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## Gandhian Ideals and the World Crisis

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### Abstract

The modern world is facing a multidimensional crisis; a crisis that poses challenge to each and every aspect of our life. Among the outstanding aspects of this crisis are; over militarization, nuclear proliferation and global reach of arms, overdevelopment and underdevelopment resulting in mal-development, a vast number of people suffering from poverty, hunger and marginalization. Added to these are environmental degradation in the forms of abuse and overuse of nature and pollution and growing paucity of resources, denial of human rights, gender bias and injustice, crisis in the field of energy, mounting insecurity and violence, terrorism, war and conflicts, drug trafficking, AIDs. Besides, there are corruption, communalism, unemployment, regionalism, problems of language, ethical and moral degradation in private and public life. All these together pose a grave challenge to the world order and demand a renewed emphasis of Mahatma Gandhi's ideals – political, socio-economic and cultural.

**Keywords:** Political, socio-economics and cultural thoughts, today's crisis

### 1. Introduction

Gandhi was a many-sided personality. The outward simplicity of his life and his single-minded devotion to nonviolence cloaked innumerable deep currents of ideas, disciplines, loyalties and aspirations. He was at once saint and revolutionary, politician and social reformer, economist and man of religion, educationist and satyagrahi; devotee alike of faith and reason, Hindu and interreligious, nationalist and internationalist, man of action and dreamer of dreams. He was a very great reconciler of opposites and he was that without strain or artificiality. He loved greatly and accepted unreservedly that truth can reside in opposites. No one has yet attempted a complete analysis of his complex and magnificent personality. The life of Mahatma Gandhi should serve as a beacon of light to guide humanity to a better world. He taught a lesson to all political leaders on how to work great social and political changes for the betterment of humanity in every walk of life. Gandhi's economic thought is imbibed in his philosophy. Gandhi's schemes of thoughts, the non-economic components of economic development are perhaps more important than strictly economic concepts. The Gandhian concept takes a total perspective and focuses on development of the moral and spiritual aspects with truth and non-violence as its base; with all the other aspects, such as physical, mental and economic, to enhance the individual's social sense, thereby creating a society of healthy individuals.

### Political

Gandhi's political thought stems from different traditions, Eastern and Western. Gandhi belongs to none of the three ideological options which are available for us today. One option is the return to a "religious dogmatism". The second option is "relativism" which is exemplified by the postmodernist movement that believes that the objective truth should be replaced by hermeneutic truth. The third option is the "rationalist fundamentalism" which believes in the total power of reason and desacralizes and disenchant, everything substantive. Gandhi belongs to neither of these three main visions influential at present. He is not a religious fundamentalist. He is not a cultural revivalist, and he is not committed to the idea of absolute reason.

With the growing tensions all over the world between different sects and region, groups of people his idea of grassroot democracy and gram swarjya may be of much help.

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His emphasis on the 'last man' is the need of hour. In this age of authoritative and states taking much of the work on itself and becoming a 'big brother' with overall control of the life of all the individuals Gandhi's idea of the best state is the one that governs the least is really needed. His theory of co-operation rather than competition is going to make our world a better place than what we are living in now with so much fighting and senseless wars. Politics has divorced itself from the morality and that has cultivated more problems than it can solve, so here also the Gandhian views of moral politic is needed in the modern world.

### **Economic and Ecological**

In the sphere of economic rebuilding, Gandhiji's views were widely known. His insistence was on expanding the domestic market by large-scale promotion of khadi and village industries to meet the demands of the huge rural market. He then did not really oppose the introduction of heavy machine and heavy engineering based industries, but stood for the harmonious blending of the two streams of economic thinking. However, in our enthusiasm to build a strong economy befitting a powerful country, Gandhiji's mandate of strengthening and expanding the village industries was nearly forgotten with emphasis on giant machines both for the production of heavy industries and the major consumer goods.

Though people generally believe that Gandhiji was against machines but the truth is that he was not against machines but was against the way it has controlled our lives. We have become dependent and it is taking bread and butter from the poor people of this nations that was the reason he said that the over use of machines should be checked and village and cottage based industries should be given importance which will not only help the general populace but also help us take care of the environment because with the industries taking up all the natural resources for themselves the poor people are left behind in this run of development and they are the ones who are going to suffer from the natural disasters that will happen because of this. So his much quoted view on economics is also a great quote on environment too that, "Earth has enough for everyone's need but not for one person greed". His economic thought centers on sustainable growth, focus on man against machine and reducing economic inequality. His approach is holistic and aims at the socio-economic reconstruction of society. Gandhiji visualized a total socio-economic reconstruction. Gandhi ji always emphasized on the lessening of our needs which will help us in long run. He always emphasized on the physical labour which will solve our international problem of unemployment.

### **Socio Cultural**

In Gandhiji's design for a good society, the poor are to inherit the earth and the rich to hold their affluence as a trust to society. In the culture shock that the so-called globalisation is bringing to our society, the need for Gandhiji's message has become all the more relevant and imperative.

With modern world riddled in fights over all the petty issues of religion and caste and region and ideas Gandhiji's view on social harmony and cultural mutual respect can show us the true path to actual happiness and social emancipation. His emphasis on truth and non-violence marks his socio-cultural views too as all other. For seeking as well as for finding truth, Ahimsa - non-violence - love for all beings - was a necessity. Although Ahimsa - non-violence - is a negative word, Gandhi certainly did not consider it as a negative force. His concept of Ahimsa is not confined to human beings but includes the entire creation. He firmly believed that the happiness of the individual formed the constituent part of the happiness of the society. So, for him, social welfare meant the conscious submission of the individual and a voluntary contribution of one's possession to the society, which consisted of *all*, not a majority and, in return, the social system, built upon the principles of non-violence and democracy, was to give a complete guarantee for the maximum development of the individual's personality. Gandhiji never said that any one religion has got the guardian ship of the truth but all religions have emphasized on the basic truths and we all shall make efforts to reach those ideals. Gandhi ji believed that in a true society a man will not only work for his self-development but it will in turn help the whole society and he will not encroach upon the rights of anyone in this process. Everyone will have the right to profess his views and ideas. That society will be very different from what type of society the groups like al Qaeda, Boko Haram or Ultra Nationalist in different parts of the worlds are trying to create. Gandhiji always emphasized that non-violence will eventually triumph over the violence in our society will give us hope that at last these violent groups will be defeated and true human spirit will rise again.

### **Conclusion**

In this way we have come to the conclusion that in this world of differing opinions and so many problems only Gandhian views of Truth and Non-Violence (in their broadest sense) can help us achieve victory over our problems, social ills and differing aspirations and Gandhian ideals are the need of the day.

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