not willing to accept any ritual, practice or even text which he considered to be contradictory to his understanding of this religion. He was a man of prayer and an ardent communicator with God. He implicitly believed in divine guidance and submission to divine will, and as a man of Truth had no inhibitions in
publicly proclaiming his faith in and surrenders to Divine will. But Jawaharlal did not share Gandhi’s faith in God or in inspiration from religion. The Vedanta philosophy, the Bhagavad Gita and the teachings of Vivekananda had deep influence on Jawaharlal, but he did not seek any anchorage in religion as generally men of religious faith do. In a mood of irreverent candidness Jawaharlal explains his religious convictions: “I am afraid, it is impossible for me to seek harborage in this way. I prefer the open sea with all its storms and tempests. Nor am I greatly interested in the after-life, in what happens after death. I find the problems of this life sufficiently absorbing to fill my mind. Unquote. On the question of religion and politics, Gandhi said that “those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means”. With equal frankness Jawaharlal declared that “he felt angry with Gandhi at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question and his frequent references to God in connection with it”. Each stuck to his position without trying to convert the other because both were essentially moral men, and in that sense Jawaharlal was probably more religious than many other followers of Gandhi who proclaimed their adherence to religion loudly and demonstratively. Perhaps, Gandhi was satisfied that in spite of Jawaharlal’s unorthodox and critical attitude to religion, he was religious in the true sense of the term.10

2 On the strategy for Economic Development

There were fundamental differences between Gandhi and Jawaharlal on the concept and strategies for economic development. Jawaharlal did not accept the Gandhian idea of “Limitation of wants” or on his insistence that real freedom and peace could be reached only through societies based in villages.
Jawaharlal accepted the need for decentralized industrial development, but insisted that most villages did not have the resources or infrastructure necessary for viable development. He differed sharply with Gandhi on the scale of modernization and of science and technology needed to cross the development threshold. When Jawaharlal got the opportunity for shaping the economic development of the Nation later as Prime Minister, he chose a model which made only marginal concessions to Gandhi’s concepts and strategies of economic development.

3 On Trusteeship of Property

Another Gandhian concept which Jawaharlal rejected as impractical and inapplicable to modern society was that of Trusteeship of Property by the Zamindars and other such propertied classes. Gandhi advocated that these classes should be allowed to hold their properties as trust for the good of the society. He believed that trusteeship provided the means for the eventual transfer of the capitalist order into an egalitarian one. Gandhi’s convictions were based on his optimism that the land owning class would ultimately reform itself if allowed to remain under a trusteeship arrangement. Nehru rejected this concept completely and would accept only the trusteeship of the State and not of the individuals or groups.

4 On Planning

On the role of Planning, which Jawaharlal considered as the indispensable instrument for orderly development, there was no meeting of the mind with Gandhi. Jawaharlal had taken to his work as Chairman of the National Planning Committee appointed by the
Congress in 1938 with missionary zeal, and had appointed several sub-committees and drafted the services of experts from even outside the party to formulate plans on different sectors of development. But Gandhi could not appreciate either the need for planning or the methodology followed by Jawaharlal. In a frank letter to Jawaharlal, Gandhi said: “I have never been able to understand or appreciate the labour of the committee. It appears to me that much money and labour are being wasted on an effort which will bear forth little or no fruit.” Jawaharlal was not easily deflected from his work on planning by the lack of understanding on the part of Gandhi or the undisguised opposition of a strong group of his colleagues in the Party. He went ahead with prodigious energy with the work of the various sub-committees and the main Committee ignoring all opposition from within the Party till 1940 when he was again behind jails and could not continue this work. Jawaharlal wanted the reports of the Committee to be published, but Gandhi did not even agree with this suggestion.\footnote{12}

4.3 Differing Views on Economic Development

Gandhiji and Nehru had no complete agreement on the economic structure of free India. Nehru’s socialist convictions and thirst for modernity rebelled against Gandhiji’s ideals of Gram Swaraj. The differences surfaced through spirited dialogues and letters. But their mutual regard for each other did not allow them to stretch these differences to the breaking point. They knew that they could not drift away from each other. To Nehru, Gandhiji represented the soul of India. And to Gandhiji, Nehru embodied India’s destiny. The two were complimentary to each other. No superficial differences could pull them apart. Even their marked differences on the attitude towards British during the
Second World War were not taken to their logical culmination for, inspite of the uncompromising nature of their views, they could comprehend with proper understanding the basis of their respective stances. The differences persisted till “The Quit India” Movement which helped sink all shades of opinion and make common cause with Gandhi.¹³

GANDHI AND NEHRU: IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

(a) Philosophy of History:

According to Gandhi, human society is a ceaseless growth, an unfolding in terms of spirituality, and there is a definite though unconscious working of love in human society. Man has been steadily progressing towards non-violence. There are two elements in human beings - animality and spirituality. As an animal, he is violent, as spirit is non-violent. The very fact that life persists in the midst of destruction, shows that there must be a higher law than that of destruction. This is the faith in a well-ordered society and a well-ordered universe. Gandhi had deeply rooted in him a sense of history, though he often spoke disparagingly, of the value of conventional histories, which are merely chronicles of the doings of ‘kings and emperors’, ‘a record of the world’, or a record of the every interruption of the working of the force of love or of the soul.” Gandhi is convinced that “right which is truth cannot perish; the wicked are destroyed because wrong has no independent existence.” Nehru was himself a historian and had a great fascination for history. He also discards “the conception of the history of a country being the names of a large number of kings and emperors” and emphasises “the social aspect of history, the development of the social organism.” He does not subscribe to the view that history repeats itself, rather he agrees with Marx that “History has no otherway
of answering old questions than by putting new ones. History to him is a record of the martyrdom of man. It is a record of repeated resurrections after every crucification. In a prophetic tone, he says that “it is easy to admire the beauties of the universe and to live in a world of thought and imagination. But to try to escape in this way from the unhappiness of others, caring little what happens to them is no sign of courage or fellow feeling. Thought in order to justify itself must lead to action. He quotes Romain Rolland: “Action is the end of thought. All thought which does not look towards action is an abortion and a treachery. If then, we are servants of thought; we must be the servants of action.” To Nehru, “history is a process that leads man to higher and better stages of progress.” However, having been fascinated by the scientific and technological civilization which has been built in Europe and America, Nehru gradually came to a stage when it seemed to him to have stopped. He began seeking for something deeper than merely the physical aspect of civilization and his mind became more interested in what Plato and Buddha said which had timelessness about it. So he had a doubt whether the present history, having fulfilled its destiny in so far as science and technology are concerned, is moving at all on to a higher plane of human existence. On the one hand, “Spiritualism with its séances and its so called manifestations of spirits and the like” always seemed to him as “rather absurd and an impertinent way of investigating psychic phenomena and the mysteries of the after-life.” He could accept without difficulty the Marxist doctrine of “monism and non-duality of mind and matter, the dynamics of matter and the dialectic of continuous change by evolution as well as a leap through action and interaction, cause and effect, thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis.” However, Nehru had also “a sense of mysterious of unknown depth”. In fact he had “a
vague idealist approach, something rather akin to the Vedanta approach.” At the same time the Vedanta, as well as similar approaches, rather frighten him with” their vague formless incursions into infinity.” Thus we can find an odd mixture in his mind which he could not rationally explain or resolve. On the one hand he treats it as a form of escape to find out an answer to the riddle of the universe and at the same time he appreciates the amazing spirit of man and admits that even rational and scientific thought does not take us as far as we would like to go. Philosophically speaking, this is a very confused and muddled approach and reveals the divided loyalty in his Weltanschauungs.16

(b) Economic Outlook and Techniques:

Although Gandhi and Nehru had the same broad economic goals of serving the poor and removal of inequality, they subscribed to different models and techniques of economic development. To cut short, the salient features of Gandhi’s view as found in the crucial Gandhi-Nehru correspondence, between October-November, 1945, can be summed up as emphasis upon village-oriented economy, individual as well as village self-sufficiency, decentralization, and adoption of appropriate technology. To Nehru, a village is, normally speaking, backward intellectually, and culturally, and that they cannot progress and can hardly embody truth and non-violence. He pleaded for modernisation, with emphasis upon heavy industries, mixed economy, more and more comforts, and international economic and fiscal cooperation. Both are interested in planning, but whereas Gandhi would advocate “planning from below and greater and greater, “peoples involvement”, Nehru’s planning from above was implemented through administrative bureaucracy. Nehru aspired for a “socialised society,” a planning
“economy,” and The Big Machine”. But this is a tragedy that he could not guarantee the right to work as a fundamental right to every Indian citizen. Socialism minus right to work is equal to zero. It took only two development decades for the Nehruvian paradigm of development to prove its invalidity in India, whose main elements are emphasis on economic growth, capital intensive technology and centralised planning. If one looks at the health statistics in India, particularly the statistics of malnutrition and blindness or any other disease, one cannot escape the startling conclusion that this nation is going through a biological decay which does not get reflected at all in the statistics about people below the poverty line. Economists like Dr. Schumacher suggested that India should go in for Intermediate Technology instead of big machines, big dams and big capital investment. This new technology should be small, simple capital-cheap and non-violent, which is characterised by three features: 1. Employment for the local people, 2. Use of local resources and 3. Production for local markets. Apart from the dangers of fast erosion of natural resources and non-renewable sources of energy, industrialisation has caused pollution and other ecoproblems. To stem the tide of exploitation, Gandhi enunciated the idea of the Swadeshi, coupled with a life of simplicity, whereas Nehru saw a growth of imported consumption goods and a life-style of pomp.17

(c) Educational Paradigm:

So far the general aims and ideals of education as the improvement of the individual “and a definite social outlook,” are concerned there is hardly any difference between Gandhi and Nehru. But when we look into the content, methodology, priorities and language ~ the policies of the two, we find many
basic differences. Inspite of his great love for language and literature, Nehru could not include the right to education as a Fundamental Right in our Constitution. Needless to say that it is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Act 26(i)). In India, this birth-right of every citizen has been relegated to the Directive Principles of State Policy with the result that after 42 years of India’s independence, we have the largest number of illiterate people in the world. Nehru was imaginative enough to set up the University Education Commission in 1948, High Level technical Manpower Committee (1949), Secondary Education Commission in 1952, restructuring of All India Council of Technical Education in 1947, National Committee on Women’s Education in 1958, and many other institutions of higher learning and research. Primary education was comparatively a lower priority. During Nehru’s time India spent about 43.4% on Secondary and 24.8% on Higher Education, while only 22.6% on Primary Education, of the total budget on Education. From class I to V at the Primary stage, the drop out is 50%. The system of primary education remained largely ineffective and wasteful. Nehru was never clear in his policy towards Basic Education though he occasionally harped on its value but did not try to implement it or accept it as part of the national educational policy. He says: “We want that kind of basic education throughout, “and in the same breath he adds: “The basic training should be dovetailed.” One may ask that if he liked that Basic Education should be spread all over India, who obstructed him except his love for Western system of education. He thought more of Universities, which he thought would build a certain intellectual atmosphere in the country. His policy on language was overtly confused and covertly partisan towards English. He would say that “I am myself convinced that the medium of education must be the mother tongue of the child, that “I cannot
conceive of English being the medium of education in India, in future,” and in
the same breath, he would show the dangers of linguistic trends leading to
greater provincialism, separateness, pulling down standards of education -
communication with the outside world etc. Gandhi had no such reservations
and His ideas were crystal clear. He says: “If I had the powers of a despot, I
would today stop tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and
require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the
change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will
follow the change. It is an evil which requires summary remedy,“ The
Continuance of English even after 42 years of our Independence, which is a
legacy of Nehru’s language policy is only at the cost of national languages. To
Gandhi, real education is impossible through a foreign medium. Then it must
not be based on foreign culture and it must not ignore the culture of the heart
and the hand and confine itself simply to the head.19

4.4 Critical Estimate of the two Views

Gandhi and marx

The difference between Gandhi and Marx, in respect of the
method of realizing the ideal is due ultimately to their different
metaphysical assumptions. Also they are influenced by political,
historical and economic factors of life in different ways. So their
philosophies in respect of the realization of the human ideal have
developed in different ways.Ethics is concerned with man’s actions.
Man’s actions are mostly directed towards securing a livelihood and
ensuring the maintenance of life. So Marx seems to be right in
accepting “ethics as closely associated with the economic basis of
society.” And there seems to be some sort of justification for the Marxian methods discussed above. Gandhi does not accept the economic condition of life to be the determining factors of moral value. Morality for him is something divine. Marx justifies violence, class-struggle and revolution by saying that they can bring about economic well-being which is the supreme ideal for life. This type of morality cannot be accepted by Gandhi. Marx claims that the morality of his conception fulfils “the purpose of helping human society to rise to a higher level.” But his claim cannot be accepted. Gandhi’s methods of non-violence and Satyagraha are definitely more effective than Marx’s methods of violence and class-struggle, because the results of the former are lasting and permanent. Also, Gandhi’s method of non-violence can operate where Marx’s method of violence cannot. No wonder, Gandhian methods have profoundly “influenced movements in other parts of the world” including the civil rights movements in the United States. And we find that Gandhi’s philosophy of human ideals is in conformity with the “principles and purposes of the charter of the United Nations.” The Gandhian method of non-violence and love can give rise to a nationalism which will be co-operative and constructive. Such nationalism, instead of being exclusive, competitive and militant, will foster the cause of humanism in which conflicts will make room for love and sympathy.

**Social dynamics of Marx and Gandhi**

Society is a moving phenomenon. It holds a changing scene, and presents a human drama enacted continuously. Master minds are busy in understanding the logic of this social drama. Often an endeavour is made to create a science of society. Natural science has indeed succeeded in establishing the
lawfulness of natural phenomenon. The stage was set for a similar exercise in the study of society. And we now have social dynamics. Society is a dynamic phenomenon, with growth and change as its basic characteristics. This change is often not smooth. Differences and disputes, clashes and conflicts punctuate the process. Sometimes battles are fought, wars are waged. Society is a moving phenomenon. It holds a changing scene, and presents a human drama enacted continuously. Master minds are busy in understanding the logic of this social drama. Often an endeavour is made to create a science of society. Natural science has indeed succeeded in establishing the lawfulness of natural phenomenon. The stage was set for a similar exercise in the study of society. And we now have social dynamics. Society is a dynamic phenomenon, with growth and change as its basic characteristics. This change is often not smooth. Differences and disputes, clashes and conflicts punctuate the process. Sometimes battles are fought, wars are waged. Society is a moving phenomenon. It holds a changing scene, and presents a human drama enacted continuously. Master minds are busy in understanding the logic of this social drama. Often an endeavour is made to create a science of society. Natural science has indeed succeeded in establishing the lawfulness of natural phenomenon. The stage was set for a similar exercise in the study of society. And we now have social dynamics. Society is a dynamic phenomenon, with growth and change as its basic characteristics. This change is often not smooth. Differences and disputes, clashes and conflicts punctuate the process. Sometimes battles are fought, wars are waged. change and are busy in providing models that ensure order and progress, stability and change. Marx and Gandhi were such masterminds, great people in the human history. Marx was a historian, a philosopher, an economist, a
sociologist, a social scientist and above all a revolutionary. He was at once an analyst and a prophet—a prophet with positive message. Marx viewed society as a moving entity and developed a sharp theory of social change, a theory of conflict and a theory of conflict resolution. Mahatma Gandhi was at once a leader, a reformer, a missionary, a revolutionary and above all a messiah. Gandhi was the architect of India’s freedom. He has been held as the father of the nation. Yet Gandhian thought transcends the context of India. He viewed India’s struggle for freedom in a universal frame of reference. The whole mankind was the context of Gandhian philosophy. Gandhi stood for a social change, fought for a new society, and experimented in new ways of life. Philosophy as science of man, to use the expression in the way marx, mentioned earlier, is no longer ‘science’ in the metaphorical, groundless, misleading sense in which it is used for example in formulas such as ‘philosophy asd science of the spirit.’ It is this specific sense of history—science or materialist science of history in which we indeed find in the 1857 einleitung, the first appereance in outline, of anepiste mological—scientific foundation of of economics as science. The marx’s famous theses on Feuerbach was that until now philosophers had only interpreted the world in different ways;

**SHAPING OF GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY**

Gandhi’s social philosophy took shape over years through continuous ‘experiments with truth’. It was in South Africa that Gandhi developed his philosophy and technique of satyagraha—an instrument for redressing the grievances of the immigrant Indian minority in Africa. On his return to India in 1915, he established an Ashram. It was not until 1919 that Gandhi began to play an influential role in the Indian National Congress. Congress had been in
existe nationalism. Yogi Sri Aurobindo and Lokmanya Tilak stood for nationalism which originated in the sacred tradition of the land. Gandhi took it over from Tilak and began to lead the Congress. Rowlatt Act, and the Amritsar massacre stirred the country deeply. The days of cooperation advocated by moderates and liberals were gone. Even responsive cooperation of Tilak was now a policy of the past. Gandhi advocated non-violent, non-cooperation and a new phase in the history of Indian nationalism was ushered in. Under Gandhi, Congress got soon transformed into a disciplined mass movement. It was now a broad-based people’s coalition where the educated elites, sophisticated lawyers, prosperous businessmen, rich landlords and simple peasants all stood shoulder to shoulder. Gandhi raised politics to the level of religion. Truth and nonviolence were now the secrets of political action. The unarmed illiterate common man was now fearless. Gandhi’s life was an open book an experiment with truth. He led vast hordes of men along the path of danger with remarkable discipline and unity. Satyagraha in South Africa, all India hartals in 1919, 1920 and the famous Dandi Yatra were unprecedented events in the human history. Gandhi infused enthusiasm into millions, moulded heroes out of common clay, and made them act with astonishing singleness of purpose and spirit of sacrifice. Since 1885. For the first two decades, moderates—Westernised intellectuals and professionals—led the Congress. Later, early in the twentieth century, radicals seeking inspiration in the ancient glory began to make a mark on the national organisation. Swami Vivekananda descended as the apostle of Indian. Equally significant was Gandhi’s constructive programme. Removal of untouchability, elevation of the status of women, protection of village industries were the social an
reborn. While deeply dedicated to his own Hindu faith, Gandhi recognised the unity of all religions. He brought social significance to virtues held supreme in personal life. Love and sympathy, devotion and dedication, suffering and sacrifice were now supreme social values. Gandhi preached the principles more through example than through precept. A great karmayogi, modelled after Gita, Gandhi influenced the people not so much by teaching, not even by his programme, but by his character. To the masses, Gandhi was not simply a political leader, a social reformer, a friend of the poor but a man of God, a saint, an apostle of peace and non-violence and a man with divine mission. Gandhian economic system formed an integral part of his social dynamics, a corollary of his social philosophy. Economic content of this constructive programme. Craft education, cultivation of mother-tongue and a common national language constituted the core of his educational programme. Comprehensive constructive programme ensured sound foundation for the super structure of the nation. Besides, it provided an opportunity to the rich and the elite for fruitful positive participation in the social work. Gandhi’s social programme was the legacy of Swami Vivekananda. In matters religious and spiritual, he was Ramakrishna.\textsuperscript{23} Here is tilak creed and testament in his own words: “I regard India as my motherland and my goddess, the peoplen India my kith and kin, and loyal and steadfast work for their political and social emancipation my highest religion and duty”

**TWO PHENOMENA OF UNPRECEDENTED IDEALISM**

Gandhi and Subhas are to be reckoned as the two unique phenomena of unprecedented idealism not only for India but for the whole mankind. Gandhi will be remembered in history as an apostle of peace and non-violence and
Subhas as an epic hero of revolutionary struggle. Non-violence was universally known as an individual virtue but Gandhi introduced it as a moral rectitude for collectively resolving political and socio-economic problems of human society. The Mahatma gave to ever-shadowing fury of death as did the Indian revolutionary. No revolutionary like him ever dared to build up rebellious organisations and two armies of revolution in as many as . countries of the world alone and in about only two years almost out of nothing. No other revolutionary is known to have had waged such a mighty anti-imperialist war from outside his own country as did the Netaji in leading the Azad Hind War of Indian Liberation against the greatest among the imperialist powers of the world of those days. His revolutionary idealism inspired many anti-imperialist struggles in the colonial countries of South-East Asia. Every leader of national liberation in each of the countries of South-East-Asia acclaimed ‘Chandra Bose’ as the ‘greatest leader of Asiatic Resolution.’. Though Netaji failed to reach Delhi straightaway, yet, he succeeded in creating conditions for digging the grave of imperialism in India and South-East Asia, which set in consequence the process of liquidation of imperialism from other parts of the world after World War II. After the Azad Hind revolution, the image of Netaji emerged in India in the majesty of an unprecedented revolutionary heroism and as the greatest anti-imperialist crusader of Asia. If the Mahatma is the gift of the noblest concept of nonviolent idealism, Netaji is the gift of the gloriest concept of revolutionary idealism to India and to the mankind of the modern age.24

**GANDHI-SUBHAS NEXUS**

A general belief is lingering in India, as has already been mentioned, that Subhas is a complete antithesis of Gandhi. This is, mainly because the
popular image of Gandhi still continues to be the image of a mahatma of non-violent satyagraha and that of Subhas, on the contrary, of a hero of a violent revolution. It is said that Mahatma Gandhi had always been a religious man whose lifestyle was completely different from the perfectly modern profile of Subhas. Gandhi was commonly known to be a pacifist and a reformist and Subhas a radical and a leftist. Gandhi relied on the conciliatory means of peaceful mass movement and negotiated settlement with the Britishers for the peaceful transfer of power to Indians, while Subhas preferred to pursue the course of uncompromising struggle for the seizure of power from the hands of the alien rulers. Gandhi had the dream of setting up a Ram Rajya or Gram Swaraj in free India, but Subhas hoped to build in it a modern socialist state. \(^{25}\) Gandhi was opposed to industrialisation and asked for the revival of village industries, whereas Subhas stood for planned economy and modern industry. It is, therefore, said that the image of Gandhi was wholly irreconcilable with that of Subhas and they symbolized two different types of personalities having no common nexus to relate them together in any concept of harmonious values. It is a known fact of history that Gandhi and Subhas had many differences, particularly regarding their ways and means of achieving freedom for India. But if a deeper study of the ideological characteristics of these two true Indians and two true nationalists is made, it will be found that, beneath their apparent contradictions, they had essentially a very large measure of identity in regard to their philosophical faiths and socio-political views. If a dispassionate and objective study of the hopes and dreams the two leaders entertained to rebuild a new India is made, it will be found that Gandhi and Subhas were much closer to one another than many think otherwise. If a re-evaluation of their fundamental thinking is undertaken, it will be seen that
belying many common beliefs Subhas was much nearer to Gandhi than Nehru. It missed the attention of many biographers of Gandhi that after the ‘great escape’ of Subhas, the days of conflict and contradiction between Gandhi and Subhas were over. After he plunged into the fury of World War II, staking everything in quest of the fulfilment of the liberation of his motherland, the attitude of Gandhi towards the rebel changed amazingly and the image of Subhas began to emotionally dominate the vision of the Mahatma. At least, Louis Fischer, a noted American journalist who came in close contact with Gandhi during the days of the war, and Maulana Azad, the Congress president of 1942, unmistakably noted in their books that, after Subhas left India, the attitude of Gandhi about the irrepressible rebel changed and changed very mystically. They were surprised to find, as was also noted by Sir Stafford Cripps in early 1942, that most of Gandhi’s political decisions were profoundly ‘influenced’ by his changed attitude towards Subhas. It is no rhetoric to say that had Subhas carved his way back into the heartland of India via Imphal, he would have stormed Delhi more thunderously than Nepoleon’s triumphant march into Paris from Elba. And, had such an eventuality really marked the history of Indian freedom, the Mahatma would have embraced Subhas to hail him as his changed heir-apparent. Most of the biographers of Gandhi overlooked the most significant fact how after 1945 the emotion of Gandhi was found to be swayed by his deep admiration and affection for Subhas and how the Mahatma was longing for the return of the ‘rebel’. In many of his post-prayer speeches and writings, in the Harijan, he focussed his special attention on none else but only on one man and he was Subhas Chandra Bose, whom he on most of the occasions later admiringly mentioned not as ‘Subhas’ but as ‘Netaji’. In December 1945, Gandhi came to
see the senior colleagues and followers of Subhas in the Dum Dum jail of Calcutta, then, all Congressmen had already been released except, mainly by the Subhasists. The Mahatma talked to the detenus for over an hour and mainly on Subhas. The Mahatma was found to become visibly emotional when he talked about Subhas. He touched his head with his forefingers when his eyes were found gleaming as he said very feelingly: “Netaji! What a bahadur he is! I feel awe-struck, how could he escape from India by throwing dust into the eyes of the Britishers? He staked everything for the freedom of his country.” For a minute, the Mahatma appeared to suddenly lapse into dead silence, and then he startled all the assembled detenus as he said: “I believe Subhas is alive. He is hiding somewhere. Even if somebody shows me the ashes, still I will not believe that Subhas is not alive.” The author, who was also then in detention in the same jail, was present in this meeting along with many well-known revolutionary leaders of Bengal, some of whom are still alive. Thereafter, the Mahatma reiterated this faith in a number of public statements. An unforgettable fact which all Indian biographers of Gandhi failed to note was recorded by only one American biographer in his book. He bafflingly questioned how could it happen that Gandhi, the apostle of non-violence, paid his last tribute in his last public speech to none else but to a votary of violence Subhas Chandra Bose. In his last post-prayer speech on January 23, 1948, only seven days before his martyrdom, the Mahatma talked only about Subhas and none else. It was the 52nd birthday of Netaji, and the Mahatma said on this day: “I do not remember the birthday of any person, nor do I attach any importance to it.” But the Mahatma could not forget one who abandoned everything for fulfilling the mission of Indian freedom. He continued: “He gambled away his own life for the sake of his country. What a
huge army he raised, making no distinction of caste and creed. His army was also free from provincial and colour prejudices. Subhas Chandra Bose was tolerant of all religions and consequently he won the hearts of all men and women of his country. He accomplished what he had set his heart on. We should call to mind his virtues and practise them in our lives.” In his last message, the ‘Father of the Nation’ urged the Indian people to emulate the ideals of Netaji. After the Tokyo Radio made a unofficial announcement about Netaji’s death in an alleged aircrash on August 23 1945, the Mahatma asked the Bose family not to perform any ‘Sradhi’ ceremony but to ‘hold mild prayers’. Gandhi said in a public statement later on January 2, 1946: “I believe Netaji is alive. He is hiding somewhere.” He repeated this belief many times publicly in 1946. The Government of India also received many intelligence reports which indicated that Netaji escaped to Russia. But it did nothing to find out what really happened to the greatest hero of Indian freedom. Had the Mahatma remained alive a few years more he would have Compelled the Government to make every effort to find out what exactly happened to Subhas. It appeared in late 1945 and early 1946 that the Mahatma was eagerly longing for the reappearance of Subhas.28

4.5 The First Saint of the Nuclear Age

Vinobaji was once described by one Western critic as ‘the last of the saints!’ How he came to this conclusion is difficult to understand. The critic was one who was not only well-informed on world affairs and ideologies, but he was also sympathetic to what Vinobaji stood for. And yet it seems that he had come to the strange conclusion that hence forward there was no scope for saintly careers in the modern world! In my humble opinion, Vinobaji could be presented as the ‘first saint of the nuclear age’ He was deeply spiritual and yet
very rational and modern in his outlook on life. I feel, therefore that in spite of his obvious deviation from the Gandhian concept of satyagraha and in spite of his ambiguous attitude during the crucial Emergency period in the seventies of the present century, Vinobaji will go down in history as a great sage, a brilliant thinker, a gentle social and religious reformer and a saint who in this age of advanced science and marvellous technology, propagated spiritual ideals both through practice and precept, for the benefit not only of Indians, but of the peoples of the whole world. His message of effecting a marriage of science and spirituality is most appropriate for the modern world. His contribution to Gandhian thought in this particular respect was extraordinary. The media persons always referred to Vinobaji as The Bhoodna Leader. They seemed to be unaware of the fact that he was a great saint who preserved the best in India’s ancient culture and who through his writings, discourses and activities consolidated, strengthened and expanded the context of the various aspects of Sarvodaya ideology. It might happen that in centuries to come, the Bhoodan aspect of his activities would be somewhat forgotten and his writings would be studied in Indian and even in foreign universities. Already, the task of publishing his collective works in Hindi in the form of twenty big volumes has started. Four volumes have already appeared. His teaching, when studied methodically, will continue to inspire both the old and the young to mould their lives in the light of the high religion-spiritual, as well as socio-political ideals that he has placed before them. He has not the slightest doubt that in the twenty first century itself, the world will welcome his most timely and significant message of bringing about a marriage between science and spirituality and establishing one world government leading to world peace.29
(III) A Comparison

Ruskin and Gandhi

Ruskin and Gandhi both established the supremacy of man over machine, of soul over matter. The manufacture of good souls was the most profitable profession, the world should realize, they maintained. The wealth of a nation does not consist in figures and bank accounts; it consists ‘in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures’. Gandhi took it out of Unto This Last and maintained that ‘man was the first consideration’ and ‘character-building’ the first requirement of education. Ruskin, in Unto This Last, pointed out the necessity of those persons who resolve to seek ‘not greater wealth, but simpler pleasure; not higher fortune, but deeper felicity; making the first of possessions, self-possession; and honoring themselves in the harmless pride and calm pursuits of peace’. He repeatedly urged the people to curb their ambitions and not to strive for future advancements. Contentment, he said, is the main thing. Gandhi was an absolute follower of Ruskin in this regard and maintained that happiness does not consist in the multiplication of wants but in the voluntary restriction of desires “Man’s happiness really lies in contentment”. To him, as to Ruskin, contentment is the best of riches and self-possession, the best of possessions. Gandhi left Ruskin far behind in this respect. Ruskin “was writing, lecturing and painting for his daily bread. Gandhi was daily putting in some manual labour for his bread besides writing, lecturing, editing and doing a thousand odd jobs. Ruskin believed in earning the bread ‘by the sweat of his brow’ but Gandhi earned. Ruskin maintained a distinction between rough work and fine work: ‘The head’s is the noble work, and the hand’s the ignoble’”. No such distinction exists for Gandhi. ‘If everybody lived by the sweat of his brow,
the earth would become a paradise. The question of the use of special talents hardly needed separate consideration’. Gandhi believed that God created man to work for his food, and said that those who are without work were thieves. Throughout his life he lived upto this ideal. The *Gita* was with Gandhi as the *Bible* was with Ruskin. Ruskin used the *Bible* to support his ideas, beautify his language and to awaken the conscience of those who read the *Bible* but never followed it. Gandhi read the *Gita* to strengthen his ideas but much more to follow it. The theory of work which Ruskin developed and the one which Gandhi developed are similar, to a great extent.\(^3\) Ruskin says: “Work first—you are God’s servants; Fee first—you are the Fiend’s.” But with Gandhi Fee is neither the first consideration nor the last. Work is to be done with no attachment whatsoever, with no consideration of reward and with a happy spirit. The spirit of sacrifice and renunciation reaches its perfection in Gandhi. Influence of Ruskin was great on Gandhi—he renounced all material possession and strove ‘to satisfy human needs in the simplest manner, coupled with the communal existence in which all labour was equally valuable and all goods were shared.’ It was the *Gita* which inwards guided him, molded his activities and shaped his character. He becomes a ‘*Karmyogi* in the true sense of the *Gita* words. In the sphere of education, Ruskin and Gandhi hold almost similar views. Both emphasize the necessity of physical labour and regard sound health and proper development as the first condition of successful education. The purpose of education was basically ethical and moral, to both of them: thus character-building was prime consideration. Education to Ruskin means teaching the young boys and girls ‘to behave as they do not behave.’ Gandhi similarly stressed upon the necessity of ‘the culture of the heart or the building of character.’ Ruskin wanted the youth of all
the classes to learn some manual crafts. The learning of handicrafts is essential to his scheme of education. Moreover, he wanted education to be directly related to life. So his emphasis is on vocational training and on trial schools. Gandhi always insisted on some useful vocation to be taught to all the young boys and girls. He wanted manual labour and the handicrafts to be a means and an instrument of education for developing the intellect.\textsuperscript{32} Ruskin and Gandhi both hated idleness as it bred corruption and wastage. Ruskin said that “it is mere insane waste to dig for coal for our force, while the vital force is unused; and not only unused, but, in being so, corrupting and polluting itself.” And Gandhi said that “it is criminal to displace the hand-labour by the introduction of power-driven spindles unless one is at the same time ready to give millions of farmers some other occupation in their homes.” They do not want “that machinery should replace human labour and spread unemployment and consequently corruption and crimes.”\textsuperscript{33} Ruskin and Gandhi both believed in the essential inequality of man and maintained that some persons would always be rich and some poor. Since both hated violence, they did not want the poor to revolt against the rich. They wanted the rich and the wealthy to use their wealth for the good of all. Ruskin was rich and spent much on charitable purposes but Gandhi voluntarily adopted poverty and thus put a greater ideal before the people. Both looked towards the past: Gandhi towards the \textit{Vedic} glories and the justice of the age of the \textit{Ramayan}; Ruskin towards Mediaeval aristocracy. Ruskin wanted the Kingdom of God on earth to be established and Gandhi dreamt of the Ram-Rajya and did much more for it than Ruskin did for his Kingdom of God. Both were men of religion and based their economic, social and political ideas on the solid rock of religion. Religion was to them more than scriptural and a ritual affair; it was, to Ruskin,
to breathe ‘into the clayey and brutal nature of man himself, the soul, or love of
God’; and, to Gandhi, it was Truth—Truth that is God! When we come to
study Ruskin and Gandhi as workers and idealists in the practical aspect we
note that Ruskin was a skilled specialist in the fine arts. His experience
‘comprised also the practical work of architecture, metal work, pottery,
jewellery, drawing and other skilled handicrafts, to say nothing of gardening
and other branches of rural work.’ When he had to direct road-making at
Oxford, he ‘sat with iron-masked stone-breaker, on his heap, to break stones
- I learned from an Irish street crossing sweeper what he could teach me of
sweeping; I worked with a carpenter until I could have at even shaving six feet
long off a board; Moreover Ruskin told us that he enjoyed doing manual
labour whenever he got a chance. Similarly Gandhi had learnt much of
gardening, shoe-making and carpentry in South Africa. Further, he learnt
some humanitarian trades like tending the sick and the wounded and fighting
against epidemics. Coming back to India he specialized in spinning and
weaving and a number of rural crafts. In India, he started with cleaning the
latrines. His activities had far-reaching economic, social and political effects.
Gandhi took to crafts and struck to them for the whole of his life: through his
practical efforts he brought about a great social and economic revolution in
Indian society. Manual labour for Ruskin was a matter of aesthetic pleasure.
He took to manual labour to please himself and then to cultivate in others the
taste for the beautiful. With Gandhi, service was religion, and manual labour
was the ritual. Ruskin’s efforts involved only the Oxford graduates and a few
more persons. Gandhi’s efforts involved all the people of the Indian sub-
continent. gandhiji always stressed human factor in technological and
economic development.
4.6 THE MAHATMA AND THE NETAJI

Indians are known to have displayed their deep sentiments to glorify their national leaders in terms of exalting attributes. They honoured Bal Gangadhar Tilak as the Lokmanya and Chitta Ranjan Das as the Deshbandhu. They eulogized Vallabhbhai Patel as the Sardar and adorned Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan with the epithet of Badshah Khan. They were also endearingly greeted Jawaharlal Nehru as Panditji and Abul Kalam Azad as Maulana Saheb. All these manifestations of popular admiration for their national leaders signified great appreciation of the people for the remarkable contributions these leaders made in the struggle for their national freedom. But the two unique expressions of national adoration—‘the Mahatma’ and ‘the Netaji’ for Gandhi and Subhas, respectively—characteristically signified two different concepts of national leadership. The two epithets symbolized the novelty as well as the magnificence of their leadership and the distinctiveness of their contributions to the struggle for national emancipation of the Indian people. Many Indian leaders vitally contributed to the struggle for India’s freedom, but only Gandhi and Subhas excelled in it as the two path-finders and as two incomparable architects of the ways and means for achieving national freedom. Though what Gandhi and Subhas achieved were not exclusively independent of each other, yet the ways and the means they adopted were characteristically different both conceptually as well as in action. Gandhi followed the means of non-violence and satyagraha, whereas Subhas pursued the course of leftism and revolution. Their ways diverged but their objective remained common—the attainment of independence. The people meaningfully appreciated the philosophic as well as the historical significance of their ways and means and as such the image of Gandhi
appeared to them as that of a saintly Mahatma—an apostle of non-violence and satyagraha—and of Subhas asthat of a Kshatriya Netaji—an epic hero of revolutionary struggle.36

4.7 TOLSTOY AND GANDHI

(i)THE BEHAVIORAL CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE RECURS, BUT IS OVERRIDDEN BY THE ATTUTUDINAL

Although Gandhi accepted Tolstoy’s conception of nonviolence as an attitude of good will and compassion, and rejected the behavioral conception he claimed to have learnt in India, he did make use of the behavioral conception sometimes. The latter required one to refrain from killing animals even accidentally. Jains would wear masks or sweep the street ahead of them to avoid accidental killing, even though, according to Gandhi, Indian nonviolence did not care about animal suffering. Occasionally, and not surprisingly, Gandhi slipped into talking about violence in this other way. He did so when he spoke of violence being unavoidable, when for example, we breathe in microbes. He said that “even the forest-dweller cannot be entirely free from violence, in spite of his limitless compassion. With every breath he commits a certain amount of violence. The body itself is a house of slaughter “ Again “ man cannot for a moment live without committing outward himsa [violence]. The very fact of his living – eating, drinking and moving about-necessarily involves come himsa, destruction of life, be it ever so minute.” This is violence in the behavioral, not the attitudinal, sense. But there is no room for confusion here. The attitudinal sense was explicitly introduced in contrast to the rejected behavioral sense, and it was nonviolence in the attitudinal sense that Gandhi officially endorsed.37
4.8 LENIN AND GANDHI

Another basic point of difference between Lenin and Gandhi is regarding “the mean of production.” While both more or less agree on the method of distribute on of wealth, there is a fundamental difference with regard to the method of production. According to Vinoba Bhave, the methods which marx, or for that matter Lenin, Accepted for industrialization are identical to those of capitalism. Gandhi, on the other hand, wanted these too to be revolutionized, i.e. the wastage of human labour and material, the de-humanization, the alienation from nature, and the horrifying proportion of pollution of the environment inherent in capitalist methods of producing wealth, must be stopped if we plan to live in a friendly and non-exploitative society. It is a hard fact to grasp, but it’s a basic element which pulls the two ideologies apart. Lenin believes that as the inspire and leader of a mass movement he was revolutionary.

The Individual

Individualism and the individual are two different things. On individualism, Gandhi and Lenin might agree to a great extent, but on the question of the freedom of the individual, there is a vast difference between the two. On the individual vs society, Gandhi states:

I value individual freedom but must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have to learn to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission
to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individuals and the society of which one is a member.

**Gandhi and Revolution**

Lenin, I suppose, would agree with ‘unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle’ and that “submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society’ But Gandhi goes further. ... her there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government.\(^{38}\)

**4.9 Jayprakash Narayan**

J.P. was perhaps the biggest mass-leader to join the Gandhian movement led by Vinobaji after Gandhi. He had multifaceted personality. Beginning as an enlightened Marxist and turning to a staunch nationalist and them to democratic socialist. J.P. devoted over one and a half decade of his best part of life to the bhoodan-Gramdan revolution reducing himself of zero. But infect like he was an earnest explores in the quest of truth of people’s power. From his vast experience in active politics and people movement of present, workers, etc. he came to the conclusion that people’s politics without people power is an illusion. So he tried one after the other. He did not stop with sarvodaya experiment in his quest of social dynamism, hence even at the advance age of 74 years, he led a movement of total revolution against the suppression of civil rights a freedom.

J.P. did not treat life and society in watertight compartments, hence, though he had a selfless mission, he did not confine either his idea or his personality within the narrow and sectarian frontiers of sarvodaya monasticism. He would
not hesitate to take up the issue either of Kashmir or Bangladesh, Tibet or Checholovakia, Chamal or communal riots as his important missions. I can say that through J.P.’s personality and multi-faced work, he gave prestige as well as wider acceptances to Gandhism. Gandhism to him was not some rituals of spinning, prayer and observances of some Ashram rules. It was not only an individual but a societal affairs. Even while in Bhoodan-Gramdan movement, he interpreted these movements in terms of national and international perspectives. He could effectively interpret to the people as well as to the intellectual community the rational behind Gandhi’s critique of parliamentary democracy and party politics in current political terminologies. He himself wrote about the reconstruction of Indian polity and people’s Government (Lokaswaraj). He differentiated between the change of Government from the change of system. There he could carry Gandhi’s message to the world in more convincing terms:

J.P.’s Gandhism had three sides;

(i) Socio-economic and cultural – Like a social scientist, he would try his best to provide socio-economic and cultural ground for any Gandhian movement-whether it is Bhoodan-Gramdan or partyless Government.

(ii) Moral and ethical – He believed that materialism cannot offer incentive to goodness. He felt that unless socialism or any social system has ethical basis, it will land us into contradiction.

(iii) Intellectual openness – J.P. was never a faddist, so he never made a fetish of anything. For example he did not join any political party in the later period of his life, he did not hesitate tolled and election campaign to out a dictatorship. Though he believed in Khadi, he
floated the idea of Lokvastra. Though he did not subscribe to the idea of class-struggle, he had no hesitation to support the idea of non-violent class-struggle, though he was a believer in non-violence, he contributed a lot to the armed struggle of Mukti-Vahini of Bangladesh as he thought that violence is better than cowardice.³⁹

J.P. was a real Gandhian as he believed Gandhian in action. In his personal life, he was truthful, non-violent and compassionate, he even practiced life-long Brahmacharrya after Gandhi. He was a life long fighter like Gandhi. His faith in non-violence was total and complete. He regarded that non-violence is the only practical form of man direct action. He had a global mind. He had suggested setting of an unarmed international police force. He had also supported this idea of a confederation between India and Pakistan. He had sent groups of workers to study the experiments of rural reconstruction and decentralization in Yugoslavia. He had close contact with E.F. Schumacher, Richard Gregg, Ralph Barsodi on the problem of effecting decentralization. In short, in the Gandhian world, he had a international personality.⁴⁰

4.10 Untouchability

Untouchability referred to man-made distinctions of high and low and particularly those based on birth and calling. Such inequality was a menace and every effort was to be made to eradicate it by not observing restrictions on dining, calling, social interactions, and distribution of resources and opportunities. All inhabitants at the Ashram lived in the same quarters, ate together, and no work was considered below one’s dignity. Once a Harijan family came for admittance to the Ashram and opinion got divided. But Gandhi held his ground and the family was admitted after some fuss.
Varnashramadharma or occupational division of labor that recognized innate capacities and orientations of people and was influenced by hereditary situation was acceptable in Ashram life as no calling was considered high or low and one could change the calling. Moreover Varnashrama was in the spirit of service to others and not to amass position, prestige, power, or wealth. Gandhi, therefore, thought that Varnashramadharma was ethical, economic and convenient.\(^41\)

### 4.11 Their differences – Gandhiji, Lohia, Jayaprakash

Where there is no mere blind faith or just hero-worship, there are bound to be differences between close colleagues, friends, co-workers or even between master and disciples. There were undoubtedly differences between Gandhiji, on the one hand, and Jayaprakash and Lohia, on the other, in regard to the outlook on life, programmes, tactics and strategies of struggles, and views on different matters of concern to the nation. But it is a tribute to Gandhiji’s skilful use of the technique of non-violent approach to critics and political adversaries that he could win over Jayaprakash and Lohia, two of his most forthright young critics, to most of what is known as Sarvodaya. On the other hand, both Lohia and Jayaprakash deserve credit for their lack of doctrinaire dogmatism, open-mindedness, readiness to recognize genius and the large-heartedness to publicly admit the inadequacy of the ideological formulations of their early youth and to subscribe to the major tenets of Gandhism.

Would it be too much of an exhibition of optimism if one predicted that Gandhi would reign supreme not only in India, but throughout the modern world at the beginning of the twenty-first century, taking into consideration the recent world-wide regeneration of interest in Gandhiji’s life and message?\(^42\)
4.12 M.N. Roy’s Co-Operative Socialisms

Like J.P. Roy also discarded Party-system and power politics during the last phase of his life according to Roy, capitalism, Socialism, Communism and welfare state exc. Were unable to give freedom democracy and security to the individual. The only alternative in his view, was co-operative socialism. It was not mercy a method of economic attainment, but a way of life.

Consequently, e dissolved his radial democratic party in order to bring about a social revolution he propounded the philosophy of new humanism. In co-operatives socialism the individual would be independents unit of socially in Roy’s would “Man is freedom loving romantic and creative animal. He would submit to no domination, dictation or bondage. So it would be the task of the co-operative common wealth to give every individual opportunities for direct participation in the government of the state through panchayats. Roy, further believed that co-operative socialism could on one side to communism based on collective economy on the other side. Though co-operative socialism the present political crisis can be resolved. Roy believed indirect democracy in the form of a network of small co-operative commonwealth. There would be no clash between individual interest and the community intersect. He thus observed:

The co-operative approach moreover dose not stand merely for forms of enterprise or political institutions. It is the name for a social philosophy. It has an ethical spiritual dimension. Regard as such it is an alternative to orthodox liberalism as also to recent varieties of corporativism and communication. The Roy’s co-operative socialism is based on widespread decentralism on and a spirit and practice of op-operation. The co-operative economy according to Roy, should be guided by two consideration. “(a) the basic purpose of national
economy is to provide food, shelter and clothing for the people and (b) one must cut the coat according to the cloth available.

No doubt J.P. before joining sarvodaya movement and M.N. Roy before presenting his new philosophy of redial humanism criticised Marxism severely but their grounds of criticism were different where as J.P. Mainly criticised it it for its practice in sovit Russia, Roy main emphasis was on the concept criticism of Marxian philosophy. As J.P. main concern was with the practice of Marxism in comparison to Roy J.P. S criticism appears to be sporadic, piecemeal and less comprehensive while J.P. Kept in view only Indian Sitation. Roy criticized Marxism from the stand point of international communism. J.P. warned the Indian socialists to learn a lesson from the Russian communism, according to him, Marxism could not be practiced in India in the same manner in Russia, because there were deep and far-reaching differences in the circumstance, ethos, culture and tradition of the two countries. He appalled to the Indian communities to declare their independence of Moscow and to choose their own road to socialism. To J.P. Gandhism was not only an alternative to Marxism & at a much superior and suitable replacement ideology for India. Roy ruled out Gandhi’s objection on this count and conceived an alternative way of industrializing the country. J.P and M.N roy believed in Marxism way to bring about socialism in India.
Chapter – 4 : Reference

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