Chapter – III
GANDHI’S IDEA OF REPUBLIC

The central theme of Plato’s idea of republic is the question of ‘well-being’ and of ‘good life’. It is interesting to note that it is the same question of ‘well-being’ and of ‘good life’ that was the chief concern of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s idea of values, citizenship, political structure and also of the political movements. Gandhi’s role as a freedom fighter, as a leader of a mass movement against the British rule is an established fact and his political and social movements call for the highest regard amongst his country men. But it is the ideal behind the movement, the vision of the republic which he wanted to found in independent India, the basic value pattern that would sustain such a political order that is the pertinent point of discussion here. An exposition of such ideals should provide an insight by which his thoughts and actions could be viewed as bearing a comparable semblance to Plato’s thought and ideals.

Gandhi was a man of his times, the development of his thoughts and ideals was greatly fashioned by the political, social, economic history of contemporary India; greatly though not wholly. So, a close review of the socio–political conditions prevailing in India before and during the time when Gandhi rose into prominence as a political leader and a socio–political
thinker is my immediate concern. But at the same time we must not lose sight of the traditional cultural Indian in Gandhi that largely shaped his idea of the republic.

(1) **The Background:**

i) **The Political Background:** Gandhi’s serious activism in politics began in 1893 in South Africa and it was after returning to India in 1914 that his engagement in the cause of freedom of India took place. So, a review of the historical situation involving the freedom struggle in India till 1914 can shed light on the developments of his thoughts.

The Sepoy Mutiny took place in 1857 and India became a British colony under the Act of 1858. The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. In between the period of the Mutiny and the founding of the Congress, there were a number of tribal uprisings, amongst which the Santhal rebellion of 1855 and the uprising of the indigo cultivators in Bihar and Bengal against the European estate owners in 1860 were especially noteworthy. A little earlier, in between 1836–1854, in Malabar the Moplas revolted against their Namboodri landlords. Beside these regional revolts which were organized as protests against some specific kind of exploitation and extortion of a certain section of population, there was also a mass awakening involving larger section of the population. This happened when the British
decided to partition Bengal which was the centre of revolutionary politics. This happened in 1906 when the British decided to separate the Muslim majority areas of East–Bengal and Assam from the province of Bengal. The proposed partition of Bengal saw an enormous mass awakening when the leaders of Congress called for boycott and svādeśī movements. This movement permeated to every section of the society, to every part of the country. In spite of several measures taken by the government to curb the momentum of the movement, the movement continued for almost six years and in 1911, the government was forced to reverse the plan of partition of Bengal. In between, the Congress had been split into two major sections – the extremists and the moderates. The moderates were in favour of achieving svarāj within the British empire whereas the extremists were opposed to such a method of petition and prayer and wanted to achieve complete independence from the British rule. This period also saw a number of secret societies being set up with the sole purpose of conducting revolutionary activities amongst which the Anushilan Samiti, the Yugantar in Bengal, the Mitramela of Western India, the Bharat Mata Samiti of Punjab was particularly active. There were also some efforts, though scattered, to make the cause of India’s freedom an international issue. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Madame Cama, Lala Hardyal, Madanlal Dhingra, The Ghaddar
Party sought to achieve India’s freedom with foreign help. Rashvihary Bose, on the other hand sought to arouse dissension amongst the armed forces to cause a revolt against the rulers. These revolutionary activities did not cease with the advent of Gandhi in India’s political scenario. In fact the movements continued following their own ideals and beliefs.

Evidently the awakening of the people to the cause of India’s freedom had begun quite earlier than Gandhi initiating his political campaign which was not merely political. The traditional religio–ethical ideals of the historical India were perspectival to his political movement. It was not only the educated urban populace that actively participated in the cause of freedom, even the rural people, the depressed sections of the society, the tribals, and the women in large number were equally involved. Gandhi aroused a mass consciousness for freedom.

ii) The Social Background: It is perhaps true to say that India in the second half of the nineteenth century underwent a social and intellectual rebirth. The British rule brought about an inflow of the British ideals. Thus, the British ideals of liberal democracy and constitutionalism, its philosophical trend of agnosticism and positivism, its empirical ethical trends of utilitarianism influenced the intelligentsia and the educated masses. This influence was especially apparent in the event of what is usually called the
Bengal renaissance. The novels of Bankim Chandra and of the other novelists though having nationalist undertone exhibit the influence of such new ideas from the West. The different religious reform movement of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda, Dayananda Sarawasti, Aurobindo Ghosh; the socio-religious reform activities of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Brahma Samaj, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and the education movement, helped in creating a social and cultural awakening against the orthodoxy for liberal values. This period also saw the establishment of the vernacular press which became a very important means of communication and expression of the leaders of the movement. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, through his writings in the Marathi daily newspaper Kesari and the English weekly Mahratta continuously tried to arouse the people and organize them for the national struggle. Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh also communicated to the masses through the vernacular press. This period also witnessed the introduction of railways, a move which literally mobilized the nation.

These social, religious and intellectual movements also prepared the ground for Gandhi to pursue the cause of social reform and constructive programme for a reordering of the society. In fact, the cause of the removal of untouchability which was one of the prime concern of Gandhi was
emphasized by Swami Vivekananda and Bal Gangadhar Tilak years before him. Swami Vivekananda in his famous appeal to the nation contended: “Go to the untouchables, the cobblers, the sweepers and others of their kind, and tell them, ‘You are the soul of the Nation and in you lies infinite energy which can revolutionise the world’. …Go and find schools amongst them”.¹ Gandhi followed the path already shown by these men in the sphere of social upliftment.

iii) **The Intellectual Background**: The period of Gandhi’s childhood and youth was thus a period of political, social and intellectual upheaval. Besides, the mid–nineteenth century was witnessing a non–acceptance of the socially age old customs and rituals of a stagnant society. Influenced by western, liberal education new subjects, new methods of enquiry were being introduced in the curriculum of institutionalized education. Gandhi, born and brought up in such an age could not be totally blind to such changes. He pursued western education and was influenced by the thoughts of the western thinkers, without abandoning his traditional moorings. In 1888 during his study of law in London, Gandhi become acquainted with the common laws of England and the Roman laws. Apart from his study in Roman Law, he was acquainted with Plato’s Apology. In the *Apology* he found “the qualities of an elixir”.² In 1908 a paraphrase of it was published
in a six part series in *Indian Opinion* and later as a pamphlet under the title, *Story of a soldier of Truth*. In the literary sphere, Tolstoy’s works were gaining prominence in the modern India’s literary and intellectual sphere. One of Tolstoy’s works, *The Kingdom of God is within you*, Gandhi read for the first time in 1894. In this work Tolstoy viewed Christianity as an ethical system. This ethics is the ethics of the *Sermon on the Mount* which teaches the doctrine of non–violence and the supremacy of the conscience. This work was made a compulsory reading for the members of the Phoenix Settlement and was later on translated in Gujrati by Gandhi. Among the other important works of Tolstoy were *What is Art?*, *How shall we escape?*, *The slavery of our times* and *The First step*. All these works were criticisms of the various aspects of the new industrial civilization. But it was Tolstoy’s *Letter to a Hindoo* which was perhaps the most controversial of all his work and it was in this work that he commented, “…it is not the English who have enslaved the Indians, but the Indians who have enslaved themselves”. This comment along with Tolstoy’s practical commitment to non–violence gave a new thrust to Gandhi’s political programme especially in South Africa, and in 1909 / 1910 Gandhi published both the English and Gujrati versions of this letter.
Besides Tolstoy, among the other noteworthy thinkers of the age were Carlyle and Ruskin. Ruskin’s work on economic philosophy, *A joy for ever and its price in the market* was published in 1880. But it was Ruskin’s second *work unto this last* that was unique in content and analysis. Gandhi avidly read this. The establishment of the Phoenix Settlement which remained a prototype of three other settlements— the Tolstoy Farm outside Johannesburg, the Sabarmati Ashrama outside Ahmedabad and Sevagram outside Wardha, followed the study of this book. A nine part paraphrase of Ruskin’s book was serially published in *Indian Opinion* and later on was published as a pamphlet under the title *Sarvodaya*.

Amongst the other prominent works of this age which were of interest to Gandhi included Henry Sumner Maine’s classic work *Village Communities in the East and West* (1871) which pictured the ideal of village community, Edward Carpenter’s *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*, Godfrey Blount’s pamphlet *A New Crusade* which was again summarized in the *Indian Opinion* in 1905 by Gandhi, Thomas Tailor’s *Fallacy of Speed* which was summarized by Gandhi, Max Nordau’s *Conventional Lies of Civilization* (1895), and *Paradoxes* (1906), Robert Harborough Sherad’s *White Slaves of England: Being a True Picture of Certain Social Condition in the Kingdom of England in the Year 1897*. Besides these thinkers there
were others whose thoughts also had their own impact upon this age. Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo, William MacIntyre Sulter were the acclaimed authors of repute. The notable figures of John D. Rockefeller, Jeremy Bentham, Wendel Phillips, Daniel Webster, Mathew Arnold, St. Francis Xavier, St. Theresa and Charles Darwin with their profound contribution in their respective fields enriched the literary, philosophical, scientific advancement of this age. The work of the legendary figure Mazzini entitled, *Duties of Man* also figure as an inspirational work of this age to some, including Gandhi.³

iv) **The Religious Background**: Though Gandhi extensively studied the writings of the western thinkers and took note of them, it was primarily the culture and tradition of India as he understood them that shaped and developed his ideas. India has a long history of rationality. This rationality is the rationality of religion and ethics. The rational religiosity does not constrict one’s views for it is a religion of principle, not institutional religion. “To understand Gandhi’s activity it should be realized that his doctrine is like a huge edifice composed of two different floors or grades. Below is the solid ground work – the basic foundation of religion. On this vast and unshakable foundation is based the political and social campaign. It
is not the ideal continuation of the invisible foundation but it is the best structure possible under present conditions. It is adapted to conditions”.

The religious base of Gandhi’s political activities and thoughts is better understood if religion is not understood in the western sense of the term ‘religion’, but in the broader Indian sense of dharma. This broader context of dharma was conveyed to Gandhi by the study of the classics of Indian thought – The Upanisad-s, Pāṇini’s Yogasūtra, the Code of Manu, Tulsidas’s Rāmāyana and The Bhagavad Gītā. The different ethical and metaphysical explanations of the Jaina and Bauddha texts also inspired him to realize inner development and spirituality in the quest for political autonomy and independence. The political objective he strived for was founding a state based upon certain fundamental moral principles of traditional India. Gandhi believed in a law–governed universe. “…anybody who believes that the universe is governed by Laws …agrees that the idea is analogous to Rta”.

Rta is the most dominant ethical concept in the RgVeda. It stands for the order of natural phenomena. It is also at the same time the moral order in obeyance to which God and men are to conduct themselves. It is not a mere speculative abstraction but a reality, a physical and moral order for which Mitra and Varuna are the guardian deities, which is apprehended directly in
the course of natural phenomena. In short, ṛa as a moral order enjoins upon man a set of moral principles to be followed by men in their social conduct.

The idea of ṛa was later replaced by the idea of dharma in the RgVeda itself. Dharma is the central ethical concept particularly in post–RgVedic thought. It is the principle which defines, preserves, underlies and regulates a thing’s being. Man has to conform to a higher order of universal dharma in order to preserve himself in worldly life and is the way to what is of ultimate concern. Such conformity leads to one’s own welfare along with that of others. So dharma is viewed basically as a form of social and individual welfare. Gandhi in a similar vein understood dharma as a universal morality to which the affairs of men and state should conform.

The word ‘dharma’ though makes its first appearance in the RgVeda; it developed into an ethical concept in the period of the Upaniṣad-s and Smṛti sāstra. Dharma is different from ṛa. ṛta is both natural and moral order. The ṛta concept was later absorbed in the concept of dharma restricted to human moral order. In the period of the Brāhmaṇa-s, the Smṛti literature, dharma acquired a new meaning in the sense of moral duty in general and spiritual duty in particular. It is in this sense dharma appears as one of four objects of human pursuits (puruṣārtha) along with artha, kāma and mokṣa. Dharma is fundamental puruṣārtha in the sense that artha and kāma should
be bound and guided by *dharma* which paves for the laity, the social beings, the way to *mokṣa* (salvation) which is the ultimate concern. The moral order of *dharma* thus also implies justice and righteousness. It is interesting to note that in the ancient Indian political tradition, amongst the several duties enjoined, it is the *rājadharma* which became the chief dharma to be observed and codified—even within *Dharmaśāstra* and also independently—as the *Arthaśāstra* encompassing economics and politics. The performance of *rājadharma* is important for it is the duty of the king. The king’s duty is to ensure the protection of rights and welfare of the people. In the ancient political tradition the state regulated the affairs of the society and the king stood at the helm of the state. In the *Mahābhārata* the duties of the king are described aptly by Bhiṣma, “the foundation of individual security (comprising the security of person and property), as well as the stability of the social order, the basis of the great institutions of family and property, the support of the fundamental law of the social order and the guarantee of normal functioning of the social, the economic and the religious activities of the people”.

Keeping with this ideal that the king and his office have to perform, *rājadharma* gained a conspicuous place and precedence over the other *dharma*-s. “Like the rein unto the steed and the goad to the elephant, is
“rājadharma to the people”\textsuperscript{8}. Just as the footprints of all creatures sink in those of an elephant all the duties in the sense of dharma are embedded and encompassed in the duties of the king. A king not performing his rājadharma adequately cannot expect his subjects to perform their respective svadharma adequately.

Besides the concept of rājadharma, the notion of sādhanadharma or general duty which every individual has to perform for his own benefit, is an important feature of dharma. In the classification of sādhanadharma Manu cites the following ten duties: dhṛti or steadfastness, kṣama or forgiveness, dama or application, cauryabhāva or non–appropriation i.e. non–stealing, sauca or cleanliness, indriyanigraha or containing of the sensibilities and sensuous appetites, dhi or wisdom, vidyā or learning, satya or veracity and akrodha or restraint of anger. In a similar classification of sāmānya or generic duties or the duties which are common to all aśrama-s (stations) of life and all varnas of the communities Praśastapāda cites the following duties: dharme śraddhā, dharme manahprāśadah or moral earnestness, regard for the spiritual, ahiṁsā or refraining form injury to living beings, bhūtahitatva or seeking the good of creatures, satyavacana or speaking the truth, asteya or refraining from theft, brahmacarya or sexual continence, anupadhā or sincerity, purity of motive, krodhavarjana or renouncing,
restraining anger, abhiṣecana or ablution and snāna or personal cleanliness, sucidravyasevana or the eating of linseeds and other specified substances on special occasions for the object of suci or purification of the body, viṣṇu-devatā-bhakti or devotion to deities recognized by the Veda-s, upavāsa or fasting on specified occasions, apramāda or moral watchfulness, and nityanaimittikānām karmanām aśyambhāvena karanam or unfailing performance of unconditional duties. It is this concept of duties that are obligatory on the part of every individual and which though directed to individual betterment leads to social betterment, that inspired Gandhi to construct a social and political order based on such basic individual virtues.

Gandhi’s political activities, as is well known, revolve around the cardinal virtues of satya and ahiṃsā. For Gandhi, satya or truth is the guiding moral instrument of achieving a just and stable society and political state. “The true prevails, not the untrue; by the true path is laid out, the way of the gods (devayana), on which the old sages, satisfied in their desires, proceed to where there is that highest place of the True One”. This Upaniṣadic dictum along with the others instilled in Gandhi a belief that, “devotion to Truth, is the sole justification for our existence”. Satya features as an important duty both in Manu’s enumeration of sādhāranadharma and in Praṣastapāda’s enumeration of sāmānyadharma.
Satya is also included in the pañca yamas of Patanjali’s Yogasūtra, the others being ahiṃsā or tenderness, benevolence, goodwill, asteya or abstention form theft, brahmacarya or continence and aparigraha or renunciation. So satya is a duty, it is a restraint that controls the mind and prepares the ground for yoga, it is the means of attaining a just social order, it is also an end in itself. Since satya is an end in itself, it is a moral virtue in the sense of a moral law or a set of moral laws. It is satya in this sense that became the guiding principle of thought and action in Gandhi’s philosophy, satya is not merely truth telling when it is said that dharma is founded on satya. For Gandhi the values of satya and ahiṃsā are inseparable. As Gandhi himself said, “without ahiṃsā it is not possible to seek and find truth…They are like the two sides of a coin. Nevertheless, ahimsa is the means, truth is the end. Means to be means must be always within our reach, and so ahimsa is our duty”.

Ahiṃsā has been an important component of Hindu tradition for thousands of years. The doctrine of ahiṃsā owes its origin to a mystical passage in the Chandogya Upaniṣad (iii.17) where ahiṃsā along with four other values feature as right form of conduct, the other values being—meditation, charity, right dealing and truthfulness. Ahiṃsā finds an important place in the sutra-s of Gautama. Ahiṃsā is also included as a
duty in Praśastapād’s enumeration of sāmānya – dharma. In Pātanjali’s Yogasūtra ahimsa is included in the pañca–yama-s (five restraints) the practice of which will purify the mind.\textsuperscript{15} Ahiṃsā in the context of pañca–yama-s do not mean merely a negative state of abstention from a tendency to cause harm to others. It also signifies a positive tendency of peaceful co–existence and harmony. Gandhi’s concept of ahiṃsā can be viewed as developed principally from the epics of Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata.

The Mahābhārata and the Ramayana …are undoubtedly allegories as the internal evidence shows. That they most probably deal with historical figures does not affect my proposition. Each epic describes the eternal duel that goes on between the forces of darkness and of light….My notions were an outcome of a study of the Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanisads etc.\textsuperscript{16}

The concept of Ahiṃsā is also the intended inherent meaning of the teachings of Bhagavad Gītā, to Gandhi. For Gandhi understood anāśakti or non–attachment to be the primary lesson of The Gītā. “Anasakti transcends Ahimsa. He who would be anasakta (selfless) has necessarily to practice non–violence in order to attain the state of selflessness. Ahimsa is therefore, a necessary preliminary, it is included in Anasakti, it does not go beyond it”.\textsuperscript{17} The concept of Ahiṃsā received a revival in between the tenth and nineteenth centuries, in the period of the Bhakti – movement. The
proponents of the movement including Basava, Lingayats, Ramananda, Kabir, Mira Bai, and Nanak, all emphasized the cause of āhīṁsā.

It is a known fact that āhīṁsā finds a predominant place in the Jaina and Baudhda philosophy and religion. In the Jaina philosophy the concept of āhīṁsā gains the place of a fundamental moral value. The Jain concept of vitarāga (dispassion) is the source of samatābuddhi, i.e. if we adopt dispassionate reason āhīṁsā is the necessary corollary. One cannot afford to be violent if one acquires the vision of treating everybody equally. The Jaina philosophy advocates that salvation can be achieved only through the practice of triratna or three jewels, which are – samyak jñāna or valid knowledge of reality or tattva jñāna of self or ātmā, matter or pudgala, and composite body of atoms or anusarīghāta; samyak darśan or reverence and devotion and belief in the teachings of the Jina-s and samyak cātritra (sadācāra) or detaching oneself from acts and events which are not conducive to the wellbeing of others and attaching oneself with acts and events which are conducive to the wellbeing of others. This samyak cātritra is constituted by five practices or pañca mahāvrata to be observed by the śramanas or the ascetics. These pañca mahāvratas are - āhīṁsā or not taking any life even by mistake, sunṣṭa or speaking in such a way as is true, good and pleasing, asteya or not taking anything which has not been given and
which is not one’s own, brahmacarya or observance of strict control of matters relating to mind, speech and body, and aparigraha or non-possession of wealth in excess of one’s basic wants. Amongst these five practices ahiṁśā is fundamental, the others are important in the sense that their non-observance lead to ahiṁśā or injury to other beings. Ahiṁśā as a value reigns supreme in the Bauddha philosophy too. The natural quality of karuṇā (compassion) in man constitutes the source of ahiṁśā, for karuṇā is natural propensity in man exemplified in natural compassion of the mother towards her child. The ethics of the Baudda philosophy is the ethics of karuṇā and ahiṁśā.

Gandhi’s preoccupation with the concept of nonviolence or ahiṁśā was not only at the level of an individual value, the inculcation of which was essential for individual excellence. Since ahiṁśā is fundamental and applicable to all it always enriches the other values, the extent of its application cannot be determined, it transcends itself from an individual virtue to a social virtue. Similarly, for Gandhi ahiṁśā was not only a moral value, it was a social as well as political value.

Beside the Hindu religion, there were also other religions which were practiced in India like Islam and Christianity. For Gandhi Islam was important in the sense that it preached peace, “its unadulterated belief in the
oneness of God and a practical application of the truth of the brotherhood of man for those who are nominally within its fold”.\textsuperscript{18} He was profoundly influenced by the simplicity, charity, complete devotion to God in the character of Prophet Muhammad and his son-in-law Ali. Christianity and its basic tenets also had its own influence in contemporary India. Gandhi was equally well conversant with the \textit{Old Testament} and the \textit{New Testament} of the \textit{Bible}. “But the New Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart; I compared it with the Gita. …That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly”.\textsuperscript{19} The message of love preached by Jesus had a social significance according to Gandhi. “The love that Jesus taught and practiced was not a mere personal virtue, but it was essentially a social virtue”.\textsuperscript{20}

This was the political, social, intellectual and religious atmosphere prevailing in British subjugated India during which Gandhi rose to prominence not only as a political leader, a mass organizer but also as a social reformer and religious thinker. This back drop provided Gandhi the necessary ground to develop and articulate his ideas regarding the complete restructuring of the political order.
2) Gandhi’s Republic:

Amidst such political, socio-cultural and historical conditions Gandhi lived, developed and extended his life and activities. His political activism was guided by his intellectual activism and this in turn was largely shaped by his religious belief. It is clear from the history of pre–Gandhian politics, that the political situation in India was ready for an outburst.

The leaders of the Congress in order to organize the masses in the struggle for independence, time and again took recourse to religious practices and religious injunction. Rabindranath Tagore during the protest movement against partition of Bengal organized the Raksha Bandhan ceremony, which was of course secular in nature. Bal Gangadhar Tilak organized the ‘Ganapati’ festival under the banner of the Congress to organize the masses. Thus, the introduction of religion, in the narrow sense of denominational religion, into politics had begun long before Gandhi’s entry in to the Indian politics. Gandhi not only continued with this political legacy, but justified it as the cultural legacy of India over the millennia.

Gandhi’s political activism was at the bottom a religio-ethical activism. It was the ethical upliftment of individuals that he was striving for and the sanctions which he provided in support of such standards was mainly derived from religion. But this religion he never meant to be
denominational religion, it was the religious consciousness of India, Gandhi thought. Thus, Gandhi’s religion is the religion of the Upaniṣad-s and the Gītā, no less than the religion of the Koran and the Bible. The question that remains is, could Gandhi carry this catholic universal moral sense of religion into the ethos of the masses? However it is regarding these ethical concepts underlying the political concepts that a certain comparison to Plato’s concepts becomes evident. Gandhi’s central concept of the republic revolves around his five cardinal concepts which form the pillars of his entire philosophy. These five concepts are: i) Satyāgraha, ii) Svarāj and Rāmrājya, iii) Naī Tālim or the scheme of Education, iv) The Economic Scheme and v) Sarvodaya

i) Satyāgraha: Satyāgraha is one of the central concepts of the philosophy of Gandhi. It denoted a political movement, yet its content was more ethico-religious than political. The sources from which the term was derived was chiefly religious. He himself admitted that this concept was inspired by his readings of the Sermon on the Mount, Bhagavad Gītā and also Tolstoy’s The Kingdom of God is within you. 21

The term satyāgraha was coined by Gandhi for the first time in South Africa, “to express the force that Indians there used for full eight years”. 22

This force and the movement using such force was different from the
movement of Passive Resistance, prevailing in United Kingdom and South Africa.

None of us knew what name to give to our movement. I then used the term ‘Passive Resistance’ in describing it. I did not quite understand the implication of ‘Passive Resistance’ as I called it. I only knew that some new principle had come into being. As the struggle advanced, the phrase ‘Passive Resistance’ gave rise to confusion and it appeared shameful to permit this great struggle to be known only by an English name. Again, that foreign phrase could hardly pass as a current coin among community. A small prize was therefore announced in Indian Opinion awarded to a reader who invented the best designation for our struggle. Maganlal Gandhi was one of the competitors and he suggested ‘Sadagraha’ meaning ‘firmness to a good cause’. I liked the word, but it did not fully represent the whole idea I wished to connote. I, therefore, corrected it to ‘Satyagraha’. Truth (satya) implies love, and firmness (agraha), engenders and, therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus begun to call the Indian movement ‘Satyagraha’, that is to say, the Force which is born of Truth and Love or Non-violence, and gave up the use of the phrase ‘Passive Resistance’, in connection with it, so much so that even in English writing we often avoided it and used instead the word ‘Satyagraha’ itself or some other equivalent English phrase. This, then, was the genesis of the movement which came to be known as Satyagraha, and of the word used as a designation for it.23
Satyāgraha is a law. It is the eternal principle of the law of love. This law of love is nothing but the law of Truth. “Satyagraha is like a banyan tree with innumerable branches, Civil disobedience is one of such branch: Satya (Truth) and Ahimsa (Non–violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out”. In a similar vein Gandhi stated, “Non–cooperation and Civil Disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called Satyagraha. It is my Kalpadruma–my Jam–i–Jam–the Universal Provider. Satyagraha is a search for Truth; and God is Truth. Ahimsa or non-violence is the light that reveals the Truth to me. Swaraj for me is part of that Truth. …For, Satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in every one of us. Like Swaraj, it is our birth right. Let us know it”. Thus, Gandhi introduced the concept of freedom into the concept of Truth, which was not included in the original meaning of Truth.

So, the literal meaning of satyāgraha or holding on to Truth clarifies its meaning. It is not only a force, it is Truth force, and since Truth and soul or spirit is identical, it is reduced to a soul force. Thus, satyāgraha is a character of the soul, it is an inner attribute, those who practice it try to grasp it by the processor self revelation. Thus, for Gandhi satyāgraha is the only means of achieving moral freedom as well as political freedom. “The world rests upon the bedrock of Satya or Truth. Asatya meaning untruth also
means non–existence, and Satya or Truth also means that which Is. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of question. And Truth being that which Is can never be destroyed”.26 This observation of Gandhi is noteworthy for he equates the epistemological criterion of ‘satya’ with the metaphysical criterion of ‘sat’ existence. So, what is True alone exists, what is untrue has no existence and hence cannot be adhered to.

As satyāgraha is clinging on to Truth and Truth alone exists, this satyāgraha can be practiced and developed for a cause which is true and just. “There can be no Satyagraha in an unjust cause. Satyagraha in a just cause is vain if the men espousing it are not determined and capable of fighting and suffering to the end, and the slightest use of violence often defeats a just cause. Satyagraha excludes the use of violence in any shape or form, whether in thought, speech or deed. Given a just cause, capacity for endless suffering and avoidance of violence, victory is a certainty”.”27

It is because satyāgraha is a character of the soul, a soul force that its victory is certain. It is the aim of satyāgraha to conquer oneself, to purify him, by getting rid of the greed, desires and passions that overcome his reason. The influence of the Jaina concept of vitarāga or dispassionate reason along with the Bauddha concept of karuṇā or compassion is apparent in Gandhi’s construction of the concept of satyāgraha. Gandhi combined
reason with love in their purity to make the meaning of *satyāgraha* which is not to harbour any evil feelings towards the evil doer, to resist the evil and not the evil doer. *Satyāgraha* also signified an overriding power of love to transform the hearts of the evil doer. It is in this context that Gandhi held, “It is a fundamental principle of satyagraha that the tyrant, whom the satyagrahi seeks to resist, has power over his body and material possessions but he can have no power over the soul. The soul can remain unconquered and unconquerable even when the body is imprisoned. The whole science of Satyagraha was born from knowledge of this fundamental truth.”  

Thus, it is apparent that *satyāgraha* operates on two levels, the first level is acquiring inner freedom i.e. freedom from inner vices. The second level is acquiring outer freedom or political freedom of the state. Both these freedom are essential for it is impossible to be ‘free’ in the absence of any of these, and if one is not free he cannot comprehend truth and one who cannot comprehend truth can have no existence of worth. It is difficult for everyone to achieve this stage of inner and outer freedom but Gandhi thought its practice could be pursued by everybody. “It has however, been objected that Satyagraha, as we conceive it, can be practiced by a select few. My experience proves the contrary. Once its simple principles—adherence to Truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering are understood, any body can
practice it. It is as difficult or as easy to practice as any other virtue. It is as little necessary for its practice that everyone should understand the whole philosophy of it, as it is for the practice of total abstinence”.

Though everybody can strive for such satyāgraha, not everyone can become a real satyāgrahi. Gandhi himself mentioned the qualities essentials for a satyāgrahi:

a) He must have a living faith in God, for He is his only Rock.

b) He must believe in Truth and Non–Violence as his creed, and therefore, have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.

c) He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and possessions.

d) He must be a habitual khadi–wearer and spinner. This is essential for India.

e) He must be a teetotaler and be free from the use of other intoxicants, in order that his reason may be always unclouded and his mind constant.

f) He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.

g) He should carry out the jail rules, unless they are specially devised to hurt his self–respect.
The qualifications are not to be regarded as exhaustive. They are illustrative only.\textsuperscript{30}

In order to accomplish these qualifications, the \textit{satyāgrahī} has to undergo a definite training. He must practice \textit{brahmacarya}. \textit{Brahmacarya} means complete control over the senses. Further one has to acquire control over his thoughts. There is however no prescribed method to attain such control of thoughts. As Gandhi states, “This control is unattainable save by the grace of God. There is a verse in the second chapter of the Gita which, freely rendered, means: ‘Sense-effects remain in the abeyance whilst one is fasting or whilst the particular sense is starved, but the hankering does not cease except when one sees God face to face’. This control is not mechanical or temporary. Once attained, it is never lost”\textsuperscript{31} The idea of ‘grace of God’ was inspired to Gandhi by the \textit{Bhakti} philosophy. This \textit{Bhakti} movement also inspired the composition of \textit{Rām–dhun}, a prayer hymn by Gandhi.

The \textit{satyāgrahīs} have to undergo a physical training for without the presence of a healthy body, a healthy mind cannot carry out its orders. A good physic by training is necessary to stand through any hardship that may come in his struggle, and also to help others in their distress. The training of the body and the mind instills fearlessness and courage that are essential attributes in any kind of struggle—be it moral or political. But mere courage
is not enough. The satyagrahis must practice discipline. “...if we have not learnt the discipline of obeying our own rules, in other words, carrying out our own promises, we are ill-adapted for disobedience that can be at all described as civil”.

The knowledge of Truth, the eternal principle, can foster courage and discipline among the seekers of truth or the satyagrahis and they alone are equipped to participate in the freedom struggle which is nothing but dharma-yuddha or a struggle for righteousness. In this context it is pertinent to cite Gandhi’s historical examples of the satyagrahis. Gandhi regards Daniel, who disobeyed the laws of the Medes and Persians and quietly suffered the punishment as a satyagrahi. “Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be the Truth to the Athenian youth, and bravely suffered punishment of death. He was, in this case a satyagrahi”.

Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having being model citizens of state to which they belonged. Similarly, he mentions the names of Prahlad and Mirabai as true satyagrahis. The mention of these names is significant. It suggests that satyagraha is not, as is commonly understood, disobedience to laws and a satyagrahi is not a law–breaker.

A satyagrahi is nothing if not instinctively law–abiding, and it is his law- nature which exacts from him implicit obedience to the highest law that is, the Voice of Conscience, which over–rides all other laws.
Similarly civil disobedience, an offshoot of satyāgraha, is not disregard and rejection of all laws. It implies a primary obedience to laws of voluntary association such as conferences and also obedience to state laws. “It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society, scrupulously, that he is in a position to judge as to which particular rules are good and just, and which unjust and iniquitous. Only then does the right accrue to him of the Civil Disobedience of certain laws in well–defined circumstances”.\(^{36}\) Thus both obedience and disobedience are implied in satyāgraha. Obedience to the eternal law of Truth is primary for this it is necessary to disobey its contrary.

Satyāgraha, though primarily an ethical concept is also a programme for character building for action. This is especially made clear in the following Gandhian observation, “Satyagraha teaches us the art of living as well as dying. Birth and death are inevitable among mortals. What distinguishes the man from the brute is conscious striving to realise the spirit within … the art of dying follows as a corollary from the art of living …The art of dying for a Satyagrahi consists in facing death cheerfully in the performance of one’s duty”.\(^{37}\)

It is this inner realization, the striving for the right that is the essence of satyāgraha. Such satyāgraha, however practiced whether by individual
penance and suffering or by mass movement of civil disobedience aims at the solitary ideal of achieving individual and collective dignity and honour.

It is here that the fundamental principles of satyāgraha remind us of certain key principles of Plato’s thoughts. In the Platonic scheme of republic the principal theme was justice and its definition. The nature of justice and the establishment of a just political order was the aim of The Republic. But it is also true that justice was the moral virtue made into a political virtue. This is because justice was viewed on the dual plane of ‘virtue in the individual’ as well as ‘virtue in the state’. Satyāgraha is also a virtue; it is both a moral virtue and a political virtue. It is also viewed as operating on the dual plane of the individual and the society. Just as justice is a law, satyāgraha is also a law. Both are eternal laws, both aims at maintaining social stability through inner harmony. Justice is inclusive of both rights and duties. Satyāgraha is the right of every countrymen and is also an obligatory duty of any body who wishes to live with dignity an authentic life, life of truth and knowledge. As justice can only be acquired by those who are wise, a true satyāgrahi is also a person who has wisdom, who has the knowledge of what is true and what is not true. It is this wisdom together with courage and discipline that makes a true satyāgrahi. Thus the qualities of the wise man and a true satyāgrahi are almost synonymous. As the qualities of the
"satyāgrahī" has to be acquired, it has to be acquired through a training programme much like the training programme of the guardian class envisaged in *The Republic* which prepares the citizens to assume the responsibility of the guardians of the state.

‘Obedience to laws’ is also a chief characteristic of the *satyāgrahī*, as also that of a just man. The question of adherence to laws was emphasized by Plato in the last speeches of Socrates in the *Crito*. The same emphasis on obedience to laws is implied in *satyāgraha*. Even when one does disobey laws that are unjust, one must be prepared to face its consequences.

A similar emphasis is given to training of the mind and the body, both by Plato and by Gandhi. The aim of training the body is to strengthen the physical health and the training of the mind is necessary to control the passions and emotions, which often disturbs the mental equilibrium? Abstention from bodily pleasures except for the purpose of procreation is emphasized both by Plato and by Gandhi. Finally viewing ‘death’ not as an event of sorrow and fatality, but as a state of bliss and happiness is common to both the Socratic Plato and Gandhi.

It is also true that Gandhi in his development of the concept of *satyāgraha* was not confined to the rationality of Plato’s thoughts. It is a mixture of ethicality, rationality and love, much reminiscent of the
karmavāda of Gītā which emphasizes on the combined effort of jñāna, bhakti and karma. This is because the concept of satyāgraha was developed by Gandhi in a different socio–cultural condition that in which Plato developed his ideas. Yet it is true that some of the basic principles underlying his concept and the principles underlying Plato’s concept bears a certain similarity.

ii) Svarāj and Rāmrājya: Svarāj was not only Gandhi’s prime concern, it was also India’s prime concern during the freedom struggle. India’s concern was the establishment of a political svarāj or a politically independent self–rule. But Gandhi’s concern for svarāj was not only the achievement of political freedom and establishment of a political self–rule, it also signified the establishment of inner moral self–rule. “The root meaning of swaraj is self–rule. Swaraj may, therefore be rendered as disciplined rule from within”.38 The two meanings are not exclusive. They are complementary to each other. This is because; Gandhi’s chief concern was the man, the individual, who is the basic unit of society. It is the individual’s virtue that makes a state virtuous, just as Plato had said. An individual’s life is actually two–fold, life of the body and life of the mind. Life of the mind is contemplation and life of the body is activity. The highest form of active life is the political life and if this political life is guided by the universal doctrine
of dharma, it will rise to the level of an ideal activity, resulting in the formation of an ideal state. “To some swaraj means the rule of dharma Ram–rajya. For them the path of swaraj is the path leading to moksa. Swaraj is an important milestone on that path. They believe that without crossing it, they cannot attain moksa”.

Thus, svarāj is not the ultimate end, it is a means leading to the ultimate goal of individual’s life which is mokṣa or salvation, Socratic Plato would say, living a good life. Again, the end of human life is also the attainment of Truth, for God and Truth are identical. “Satyagraha is a search for Truth, and God is Truth. Ahimsa or non–violence is the light that reveals the Truth to me. Swaraj for me is part of that Truth”.

The implication is thus quite clear. Svarāj does not signify any singular concept. It signifies a moral self–rule, a political self–rule and economic self–rule. It is reminiscent of the Platonic republic as a self–sufficient, self–ruled, just political structure that is based upon a morally just human character.

Gandhi’s vision of svarāj, or the independent republic was first elucidated in the Hind Swaraj, written in 1909 by him while returning from England. It quite reminds one of Plato’s The Republic as both can be viewed as political visions of the two thinkers about the proposed, rectified newly ordered societies. The Hind Swaraj was written in the form of a dialogue between the reader and the editor, and thus resembles The Republic in both
form and content. But as it is known that The Republic is not the only document of Plato’s theorizing, a practical statement of it is contained in Statesman and Laws. Similarly, Hind Swaraj is not the only political document of Gandhi. He was eager for practically implementing it and Constructive Programme is a work in which Gandhi elucidates the socio-political programme of the proposed svarāj in detail. Thus, the picture of the political svarāj that is to be established can be gathered from the thoughts of Hind Swaraj, Constructive Programme as well as from his various writings in Young India, Indian Opinion, Harijan and other periodicals and journals.

Svarāj was the immediate political aim of colonial India. To Gandhi this svarāj or self-rule is the ideal state of rāmrājya. Rāmrājya literally means the rule of King Rāma. The rule of King Rāma is an ideal rule because, “it recalls the best days of Hindu purity, nobility, bravery and steadfastness to truth”. Clearly, to Gandhi, the ideal rule is inspired by the mythical figure of Hindu religion, an idol that encompassed and conditioned the Indian religio-cultural psyche over the ages. The religio-moral base of Gandhi’s political programming is also distinct in this observation. It is true that he was at the bottom a religious man. “I have always claimed to be a Sanatani Hindu. … There was a time when I was wavering between
Hinduism and Christianity. When I recovered my balance of mind, I felt that to me salvation was possible only through Hindu religion and my faith in Hinduism grew deeper and more enlightened”.

Thus, it is quite natural that he had high regards for the heroes of Hindu religion–Rāma and Kriṣṇa. The epic figure of Rāma, his character, his mode of governance, his concern for his subject’s well-being inspired Gandhi so much so that his prayer–meetings began with the chanting of his famous Rāma–Dhun. “Personally I believe him to be an incarnation of God but I do not believe that he was guilty of no error while he lived in the body. Today however we regard him as perfect …Among the millions of Hindus, you will not find today a single person who will see error in anything which Rama or Krishna did. This fact too, reveals the meaning of the verse, ‘what is non-Being is never known to have been’. The world has preserved only what was imperishable in them, and no one knows anything about their perishable elements–their errors if they committed any”. The religious belief is that God himself came on earth as a man, suffered and enjoyed human life, and taught dharma to man by living a life of dharma. His life was his teaching.

Thus, this ideal rule of King Rāma is to be reflected in the practical, political state where the king is bound by law as dharma. There was nothing
like the absolute sovereignty. “We can only mean by Ramarajya swaraj or the rule of dharma or people’s rule. Such a rule can be established only when the people come to have regard for dharma and learn to be brave …what we are striving to achieve, however is to change the system of government and the policies and methods of government”.44 Again, in a similar vein he states, “…But all of us are heirs of Rama. … We should non–cooperate in the same manner in which he non–cooperated with Ravana”.45

Thus, it is the characteristics of Rāma’s rule which should be the characteristics of svarāj, to Gandhi. It should be the renunciation of self interest in the interests of subjects, it should be morally courageous enough to non-cooperate with the evil and accepts sufferings, it should be able to stand for its right for achieving justice.

As a political ideal this rāmrāj too has in turn certain goals or ends in view. First, “In our Swaraj, in our dharmarajya, there will be only one aim, to serve the weak. We can be called true Swarjists only if we do tapascharya to get pure Swaraj which will provide cool shelter to all”.46 Second, this svarāj is to be a rāmrāj in the sense that in it “…the meanest member of the depressed class and the weakest woman of the country are to have equal independence and protection”.47 Third, this rāmrāj can be truly achieved only when “…no one in the country will go hungry and no woman will be
obliged to sell her honor for getting work. India will then be enjoying dharmarajya, Ramarajya or Khudarajya”. Fourth, svarāj is the goal or the end of a great struggle.

“But at the end of the struggle we hope to establish ‘Ramarajya’ and the poor hope to get protection, woman to live safely and the starving millions to see an end of hunger”. Fifth, the rāmarāj will be free from the feature of untouchability. “Hinduism has sinned in giving sanction to untouchability”, Gandhi said. But at the same time he wondered, “how can the Ramayana...in which one is regarded nowadays as an untouchable took Rama across the Ganges in his boat, countenance the idea of any human being, being ‘untouchables’, on the ground that they polluted souls”? He thus advocated for the abolition of untouchability, “...Mahatma appealed for the removal of the blot of untouchability and said those who showed contempt to fellow human beings on the alleged sanction of religion committed an impious and irreligious act. Ramachandra became purer by embracing Guha, a Chandal”. “Untouchability should be shunned hated for it is against any logic, any piety or love. A religion which teaches one to worship cow can never so cruelly and inhumanly sacrifice man”.

The lofty ideal of rāmrājya, of course cannot be attained by anybody or everybody. Since it is a political ideal based on certain very strong
religious ideal, the people striving for this political ideal must possess a very strong ethical character. “India was working for a Dharmarajya and Nitirajya and Indians are going to follow the straight path and honest path”.

“The Swaraj which he wanted was not being founded on hate and fear; his was Swaraj of the righteous. His was a Dharamrajya”. “The Swaraj that India was going to have was Dharmarajya. Indians wanted to establish Swaraj based on truth and not on falsehood and they wanted to keep clear of everything that was false. It was the Parsi religion which had taught him to non–cooperate with Satan, it had taught him to keep apart from Satan, from all evil”. “Swaraj is Dharmarajya. …You must bear in mind that no one who is wicked and of impure heart can succeed in the non–cooperation struggle”. The people who will establish svarāj must be courageous. “Where the subjects have some spirit in them, the ruler will not act unjustly. To a people without spirit, what difference does it make whether they are ruled by a king or have republican from of Government? What will they do with powers who do not know how to use it?”

The republic which is to be established by such ethically perfect citizens is a political state, founded upon ethical principles. Thus, it is necessary to explicate the concept of svarāj. “The least that Swaraj means is a settlement with the Government in accordance with the wishes of the
chosen representatives of the people. …Swaraj therefore means the capacity of the people of India to enforce their demands”.\(^{59}\)

This people’s republic is not to have arbitrary rule by the rulers. For the persons owing power will also be subject to several controls. “I have not favoured the existence of states where there is no control over the rulers. The form and degree of control are matters for the ruler and subjects in each state to decide. Wherever the subjects are vigilant, it is impossible to do injustice. Wherever they slumber, there is bound to be injustice no matter what type of government they have. We can have an Indian Government with a clean and perfectly just administration”.\(^{60}\)

The proposed svarāj will also be an epitome of justice. “In Ramarajya justice cannot be sold ”.\(^{61}\) In the rāmrāj justice shall prevail, it will be just in the sense that no injustice shall be imparted to the people for the people will be courageous and conscious, the lawyers will do their duty promptly and will not be greedy for money, the people will be treated equally.

In the democratic republic of rāmrāj people will have equal rights. There will be no discrimination based on caste, creed and colour. “Ramrajya of my dreams ensures rights alike of prince and pauper”.\(^{62}\) “There can be no
Ram-rajya in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and masses do not get even to eat”.

The ideal of rāmrāj is therefore a political state in which there will be a perfect balance of rights and duties. It is this feature of the rule of king Rāma which inspired Gandhiji to coin the term “rāmrāj” for his ideal state. “I acknowledge no other God of truth and rightness. Whether Rama of my imagination ever lived or not on this earth, the ancient ideal of Ramaraj is undoubtedly one of true democracy in which the nearest citizen could be sure of swift justice without an elaborate and costly procedure”. For Gandhi svarāj means nothing but rāmrāj:

… I must say that independence of dreams means Ram–rajya i.e. the kingdom of God on earth. …In concrete terms, then independence should be political, economic and moral. “Political” necessarily means the removal of the control of British army in every shape and form. ‘Economic’ means entire freedom from the British capitalists and capital, as also their Indian counterpart. In other words one must feel equal to the tallest. This can take place only by capital or the capitalists sharing their skill and capital with the lowliest and the least. ‘Moral’ means freedom from armed defense forces. My conception of Ramrajya excludes replacement of the British army by a national army of occupation. A country that is governed by even its national army can never be morally free and therefore its so–called weakest member can rise to his full moral height.
It is this ideal of *rāmrājya* which will be established after India attains her independence, that was the firm belief of Gandhi. A democratic republic based on the very fundamental notions of equality and justice was the ideal of *rāmrājya*. Political independence necessarily going hand-in-hand with economic independence was the essential tool of *rāmrājya*. Such a set up could be ensured only if people follow the tradition of *dharma* for *dharma* stands for rights, duties and a just moral order regulating the man and the world lived.

As an ideal *svarāj* was synonymous with *rāmrājya* but the practical task of achieving a *rāmrājya* was not impossible to Gandhi. His programme of implementing this ideal is contained in the *Constructive Programme* and specially in his Note, ‘Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place’ which he prepared for the Congress.66 In this Note, nineteen items are mentioned in the constructive programme, the most important among these are communal unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition, *Khādi*, village industries, women, basic education and national language. A number of *āśramas* (institutions) were established across the country in pursuance of this programme. It is noteworthy that this constructive programme was carried out during the freedom struggle solely on the basis of Gandhi’s belief
that both political and social developments are needed to further the cause of all round development of the state.

In the political sphere, Gandhi had his own scheme of ordering and functioning of the political organization, but this in turn was never divorced from the guiding principles of satya and ahiṃsā. In fact it was his concern for establishing a non violent society that he thought of decentralization. “Centralization as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society”.

Centralization for him was based upon concentration of power and this in turn leads to violence. Of state violence he meant, “violence in concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence, to which it owes its existence”. Thus he looked upon “increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear, because although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does great harm to mankind destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress”. Hence, he emphasized upon establishing a decentralized political order as the only alternative, which rests upon the sovereignty of the individual who is self–ruled. The individual will govern himself, respecting the freedom of his neighbour in the absence of a state wielding such political power.
Thus, it was his earnest wish that, “Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic or panchayat having full powers. In this structure composed of innumerable villages there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be pyramid with apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual ready to perish for the village”. The village will be substratum of power, “the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but give strength to all and derive it from the center”.

The political ordering is thus very specific. The villages will be the foundation of such a polity. These villages will be self-sustaining and should be capable of minding their own business and meet basic needs. “The government of the village will be conducted by the panchayat of five members, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. …Since there will be no system of punishments, in the accepted sense, this panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become a republic today without much interference even from the present government”. “The next cluster will be formed by the tehsils or talukas and then it will be formed by the district, the province and the country. Each cluster will perform the executive, legislative and
judicial functions relevant to its jurisdiction. Each ‘circle’ enjoyed adequate autonomy in its working, and a province was free to frame its own constitution in tune with its local requirements”. The panchayat election will be a direct election but after that it will be an indirect election of electing the representatives. This ordering of the political units can be done on pure democratic lines.

This programme of decentralized political governance often brought upon Gandhi the epithet of an anarchist. But, it is pertinent to note that though he was against concentration of political power in the rulers of state–machinery, he did not advocate total abolition of state power. This is apparent from his observation, “In democracy, the individual will is governed and limited by the social will which is the state, which is governed by and for democracy. If every individual takes the law in his hand, there is no state, it becomes anarchy. … That way lies destruction of liberty”. Thus Gandhian denunciation of state and the Marxian concept of state ‘withering away’ cannot be equated. The Marxian denial of state was based on economic ground; the Gandhian concept had a moral basis as centralization of power was inconsistent with non–violence or ahimsā. Gandhi was anarchist in the sense that to him, individual freedom is ultimate and individual except for social relations and interests cannot be governed
by political state power. Hence there is absence of social engineering in Gandhi’s scheme of republic. Much like Plato Gandhi views that the state and the ruler must be bound by ethical laws. But the basis of these ethical laws was religion. Hence, his emphasis upon decentralization is actually an emphasis on individual freedom. The different features of the decentralized republic are in fact different facets and nuances of freedom of the social man. This feature of Gandhi’s republic viewed as svarāj or rāmprājya distinguishes it from the Platonic republic in one important feature. The Platonic republic aimed at the unification and centralization of political power with the objective of strengthening the hands of the ultimate political authority. Rāmprājya is antithetical to centralization as it aims at preserving individuality and economic protection emphasizing village self-sufficiency so far as basic needs are concerned.

iii) *Naï Tālim* or The Scheme of Education: It is a fact that for Gandhi, svarāj was not merely a dream, it was a goal which he thought each man should strive for and which each man can achieve. But this svarāj both in the sense of an ideal republic and in the sense of the ethically autonomous man, can only be achieved when the individuals themselves are prepared for it. Gandhi’s scheme of education too, is ultimately directed to the goal of svarāj in this rich sense. His view of education as a process of nurturing and
development is based upon his belief that the proposed scheme of education is the only possible means of building the individuals suitable to live in the independent republic. Gandhi was quite proud of the scheme of education, because of its innovativeness. “I have given many things to India. But the system of education together with its technique is, I feel, the best of them. I do not think I will have any thing better to offer to the country”.

It was as early as in 1904, in the Phoenix Settlement, in South Africa that Gandhi started to dwell upon the ideas relating to education. He expressed his ideas on education in the Hind Swaraj also. In 1937, he summoned an educationalist conference at Wardha to deliberate upon the scheme of education. This is the famous Wardha scheme which was the basis of the Gandhian education—programming before and after independence.

It is quite interesting to note that the prime objective of education to Gandhi was to achieve a two-fold development, i.e. development of the body and of the mind. The Platonic scheme of education with its primary objective of achieving a harmonious development of the body and the mind finds its echo here:

I hold that through education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g. hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose etc. In other words, an intelligent use of the bodily
organ in a child provide the best and the quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lop–sided affair. By spiritual training, I mean education of the heart. A proper and all–round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds pari passu with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constitute an indivisible whole. According to this theory, therefore, it would be gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piecemeal or independently of one another. 76

Certain salient features of the education policy prescribed by Gandhi are worth noticing: First, emphasis is certainly on primary education. The period of primary education is to extend up to seven years. All subjects are to be taught in primary schools except English. Some vocation specially a handicraft must be ‘used as vehicle’ for imparting knowledge. Second, this education must be self–supporting. “Self–support is the acid test of its reality”.77 Third, exclusion of English education also signifies that no foreign language must be taught in the basic schools. All education must be imparted through the medium of the mother tongue. Fourth, as a part of the spiritual education, religious education must be made compulsory. But this education does not signify instruction in denominational religion but instruction common to all religions which can function as curriculum of
moral education. However there is room for exception. If a particular religious community want they wards to receive such particular religious education at school, they must themselves provide for such expenses. Fifth, these basic schools will be co–educational. Sixth, education must begin with an elementary knowledge of history, geography, mental arithmetic and a craft. This education must continue for about six months before they are to be taught how to draw rather then write an alphabet.

These features of his educational scheme are worth noticing for his educational scheme does not simply aim at constructing the individual character, it also aims a bringing about a social revolution. This is clear from this particular observation of Gandhi, “… It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a just social order in which there is no unnatural division between the ‘haves’ and ‘have–not and everybody is assured of a living wage and right to freedom. … Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill”.79

Thus, the scheme of new education is novel for instead of emphasizing the need for modern education in arts, science and technology, it was devised as a tool for achieving certain valuable social ends, which can be used against urbanization, which can lead to the establishment of a vibrant and prosperous village life.
As regards higher education, Gandhi did not provide an elaborate scheme. He merely stated that such education should follow the same pattern of education imparted in the basic schools. The craft–centered education should be followed in the universities too, education in the universities must also be self–financed, free of state–aid, and it should also be imparted through the medium of the mother tongue.

Gandhi’s insistence on the exclusion of English and any other foreign language from the curriculum of school education found its practical reflection in his advocacy of the students leaving their schools and colleges in the Non–Cooperation Movement of 1922. This advocacy however invited much criticism specially from Rabindranath Tagore who differed from Gandhi on several counts regarding the education policy, even though he personally held him in high regard. In fact the whole spirit and idea of Non–Cooperation was inconsistent with his thinking, as is very apparent from the following observation:

…The present attempt to separate our spirit from that of the Occident is tentative of spiritual suicide. …The present age has been dominated by the Occident, because the Occident had a mission to fulfill. We of the Orient should learn from the Occident. It is regrettable, of course that we had lost the power of our own culture, and therefore did not know how to assign Western culture to its right place. But to say that it is wrong to cooperate with the west is to
encourage the worst form of provincialism and can produce nothing but intellectual indulgence.\textsuperscript{80}

Thus, it was Tagore’s hope of enriching India’s culture by the cultures of the west that made him believe in some sort of internationalism, in a communion of diverse cultures, an intellectual conglomeration of the eastern and the western civilizations, a principle which of course was pushed aside by the Non–Cooperation Movement.

It is quite clear that the difference between Tagore and Gandhi on the scheme of education during the Non–Cooperation Movement was based upon the different assessments of the two civilizations, east and west and their inter–relations. This is evident from Gandhi’s reply to Tagore’s earlier observations:

\textit{I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. … But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any of them. … Mine is not a religion of the prison–house. It has room for the least among God’s creation. But it is proof against insolent pride of race, religion or colour.}\textsuperscript{81}

Thus, the principles underlying Gandhi’s thoughts relating to education are exchange and collaboration while keeping one’s feet firm on
one’s soul. Here lies also the universality of Gandhi’s philosophy, for to Gandhi religion relates the particular or the individual man to an universal life. The lapses in practical religion can be overcome by religion itself by relating to an universal idea. The smaller life relates to the greater life. It is this concept of universality that is present in all his programming – educational, political, social and economic.

This observation can be concluded from Gandhi’s thoughts relating to higher education. The National University of Gujarat which he founded at Ahmedabad in November 1920 was his symbol of higher educational institution of independent India. In such an institution the essential tenets of both Hindu and Islam religion was to form its foundation. The compulsory language to be taught was to be Hindustani, since it was a language which retained in it traces of Sanskrit, Hindi and Persianised Urdu. Vocational training was also made compulsory here. English and other European languages were not to be excluded but were to be retained for higher grades, i.e. after the culmination of school education. These institutions of higher education were to serve as institutions for training of future teachers.

It is an important feature of Gandhi’s education–system that more emphasis is given to regulate the conduct of the teachers and that of the students. The teachers are to be bound by the following vows:
A. The vow of Truth.

B. The vow of *Ahimsa* or Non–violence.

C. The vow of celibacy.

D. The control of the palate.

E. The vow of non–stealing.

F. The vow of non–possession.

Along with these primary vows several secondary vows are also to be observed. These are the vows of:

G. *Svadeshi*.

H. Fearlessness.\(^{82}\)

These vows are essential for developing a character that is courageous and strong–morally and spiritually. A person possessing such a character is only fit to train the future citizens in a morally correct way for good teachers make good students.

What is clear from such an educational programme is that Gandhi visualized this scheme as a means through which ideal republic can be established. The political and the economic programme can only be sustained if the future citizens are educated according to this scheme. A republic centering around autonomous villages which are also economically self dependent requires its residents to be village–minded, to be skilled in
small-scale handicrafts and industry, to be self-content with its own capacities and produce, to be well conversant with its culture and not to be over-powered by foreign influence. It was with this objective that Gandhi propounded his education policy which of course had its own lapses and limitations, for which he was no less criticized both rightly and wrongly.

The Platonic scheme of education and Gandhi’s scheme of education resemble each other in their emphasis on both physical training and mental training. The emphasis on basic education is also quite similar. The emphasis on women’s education is also given in both their education programming. But there are differences as well. The primary difference in their thoughts regarding education is due to the fact that they belonged to different ages, different times and history. For Gandhi, contemporary age was a testing time. He belonged to a country which was enslaved, which was trying to end its enslavement and he was actively involved in the process of liberation. For such a man, education was not merely a ‘training–programme of the future philosopher–ruler’ as was in the case of Plato. It was a programme for the masses and not only for the elite few and its objective was to foster a free and brave spirit by adhering to the moral and spiritual principles of its own culture. It is here where this programming of the two thinkers differs. Gandhi lived in an age where the complexities of
the modern nation–state had emerged. The immediate question was political liberation; Gandhi’s educational reforms may be viewed as the preparatory ground of such liberation. Gandhi asked for the basic minimum required by his time and movement.

iv) **The Economic Scheme**: Contrary to the modern belief that economics is the science of the day for it is a material science for wealth and growth, Gandhi believed that economics is a moral science. “True Economics, never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates Mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak is a false and dismissal science. It spells death. True economics on, the other hand stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life”.

The ethico–economic programming of Gandhi followed a definite path. The inequalities present in the economic scenario was definitely a result of exploitation. This exploitation could be carried out and continued by the state only because of concentrated power. Centralized power calls for adoption of violent means which includes exploitation for the preservation and increase of power. So, to disseminate violence and exploitation of the
state-machinery it is obligatory to alter the concept of centralized power. “If India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralize many things”.84 This decentralization is thus the way out to create an unexploited and equalitarian society. Decentralization can be viewed on two major levels—political and economic. Decentralization is the chief instrument of achieving economic equality. “Centralization as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society”.85 A non violent structuring of society is only possible by self-sufficient villages. Village based economy rejects exploitation in any form and exploitation is the first word of violence. Revival of village economy is the central focus of Gandhi’s economic programme. This revival is possible only through revival of village industry. “My idea of village Swaraj, is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet interdependent for, many others in which dependence is a necessity”.86

*Ahimsa* with the methods of *satyāgraha* and non-cooperation will be the chief weapons of the village republic. The government of the village will be conducted by the *panchayat* and this *panchayat* will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Every village with its characteristics of self-rule and self-sufficiency is supposed to represent the values of a true democracy. In such a democracy “the
individual will be the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence will rule him and his government and the law governing every village will be that he will suffer death in defense of his and his villages honour”. 87

It is evident from the above account that the decentralized economy proposed by Gandhi was guided by three motives: i) it will be consistent with *ahimsā* or non-violence, ii) the small organization and units of the society have to bear principal responsibility, iii) a society can become self-dependent only when importance is given to village economy. The economic equality of the proposed republic has to be achieved in the three levels of production, distribution and consumption. Equality at the level of production is essential. Thus, every village will have to produce its entire requirement and a portion of the city’s requirements. “Heavy industries will need to be centralized and nationalized. But they will occupy the least part of the national activity which will mainly be in the villages”. 88

Production for the masses and not mass production should be the characteristic of Indian economy. To achieve this end, adoption of a ‘middle technology’ is essential, which will simultaneously accentuate agricultural and industrial production, which will increase the per-capita productivity without entrenching the masses form their work. Thus, the aim of economic
planning should be utilization of the huge human resources of the country. To achieve this aim the character of the production should be determined by social need and not by individual greed.

The economic equality has to be attained at the levels of distribution and consumption, too. The real implication of equal distribution is that each person should have the means to fulfill his natural needs, and not excess. Thus, equal distribution does not literally mean ‘equal distribution’ or distribution in equal quantity, it means ‘equitable distribution’ or distribution according to needs. This equitable distribution has to be achieved in an non–violent manner, by ensuring transformation of judgment, transformation of heart and transformation of situation. It is only in this way that the distinction between the rich and poor can be lessened, if not can be removed. This economic reconstruction can be achieved only if man changes his habit of consumption. One should crave and want only that much that is needed for our existence. Physical comfort can never give pleasure for pleasure is a mental concept.

**Machinery:** Gandhi admitted that growing technology was an important constituent in the development process of a nation. But this technology should be used for the service of mankind. Machinery is important so long as it serves man’s needs in the production process. “What I object is the
craze for machinery not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour–saving machinery. Men go on “saving labour” till thousands are without work and thrown in the open street to die to starvation”.  

The economic value of machinery is bound to be accepted. ‘I am not against machinery as such, but I am opposed to it when it masters us’.

So, machinery and technological innovation are important merely as means for the fulfillment of human material needs but the end is surely constituted by the ethical and moral values of man. “I am aiming not at eradication of all machinery but its limitation. My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions”.

Thus, technology and machinery do play a part in structuring the economic order of the state but this technology should help in not only fostering industrial growth but also agricultural growth thus increasing productivity while guaranteeing mass–employment. “An industry to be Indian must be demonstrably in the interest of the masses. It must be manned by Indians both skilled and unskilled. Its capital and machinery should be Indian and the labour employed should have a living and be comfortably housed, while the welfare of the children of the labourers should be guaranteed by the employers. This is an ideal definition”.
Svadeśī: Thus it is evident that Gandhi advocated development of indigenous industry based upon indigenous infrastructure. It was to achieve such an original and indigenous production that he advocated rejection and boycott of foreign goods and adoption of simple yet self-sufficient technique which is known as svadeśī. But in this connection it is important to note his views on svadeśī. “I have never considered the exclusion of everything foreign under every conceivable circumstance as a part of Swadeshi. The broad definition of Swadeshi is the use of all home made things to the exclusion of foreign things in so far as such use is necessary for the protection of the home industry, more especially those industries without which India will become pauperized”. ⁹³

In agreement with such definition of svadeśī, a svadeśī article is viewed by Gandhi as any article which “subserves the interest of the millions even though the capital and talent are foreign but under effective Indian control”. ⁹⁴

It is in this context of development of svadeśī article that we find the stress given time and again to khādi. Khādi is certainly an emblem of patriotism and also a means to restore the carkhā or the spinning wheel to the Indian village units thereby giving input to the growth of small economy. Khādi implied decentralization of the production and distribution of the
necessaries of life. Hence, every village is to produce all the necessaries and a certain percentage in addition for the requirements of the cities. In pursuance of this aim, Gandhi founded the All India Spinners Association for organizing and directing this extensive spinning activity throughout the country. “Imagine the unifying and educative effect of the whole nation simultaneously taking part in the process up to spinning! Consider the leveling effect of the bond of common labour between the rich and the poor”. 95 Thus, development and culture of khādi occupies an important significant mark in Gandhi’s constructive programme. Development of other village industries also occupies an important feature of Gandhian economics – like hand grinding, hand pounding, soap–making, paper–making, match–making, tanning and oil–pressing.

**Trusteeship:** Gandhi’s concept of trusteeship is a method for the economic reorganization of society. The society is to be restructured and it can only be restructured if its economy is re–planned or re–constructed. This reconstruction of the economic order is to be done following and being consistent with the ethical principles and the moral order.

Trusteeship is a concept whose aim is to provide an alternative to private ownership of wealth on the one hand and total state control on the other hand, for both these systems lead to concentration of wealth and power
which again lead to violence and exploitation. These systems thus are opposed to the Gandhian ideal of non-violence and equality.

The institution of trusteeship is based upon the idea of a trustee. “The rich man will be left in the possession of his wealth, of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society”.\textsuperscript{96} This personal wealth includes both landed property and industrial property. Thus the institution of Trusteeship is to operate both in the agrarian and industrial sectors. In the agrarian sector the landowner or the zamindar is to act as a trustee of the land that he possesses. In an appeal to the landowners Gandhi said. “I have always told mill owners that they are not exclusive owners of mills and workmen are equal sharers in ownership. In the same way I would tell you that ownership of your land belongs as much to the ryots as to you”.\textsuperscript{97}

So though the trustee will be the legal owner of the property, the other class is to be treated as moral owners of the property. Urging for the moral transformation of the owner as well as the ryot, Gandhi proposed a detailed programme as to how, the system of trusteeship will operate.

a). He would reduce his luxuries and thereby relieve the economic burden of the ryot or the peasants.
b). He would educate the peasants and provide for the education of their children by setting up schools.
c). He would make them conscious about their health and hygiene and provide for pure water supply.
d). He would give them free access to his own property which may include his garden and buildings.
e). He would use his belongings for the welfare of the peasants i.e. by building schools, hospital and the like.
f). He would collect the revenues generated from the land and deposit it into trust funds at a reduced rate, which would be used solely for the benefit of the peasants who actually initiate the production.

The landowners can be compelled to abide by the institution of Trusteeship by the peasants following the method of appeal, or request and then by the method of non violent non–cooperation.

This system can be operated in the industrial sphere too. “What I expect of you, therefore is that you should hold all your riches as a trust to be used solely in the interest of those who sweat for you, and to whose industry and labours you owe all your position and prosperity. I want you to make labourers co–partners of your wealth. …If only you make it a rule to respect these mutual obligations of love, there would be an end of all labour
Thus in the institution of Trusteeship, the capitalist and the mill–owners were requested to ensure a few steps for the mutual well-being of them as well as of the labourers or the workers. Thus an appeal was made to forego their luxuries in order to provide minimum decent wages to the labourers, to provide for the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing to the labourers as well as arrange for their education. The labourers can compel the industrialist to adhere to the system of trusteeship. They can follow the procedure of appeal and petition and then resort to non–violent non–cooperation.

It is important to note that Gandhi was not against ownership of any private property. He did make concession for acquirement of limited, private property for e.g. – ancestral property, small scale business, dwelling houses etc, which provides a certain level of freedom to its owner. The causes for such an allowance are two–fold, First, such possession is never the cause of exploitation of other member of the society. Second, such possession is conducive to natural growth and development of the society.

But large scale agricultural land and large scale business capital must always be co–operative based or based upon public ownership otherwise it will eventually lead to concentration of power. Hence, Gandhi’s theory of trusteeship gives importance to community property against absolute private
property, where workers and peasants become equal owners of land and capital along with the capitalist and the land owners. This concept of trusteeship is the chief instrument of achieving economic equality.

Though trusteeship is often referred to as a unique Gandhian economic methodology, its character is moral. A moral ordering to achieve economic parity can best describe trusteeship. This is evident from Pyarelal’s interpretation of trusteeship:

A) The doctrine of trusteeship does not make any room for capitalism. It is based on the faith that human nature can be corrected.

B) The maxim of trusteeship does not recognize any right of private ownership except in as much as it may be permitted by a society for its own welfare.

C) It does not exclude legislative measure for the ownership and use of wealth.

D) Thus under state regulated trusteeship an individual will not be free to hold or use his wealth for selfish satisfaction or in disregard to the interest of society;

E) Just as it proposed to fix a decent maximum living wage, even so a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that could be allowed to any person in any society. The difference between such minimum and
maximum incomes should reasonable, equitable and variable from time to time; and

F) Under the Gandhian economic order, the character of production would be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed. 99

It is these thoughts on economics that lend a unique touch to Gandhi’s philosophy. His political thoughts, his thoughts on social, ethical and religious issues are coherent with his political and social programming. Even though he was not trained in any formal education on economics, he ventured into economics. What makes his economic thoughts consistent with his other thoughts is the prime concern of achieving justice in the prevailing unjust conditions and his utmost hope and endeavour to establish and maintain justice in the ideal state of rāmrājya. This justice can be achieved only when there is economic equality. Economic equality can only be achieved when it is tried to be achieved following the moral principles of satya and ahiṃsā. In fact, Gandhi’s insistence on the revival of village economy, village industry and a decentralized mode of production and distribution are all conceived as consistent with his law of ethics. That is how Gandhi thought of the material benefits of his ideal republic.
It is interesting to note that Gandhi’s view on economics and economic issues, makes him stand apart from Plato. Plato was not in favour of decentralization because there was no threat from centralized power. Plato’s political and economic programming was designed to make the state powerful so that it becomes stable, orderly, and just. The concern for making the state just was also the concern of Gandhi, but it was precisely for this reason that he did not want to make it all powerful. The emphasis on village production, self-sufficiency and self-reliance are all intended to facilitated the cause of freedom, equality and justice. The economic problems of Plato’s city state lacked the complexities characteristic of Gandhi’s nation. Hence Plato’s economic programme is less intricate and less detailed as compared to Gandhi. Even so the basic programme shares a common emphasis. Plato’s basic contention is that the state need not be affluent and rich to ensure the well being of its subjects. In The Republic though Plato speaks of common property, in Laws Plato makes allowances for possession of private property though he put a limit to such possession. In Laws Plato speaks in favour of a simple agrarian society, in which industries like bee-culture, vintage etc will survive. However, in conformity with the prevailing economic system of his time, Plato’s concern was more about trade, both international and intra national, about who are entitled to practice such trade,
about retail and distribution, than about industry and industrial relations. The problem for Gandhi was the overpowering influence of industry, excessive craze for industrial and technological growth and consequent loss of human values and humane conditions of living in the aftermath of the industrial revolution, clearly a concern not faced by Plato and his times.

Gandhi’s economic scheme is ultimately an economic ordering of the society based upon moral order. It is a restatement of moral values in the actual order of things. It is also an application of moral principles enjoined by different religions. The Jaina concepts of aparigraha or non possession was perhaps the guiding moral value of Gandhi’s economic policy, especially that of trusteeship. Aparigraha, as the Jaina school advocates can be observed on two levels, as a mahāvrata i.e. an observance prescribed for the ascetics and as a anuvrata i.e. an observance prescribed for the laity. The ascetics or those who live in the monastic order observes aparigraha or non possession in the strict sense and that is why they do not possess any kind of wealth or property. On the other hand those who do not renounce the worldly order also observe aparigraha but as a anuvrata. They do possess wealth and property but in a limited sense. This means that aparigraha as a anuvrata allows possession of so much wealth as is necessary for fulfilling the basic necessities of life. The surplus wealth goes back for further
investment which in turn reaps its own benefits for the society. Perhaps this is the cause of the economic prosperity of the Jaina community. This was perhaps the reason behind Gandhi’s belief that trusteeship as an economic programme can contribute to the economic well being of the nation.

This notion of Gandhi, i.e. an economic order based upon a moral order can lead to the economic welfare of a nation, finds its support in a rather unique interpretation of the development of western capitalism, by the noted sociologist Max Weber. Weber, in his famous work, The Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism argued that economic and technological causes cannot solely account for the growth of western capitalism (as Marx thought), several other factors also operated behind such development. Of these ‘other factors’ the principal factor was the Calvinist theology and its emphasis on predestination and salvation. Calvinism, a radical sect of the Protestant Church was widely popular in Europe and it rested upon several doctrines, amongst which the most important was the doctrine of predestination. This concept implied that everything in individual’s life is predestined and there is nothing one can do to avoid it. This doctrine was the source of anxiety amongst its followers. The anxiety was the anxiety of protecting themselves from the tortures of hell. Removal of this anxiety rested upon one solution. The individual had to lead a perfect life both in
terms of religious purity and moral observances. Thus, the Puritans imbibed a very methodical pattern of life, where they relied on hard work, and meticulously worked towards the growth and prosperity of the business they had ventured into against their traditional agrarian work. This very approach obviously resulted in the growth of capitalism but this also in turn led to the diminishing importance of Protestant ethics itself. Further this religious anxiety contributed to the growth of capitalism in another way. This anxiety did not allow the individual to consume all his profits and propelled him to invest his profits back into some other business. Weber thus, analyzed the rise and growth of modern capitalism to be the effect of a religious doctrine of a particular religious sect, a feature which was ignored by the other eminent social thinkers.¹⁰⁰

Gandhi’s thoughts on economics are significant for they speak for the welfare of the common man as well as welfare of the state and this cumulative welfare is guided by the goal of sarvodaya.

V) Sarvodaya:

Sarvodaya is the conclusive idea of Gandhi’s philosophy of life. It is an ideal as well as praxis with its emphasis on the way of life of man, society and culture. It is the moral aim of the society as well as that of the individual.
Etymologically *sarvodaya* means total and coherent well-being of all. Yet *sarvodaya* is not only a social ideal, it is an individual ideal as well. For Gandhi, each individual is valuable for he is an end in himself and not a means to achieving some end. This is quite reminiscent of the Kantian doctrine of treating every human being not as a means but as an end. Thus, universal well being is a necessary pre-requisite for achieving an ideal state order. Freedom for all and development of all is the true meaning of *sarvodaya*. This notion is unique for it aims at harmonizing individual virtue with social virtue. “There is not a single virtue which aims at or is consistent with the welfare of the individual alone. Conversely, there is not a single offence which does not, directly or indirectly, affect many others beside the actual offender. Hence whether an individual is good and bad is not merely his own concern, but really the concern of the whole community, nay of the whole world”.

The non acceptance of the demarcation between the individual and the other’s domain of action is in fact a non acceptance of Mill’s famous dichotomy between self–regarding actions and other–regarding actions. To Gandhi man is one–social and individual, their dichotomy does not exist. He thereby reconciles both public and private morality in his philosophy.
In the context of *sarvodaya* serving as an ethical ideal, it differs in principle from the Mill–Benthamite principle of Utilitarianism as well, in spite of its apparent similarities. Gandhi remarks, “The fact is that a votary of ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula. … The utilitarian has no limit. Judged by the standard of non-violence the late war was wholly wrong. Judged by the utilitarian standard each party has justified it according to the idea of utility. Even the Jallianwala Bagh massacre was justified by its perpetrators on the grounds of utility. And precisely on the same ground the anarchist justifies his assassinations. But none of these acts can possibly be justified on the *greatest good of all principle*.102 Gandhi’s contention is that in the principle of utilitarianism there is a perpetual risk of slipping from the moral sphere.

The difference between utilitarianism and *sarvodaya* is also clear from the following Gandhian observation, “I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number. It means in its nakedness that in order to achieve the supposed good of 51 % interest of 49 % may be or rather should be sacrificed. It is a heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity. The only real dignified human doctrine is the greatest good of all, and this can only be achieved by uttermost self–sacrifice”.103 In principle, *sarvodaya* certainly signifies the ideal of the promotion of the greatest good
of all, including animals. “Gandhian Sarvodaya has its roots in the Vedantic concept of the spiritual unity of existence and the Gita – Buddhistic concept of ‘Sarvabhutahita’ or the good of all living beings. It’s wide comprehensive idealism thus, is opposed to the Lockean theory of majoritarianism, the Marx–Gumplovicz concept of class and racial struggle and the Benthamite formula of the greatest good of the greatest number”. This universal well-being can only be believed in if one admits that there is no difference between living and non–living beings.

*Sarvodaya,* in the sense of an ideal social order has its roots in the belief in an all embracing fraternity, a concept which was emphasized by the *Veda*-s, the *Upaniṣad*-s, the *Gītā*, the *Rāmāyana*, the *Mahābhārata*, religions of Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. Kindness to others, observance of hospitality, the concern for other’s welfare which includes both one’s neighbour and humanity at large, sympathy for other beings including animals and discharging one’s duty towards man, towards lower creatures, towards God and the saints has been emphasized by the *Veda*-s. *Sarvodaya* in fact, is based upon inculcating these moral virtues both in the individual level and in the level of society at large.

The *Iṣa Upaniṣad* emphasizes and inspires the basic tenets of universal well–being. The first *sloka*, “Iṣa Vasyam idam sarvam”, inspired
Gandhi to formulate the ideal of sarvodaya. “If all the literature of Hinduism were destroyed and these lines remained, there would be a sound basis in there for the Hindu religion”.\textsuperscript{105} Gandhi was also inspired by the Jaina view of anubrata as social morality as he made allowances in the individual’s observance of rigorous duty.

Thus, the ethico–religious character of the Gandhian ideal of sarvodaya is apparent. It was inspired by the religio–cultural tradition of India. Sarvodaya as an ideal was also based upon certain ethical laws. Amongst these ethical laws, Truth or Satya is the highest ethical law. “In fact the Sanskrit word for truth is a word which literally means that which exists, sat. For these and many other reasons, I have come to the conclusion that the definition – Truth is God – gives me the greatest satisfaction”.\textsuperscript{106} Sarvodaya is also based upon the ethical law of ahiṁsā. But this ahiṁsā is not the negative concept of non–killing; it signifies the positive concept of love. “Ahimsa means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering”.\textsuperscript{107} This suffering is suffering for Truth (Satya) or sat. Sarvodaya is also based upon the ethical law of brahmacarya. It means control of the senses and the mind and containing one’s desires. The ethical ideals of non–possession (aparigraha) and non–stealing (asteya) are also the moral bases of sarvodaya. Accumulation of wealth on the one hand leads to starvation
on the other hand, which is certainly contrary to the *sarvodaya* ideal of well-being of all. Another ethical law upon which *sarvodaya* is based is fearlessness or *abhaya*. “Fearlessness implies absence of all kinds of fears. It is freedom from such fears as the fears of death, molestation, hunger, humiliation, criticism and wrath of others, and fear of ghosts, spirits etc”.

“Cowards can never be moral… Fearlessness is indispensable for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek Truth, or cherish love, without fearlessness?”

Apart from the influence of India’s culture and religion Gandhi’s concept of *sarvodaya* was also inspired by the thoughts of several western thinkers, like Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy. This is evident from his following observation,

You have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay on the ‘Duty of Civil Disobedience’ scientific conformation of what I was doing in South Africa. Great Britain gave me Ruskin, whose *Unto This Last* transformed me overnight from a lawyer and a city–dweller into a rustic living away from Durban on a farm three miles from the nearest railway station; and Russia gave me Tolstoy, a teacher who furnished a reasoned basis for my non–violence. Tolstoy blessed my movement in South Africa when it was still in its infancy and of whose, wonderful possibilities I had yet to learn … .
It is a well known fact that in spite of different influences it was John Ruskin’s *Unto This Last* which inspired Gandhi to formulate the ideal of *sarvodaya*. *Unto This Last* was borrowed from *St. Mathew 20: 14*. The principal tenets of his understanding of his book were summarized by him as following:

First, that the good of the individual is contained in the good of all. Second, that a lawyer’s work has the same value as the barber’s, in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work. Third, that a life of labour i.e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living.

The first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realized. The third had never occurred to me…I rose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles into practice.111

Gandhi’s notion of *sarvodaya* thus, is also an ethico–economic theory just as it is an ethico-political theory. It provides an alternative to the capitalistic economics which was the prevalent principle of the day. To Gandhi, the principles of *dayā* or compassion should replace the principles of self–interest and competition. Honour should be interpreted in terms of equality and truth and not in terms of obligation of status. Individual welfare must be conditioned by ‘good of all’. Thus the question of maximization of welfare by any means whatsoever, does not arise.
Man’s conduct should not be guided by monetary transactions. This is the law of God as well as the law of justice; if one follows the path of justice the consequence should be good. The relation between the master or the employer and the employee should be based upon mutual compassion and sympathy. The worker and the handicraftsman should have fixed wages and whatever be the form of business the workers employed should be on permanent basis. If the workers have no security regarding their work they are compelled to ask for higher wages. On the other hand job security makes the worker work even for lower wages. And economics becomes universal only when its signifies production, conservation and distribution of necessary and useable objects in appropriate time and appropriate place. Hence to Gandhi, true wealth is not gold or silver. True wealth is man himself. Those who are righteous are wealthy in the true sense.

It was keeping in view this ideal of sarvodaya that Gandhi established the Phoenix Settlement, which was a community of friends sharing his beliefs. Following this ideal settlement three other settlements, Tolstoy farm outside Johannesburg, the Sabarmati Ashram outside Ahmedabad, the Sevagram outside Wardha were established. In the political sphere this ideal inspired Gandhi to believe that the republic of free India will be a democracy but it will not be a majority rule. “Under democracy, individual liberty of
opinion and action is jealously guarded. I, therefore, believe, that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority…”

Keeping in view the ideal of *sarvodaya* Gandhi created several institutions all over the country to practically carry out the ‘constructive programme’ of improving the socio–economic conditions of the masses. These included institutions like All India *Khadi* Board, All India Spinner’s Association, *Harijan Sewak Sangh*, All India Village Industries Association, *Goseva Sangh* etc.

It is in its implications that the Gandhian ideal of *sarvodaya* can be compared to the Platonic ideal of universal well–being. For Gandhi *sarvodaya* is as mentioned above, the law of God as well as the law of Justice. If one follows the path of Justice the consequences will naturally be good. Thus, it is not because of the consequence that *sarvodaya* is valuable but if one strives towards *sarvodaya*, happiness or good result will be its natural byproduct. This position is quite similar to Plato’s account of Justice and its consequences. Though Plato maintained that justice leads to happiness, he did not imply that it is because of the reward that a man should follow and practice Justice. Happiness is the natural and necessary outcome of just actions. In this respect, it can be said that neither Plato was a consequentialist, not for that matter was Gandhi. These two thinkers also
exhibit a similar train of thought when they say that good of he individual is contained in the good of all, or to put it in another way that individual welfare must be conditioned by the ‘good of all’. Thus, collective happiness and individual happiness seem to merge so much so that individual happiness has no existence apart form the collective happiness and collective happiness also has no existence apart form individual happiness. It is this concern for the individual–in–society which was the guiding factor of both Plato’s ethico–political philosophy and Gandhi’s ethico–religious political philosophy. It is because of this that happiness of others is rendered a law, the adherence to which is an obligatory duty in both Plato’s scheme of republic and Gandhi’s scheme of *ramrajya*.

Gandhi’s idea of republic so discussed, presents itself more as a programme than an ideal. The ideals remain to regulate the practical programme. Thus, the question of whether the ideals can be materialized or not do not arise. The ideals even if to a certain degree utopian do not lessen the merit of his programme. In this respect both Plato and Gandhi’s idea of republic exhibit a comparable merit of vision.
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