
Truth And Nonviolence As Old As Hill: Mahatma Gandhi

Today it has been 123 years since Gandhi was born. His assassination was a great shock. But, surprisingly, his demise banded those in India who had lost belief in non-violent co-existence. As a matter of fact, Gandhi's death taught everyone about the worth of communal affinity and social accord. Gandhi himself was well aware of this, long before his return to India and his rise as the non-violent leader of the Indian independence movement. For example, in a letter to his nephew on January 29, 1909, he wrote, "I may have to meet death in South Africa at the hands of my countrymen. . . If that happens you should rejoice. It will unite the Hindus and Mussalmans. . . The enemies of the community are constantly making efforts against such a unity. In such a great endeavour, someone will have to sacrifice his life. " It is interesting, how Gandhi, all through his life, talked about his death with a great deal of openness and with no sanctimony. It is as if for him the fundamental philosophical question — 'should I live or die; to be or not to be'? — had already found its answer in the idea of self-sacrifice.

Mohandas Gandhi a British educated barrister turned politician — looked like "a half-naked fakir", as Churchill described him deridingly ridiculing, once said, 'Truth and Non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both, on as vast a scale as I could', had nothing new to teach, but was a great supporter of these two substantial and well- built ordances. Today it's fair to say that honesty is on the ropes: Deception has become commonplace at all levels of contemporary life. We no longer tell lies. Instead we 'mispeak'. We exaggerate. We exercise poor judgment. Mistakes were made, we say. How do you define 'truth?' The dictionary says it is quality of being in accordance with experience, facts or reality; or, conformity with fact. 'Truth is that which corresponds to its referent or that to which it refers, it relies on the actual existence of the thing which a thought or statement is about. Truth is defined by the conformity of intellect and thing; and hence to know the conformity is to know truth. 'Truth is discovered, not invented. It exists independent of anyone's knowledge of it.' An example is the existence of gravity. There always has been gravity, and it is certainly true. It was discovered by Newton or just before him. A nother fact is that truth is transcultural. If something is true, it is true for all people, in all places, and at all times. A good example is that ten has only one zero in it for everyone, everywhere and all times. Truth is unchanging, even though our beliefs about truth change. Society used to believe the earth was flat. When it was discovered that the earth is round and not flat, the truth about the earth didn't change, it was only our belief which chanted. Beliefs cannot change a fact, no matter how sincerely held. Someone can sincerely believe something, but if his fact is not true, that means only one person is mistaken. Truth is not affected by the attitude of the one professing it with his attitude. An arrogant person cannot make the truth he possess false, or a humble person to make the error he possess true. All real truths are absolute.

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)

Ishwar Allah teri Naam sabko sanmati de bhagwan, It is altogether living in a much different world today called Postmodern. Its description says, 'Truth does not exist objectively; it is a product of a person's culture.'

The situation of culture we live in can be described as 'to recognize and respect others' beliefs, practices, etc. , without sharing them' and 'to bear or put up with someone or something not especially liked, The new tolerance is defined as the view that all values, beliefs, lifestyles and truth claims are not equal.' Even The Bible makes clear that all values, beliefs, lifestyles and truth claims are not equal.' It's easy to see some very strong problems occurring in our culture. We also have more problems with 'intolerance, ' which does not accept tolerance and is being enforced with various kinds of punishment.

For him, non-violence meant respecting the truth in his opponent. We are enveloped in divisiveness and hate. We live in troubled times. Look at the forms of violence that inform our daily life. We had a formidable list of bad guys like maoists, terrorists and anti-nationals. Now we have added new ones. It could be lawyers beating up anyone they disliked in court premises and getting away with it. It could be suspected cow smugglers, love jihadists, North-easterners, child-lifters, urban Naxals or a simple pickpocket — the list is endless.

With some significant exceptions, the older governments looked for constitutional sanctions to stem the tide of violence. When governments mobilised forces against militant movements in Nagaland, Kashmir, Punjab or Bengal, there was a veneer of rule of law. The scale of violence might have been terrible but it seemed remote and there was a silent acceptance. This narrative got punctured when some elements of government became party to communal riots. The anti-Sikh riots in 1984 or the Gujarat riots of 2002 are cases in point. Our public sphere is increasingly coloured by intolerance. The mass media today project a picture of war of each one against everyone. Participants in TV programmes fill the air with lispings curses. Each spokesperson seems to lead a brigade of the just. It is a perverse celebration of 'truth and rectitude'. No individual or party ever concedes that they or their organisation could be in the wrong. In a mediatised world strategic offences by excessively shrewd panelists are read as signals of violence by some viewers. The difficult part of the story is that while the 'dangerous other' was located in distant margins away from the day-to-day lives of visible urbanites, now the narrative of othering has reached the Centre. So everyone is a potential 'other' and as such a target of 'just' violence. Those who chuckle at the plight of victims today might find themselves at the wrong end of the spectrum tomorrow. Ours is a fractured society. We have seen violence in the name of 'forward caste- backward caste', Sikh-non-Sikh, Dalit-non-Dalit, Dravida-non-Dravida, Kannadiga-Tamil, Assamese-non-Assamese, Meitei-Naga, Bihari-Maratha, Jat-non-Jat — the list could be endless. Given the volatile world of shifting alliances and constellations that continuously create new boundaries, each one of us risks becoming the 'hated other' and a target for abuse and killing. Discourses of hatred that reduce humans to a

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)

despicable speck at the wrong end of the gun are all very well, as long as one is at the right end. It is in this context that we need to remember Mahatma Gandhi. He is justly remembered for his struggles against the British. What we have forgotten is that he struggled against his family, followers and people of our country even more. Most of his Satyagraha fasts were not against the British, they were against unjust wages for workers by Indian capitalists, violence by Indians against British, communalism and issues related to Dalits. He identified so intensely with the Indian people that when he saw something unethical or unjust happen, he felt that there was something wrong in his own self. So he would fast to purge himself and his people of wrong doing. Gandhi's ability to introspect and publicly admit mistakes and hold fasts as penance is something we have completely forgotten. For Gandhi, 'Truth' excluded violence because humans were not capable of knowing absolute truth and therefore not competent to punish. Gandhiji was imprisoned by the British many times, he lost his wife while in jail and yet if we read his speeches against the British there is a singular lack of bitterness. He never exaggerated the defects of his opponents. Right till the end he extended courtesy to the agents of the British government. For Gandhi, non-violence meant respecting the truth in his opponent. For all of us have a truth... for all of us love and live, hope and dream. Our beauty is as real as our ugliness. So when he launched Satyagraha he would bless the person against whom he protested. He could talk about means as ends in the making. Addressing the better self of the opponent and not exaggerating their defects was central to Gandhi's struggle. When he won his opponent also won because the opponent had been purged of the bad part of his persona. We must remember that the public sphere is an area of responsibility. The new age of media has given us technologies not only to point fingers but to introspect and face ourselves. Fanatical fear and hate are pulling us into descending spirals of misery. Rather than hypocritical moralism we need to create a platform of sharing. Indian democracy has survived despite all its defects because of contributions of people and parties Left, Right and Centre. It is important for us to remember Gandhi's truth for our own survival as a civilised community. By truth and non-violence, according to Gandhiji, often considered a founder of the nonviolence movement, spread the concept of ahimsa through his movements and writings, which then inspired the nation, he not only theorized on it, he adopted nonviolence as a philosophy and an ideal way of life. He made the people understand that the philosophy of nonviolence is not a weapon of the weak; it is a weapon of strong and thoughtful heart. As for 'truth' he did not mean the character of proposition which is either true or false, but described truth as existence, consciousness and bliss (sat, cit, and ananda). At first Gandhi used to say God is Truth. But later on he converted Truth is God. Gandhiji ventured to place before India and the world the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For Satyagraha and its off-shoots, non co-operation and civil resistance are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. In the Gandhian philosophy of resistance, we can find the intertwining of non-violence and exemplary suffering.

Perhaps, self-sacrifice is the closest we come to ethical dying, in the sense that it is a principled leave-taking from life; an abandonment of one's petty preoccupations in order to see things

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

more clearly. As such, there is a process of learning in the Gandhian act of self-suffering, to philosophise was to learn how to die. For Gandhi, the practice of non-violence began with an act of self-sacrifice and the courage of dying for truth. Gandhi was inspired on the importance of self-sacrifice and the art of dying at a time when the latter was developing his idea of satyagraha in South Africa. Gandhi referred as the father of the nation had the willingness to fight unto death for his cause. His portrayal as a satyagrahi and a moral hero went hand in hand with the affirmation of the courage and audacity of a non-violent warrior in the face of life-threatening danger, there was a close link between the use of non-violence and the art of dying, in the same manner that cowardice was sharply related to the practice of violence. Note that, Gandhi that no other decision but dying was possible if the declaration of freedom was unachieved. Unsurprisingly, straightforward and honest. Which brings us back to January 30, 1948 when Mahatma Gandhi fell to the bullets of Nathuram Godse. One can understand this event as a variety of the Sophocleas saying: "Call no man happy until he is dead." Like it or not, it seems that for Gandhi, to be human was to have the capacity, at each and every moment, to confront death as fulfillment of a non-violent and truthful life. The world today admittedly stands on the verge of disaster that may well be irretrievable. The reason: the constant ideological conflicts, ethnic cleansing, isms of all sorts, the fierce race hatreds that may lead to wars more terrible than any in history, and the ever-present threat of nuclear proliferation, involving the possibility of unimaginable destruction. In this age of crony materialism, conflict and crisis situation both within and outside and as universal vices, the chaos and crisis situation is incapacitating the potentiality of human being. Our search for happiness, self-growth, realization, tranquility, peace and harmony seems to be an elusive chase, a mirage and an illusion. Saints, researchers and scholars from all over the globe have been investigating ways and means to get out of the morass of sorrow and misery since eternity. Thus situated, mankind has to make its choice — for its sheer survival — between the moral and the material forces. The latter are leading humanity headlong on the road to self-annihilation. Gandhiji shows the other road, because he represents the moral forces. Maybe, it is no new road, but it is the road which the world has either forgotten so long or has not had the courage to take, and which it can now ignore only at the cost of its very existence.

The rishis, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses and warriors than scientists and war-experts today. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness, and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence and truth. Truth and Non-violence – the two ethical values of the utmost importance to Gandhi rested on humanism though each embodied a host of ethical norms for moral conduct. These concepts of Non-violence and Truth do not merely exist as ideals but have concrete and viable modes of action. Gandhiji had pitted against the organized might of the State the pure strength of Non-Violence and Truth. And he had won. The gospel of Non-violence and Truth which he had preached and practiced was no new philosophy, he resurrected that philosophy and used it on a new plane. In conformity with his

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

belief that Truth, as a living principle, has growth and as such, is bound to reveal to any earnest votary of it, newer and newer facets of it, he claimed to have discovered new dimensions and new potencies in the principle of Non-violence. True, that principle was only the obverse of that of Truth; but, for that very reason, inseparable from it. To conclude the essay, Gandhiji had made it his life-mission to bring home to his fellow men all over the world the conviction that there is no salvation for them, whether as individuals, communities or nations, unless they tread the path of Non-violence and Truth, both correlate each other in a manner no one can understand and no one ever will.

gradesfixer.com

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP