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Editorial

Esteemed Readers,

Happy New Year. The new year begins with major challenges of the educationist to promote ethos of peace and conflict resolution in the midst of polarized world citizens where territorial conflicts and civil wars have inflicted insurmountable human miseries. At this historic juncture, we need to remember Mahatma Gandhi's world view to guide our praxis. With this commitment, content of this issue of Quest in education is chosen.

Prof. Margaret Fernandes Joseph's article on "Gandhi and Globalization" provides critique of consumerist and hedonistic forces unleashed by neoliberal extractivist growth models. Primary research based article titled, "Accessibility to Education and Employment Aspiration: A Saga of young girls from Informal Settlement of Mumbai" by Dr. Nandita Mondal examines multifaceted interseccional vulnerabilities of girls from the marginalised sections in the metropolis. Dr. S. Prabu Shankar & Mrs. S. Jebah Suganthi raise historically important concerns in their archival research based article, "Nationalist and Reformist perspectives of Mahatma Gandhi".

Prof. Vibhuti Patel has penned a book review of an edited volume, *Peace through Poetry: An Ethnographic Journey into Peace* by Arushi Sharma, Aishe Debnath, Manisha Karne, Satishchandra Kumar, and Rajesh Kharat .

Obituary of Dr. Sunil Pandya (1940-2024) by Dr. Amar Jesani and Obituary of Dr. Anita Ghai (1958-2024) by Prof. Vibhuti Patel bring to the fore inspiring facets of two exemplary teachers in their respective fields of specialisations.

We request the scholars and experts to send their original research based articles, case studies and book reviews on contemporary challenges faced by the education sector.

Prof. Vibhuti Patel
Chief Editor

GANDHI AND GLOBALIZATION

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This scholarly article attempts to show how HIND SWARAJ written by M.K. Gandhi in 1908 has relevance even today. Gandhi's critique of the forces that drive the 'modern civilisation' i.e. European colonialism, has a lesson for us as we plunge deeper into the turmoil engendered by the demagogue of globalization.

Globalization is the domination of a uni-polar economic system facilitating the free movement of capital and trade. In an unequal situation, it works in favour of the rich. Globalization threatens national economies. In the consumeristic and technological culture promoted by globalization, people are subordinated to material forces and become expendable. The short-term benefits of the global economy create an illusion of lasting betterment but if we see social security, justice and democracy as the factors by which we measure a healthy society, then, globalization needs to be questioned as a positive force.

Gandhi in HIND SWARAJ critiqued the two principles which are at the core of globalization- 'might is right' and 'survival of the fittest.' Gandhi believed that greed and want which were the decisive dynamics of 'modern civilisation' corroded our moral being. Gandhi said, "...to bring about the highest intellectual, economic and political, and moral development...there should be equal rights and equal opportunity for all." This is possible only in a human economy based on 'social affection' not on impersonal competitive individualism as eschewed by globalization. This paper will attempt to analyse how Gandhi's observations on colonialism in HIND SWARAJ are a lesson for the neo-colonial global agenda that we in India are witnessing today.

"There are many human needs which find no place in the market"

- Rober A. Senser

Globalization is the domination of a uni-polar economic system, facilitating the free movement of capital and trade. In an unequal situation it works in favour of the rich. Capital itself is is used more for profitable speculation than for useful

production. Globalization revitalizes and threatens national economies and deprives people of a say in what happens to them. People are no longer respected as persons but become cheap labour. In a consumeristic and technological culture, people are subordinated to the material forces and become expendable. International debt and structural adjustment programmes trap people into economic, political and social dependence. Rising individualism encouraged by the profit motive goes hand in hand with lack of social responsibility and solidarity. A practical atheistic and materialistic attitude sets up Mammon as an idol. Violence and corruption become rampant everywhere and at all levels. The short term benefits of globalization to developing nations such as employment, trade collaborations, new technical skills, electronic advance, create an illusion of lasting betterment. But, if we see social security, justice and democracy as the factors by which we examine a healthy society, most of the available empirical data shows that from the moral point of view, the negative implications of economic globalization are for the third world overwhelmingly stronger than the positive.

Mahatma Gandhi believed that ‘exploitation is the essence of violence’ and that the extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics meant nothing less than the introduction of moral laws to be used in guiding international commerce.

The arguments put forth by Gandhiji, as far back as 1908 in HIND SWARAJ are relevant even today. HIND SWARAJ though deeply rooted in its time, has a universality beyond its specific context and historicity because the context of the dialogue in HIND SWARAJ is philosophical. It is therefore necessary for us to seize on its relevance for our times by entering into a meaningful dialogue with Gandhiji and his works.

Gandhiji’s HIND SWARAJ is a critique directed not so much at the British people but at their ‘modern civilization’. Anthony Parel has reprinted a letter which Gandhiji wrote in London just before his departure from England, to his friend and contemporary, Lord Oliver Amptill, former Governor of Madras who in 1904 had been acting Viceroy of India in the absence of Lord Curzon. In this letter Gandhiji makes it clear that what he objects to is that “the British people appear to be obsessed by commercial selfishness.”¹ He says, “...the true remedy lies...in England discarding modern civilization which is ensouled by this spirit of selfishness and materialism”.² In Chapter VI of HIND SWARAJ, ‘Civilisation’, describing ‘modern civilization’, Gandhiji says, “Its true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life” (HS. p.35) According to Tridip Suhrud, this is an inadequate rendering of the original Gujarati translation and should be translated as “Its true identity is in the fact

that people seek to find in engagement with the material world and bodily comfort meaning and human worth.”³ Gandhiji calls a civilization that judges fulfillment of human worth or ‘Purushartha’ only in terms of material worth and bodily comfort “irreligious” and “a satanic civilization”, “a black age.” For Gandhiji ‘civilization’ was a moral enterprise. Gandhiji defined ‘true civilization’ as “that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing we know ourselves”(HS., p.67) Civilization creates a possibility for self-knowledge both for the individual and society. Modern civilization that makes the material world and bodily welfare the chief referent of human and social worth hinders the inward gaze and blinds man. Gandhiji was emphasizing the shadow side of modern civilization with reference to a particular period, however, his insistence on greed and want as the decisive dynamic of modern civilization emphasized how our active moral being is transmuted into passive consuming without conscience. Gandhiji finds the two principles which are at the core of the ethos of modern civilization, namely, ‘might is right’ and ‘survival of the fittest’ unacceptable. One might concede that in stressing the dark side of modern civilization, Gandhiji does overlook many of its strengths, but one needs to recognize that his criticism of colonialism focuses on the imperialistic inspiration and his rejection of industrialism derives mostly from its capitalist context.

In HIND SWARAJ, Gandhiji decries the argument that means justify the ends. He argues for the purity of both ends and means” and there is just the same connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree”(HS., p.81), therefore violence of any kind must be shunned in achieving the goal because then the means are impure. The very same principles that drove colonialism, direct and guide the global economy, a manifestation of neo-colonialism. In HIND SWARAJ, Gandhiji sought to caution Indians against this and save the British from being ruined by their inability to see the flaw in their motivation and methods. Gandhiji takes pains to point out that his struggle is not against the British but against the civilization they represent. Gandhiji’s prophetic voice cautions us against material greed and power that overrides all other considerations in our post-modern global economy because it can only lead to an exploitative and unjust society where the least are forgotten and trampled upon.

Gandhiji said, “...to bring about the highest intellectual, economic, political and moral development...there should be equal right and opportunity for all...equality between town dwellers and villagers in the standard of food, drink,

all other living conditions ...In order to achieve this equality today people should be able to produce for themselves the necessities of life...If we try to work out the conditions for such a life, we are forced to the conclusion that the unit of society should be ... a small and manageable group...self-sufficient... in bonds of mutual co-operation and interdependence.”⁴ Gandhiji wanted a human economy based on ‘social-affection’ not impersonal and competitive individualism. He wanted “a leveling down of the few rich...and leveling up of the semi-starved millions”.

The free trade initiated by globalization has hardly been a leveler. The mechanism of debt has made it easy for IMF and the World Bank to impose policies that cripple the 400 million Indians who remain below the poverty line. Global corporations have displaced local trade and the ‘small’ man like the local farmer has been crushed because of cheap subsidized imports which undercut agricultural production. Cheap finished products from China have had the same effect. And so would FDI in the retail market, if it were allowed. Global markets, global communication, global civil society have relegated local people and their interests to the background and weakened democracy through the state. Helped by governments policies of privatization, deregulation and trade liberalization, more than a 100 multinational corporations now control 20% of global foreign assets (Hertz, N., *The Silent Takeover : Global Capitalism and Death of Democracy*,2001). The rule of the market, not the people governs and guides society. And who has access to the markets? The rich and the influential! Economic democracy in which all can participate equally has no place in a global scenario. Social justice takes a back seat. The poor and the weak are pushed to the wall. The SEZ are an example of such unthinking oppression. Think of the agitations in Gorai, Mumbai or Nandigram and Singur. Poverty and insecurity lead to violence and war. Gandhiji spoke up against just such a situation when he advocated an equality based on co-operative and compassionate non-violence, on ‘fraternity’ not ‘liberty’. As N.R. Narayan Murthy said at the Nani Palkhivala Memorial Lecture on ‘Making Globalisation Work for India’ (Jan.,2007), “...compassionate capitalism which is about pursuing capitalism while keeping the interest of the society in every decision we take to further our own interest” is the need of the hour.

In this context we need to re-examine Gandhiji’s idea of ‘sarvodaya’ as the goal of ‘swaraj’. Gandhiji saw ‘swaraj’ as rule over oneself, as self-control and as self-government. He said, “...In your emancipation is the emancipation of India. All else is make-belief.”⁵

Gandhiji’s principle of ‘swadeshi’ “simply meant that the most effective of social, economic and political functions must follow the natural contours of the

neighbourhood”, thus affirming “the immediate community”⁶ Globalization on the other hand overwhelms local cultures and destroys them. (1998 World Culture Report, UNESCO). It imposes an alienating homogeneity and inhibits localism and diversity, which Gandhiji meant to encourage in order to counter the centralizing and alienating forces of the Modern State. The clash between the dosa and the burger is one simple illustration of how commerce has overridden local culture.

Gandhiji’s quest for ‘decentralisation’ may seem impractical in the face of the material prosperity globalization trumpets but it is also equally obvious that the hegemonic homogeneity globalization promotes does succeed in obliterating differences. In fact, it alienates minorities and enkindles resentment. The reactionary polarization and ghettoization on religious lines that we are witnessing is undeniably a result of loss of identity and cultural bonding that comes with globalization.

Gandhiji’s ‘swadeshi’ did not mean ethnocentrism. Gandhiji was not a cultural chauvinist who would negate the global dimensions of common humanity even as he firmly stood his local ground. His concept of ‘oceanic circles’ was “...precisely an attempt at articulating inter-related levels of social organization”⁷ “His nationalism was anti-imperialist not chauvinist, a struggle for political justice and cultural dignity”.⁸

Gandhi was a cosmic man who wanted all cultures to be enriched without losing their identity. “His ‘swadeshi’ envisaged a more personalized and communitarian society on a human scale, yet extending to include both the biotic and even the cosmic”.⁹

Gandhiji’s critique of uncontrolled capitalism that was exported by the British as ‘modern or western civilization’ needs to be given a serious thought. Selfish individualism and self-interest which is responsible for the economic, political and ecological crisis that the world is facing today, warns us of what will befall us if we ignore the path of common good for all mankind. The ‘least’ cannot be forgotten in Gandhi’s vision for India and the world. There is an urgent need for markets and business to be grounded in sound ethics and for economic decisions to be guided by rules that foster greater justice and fair play ensuring a level playing field for all players in the global economy so that oppressive relationships of dominance-dependence will not trigger turmoil like that seen in 2011- whether it was ‘Occupy Wall Street’ or the widespread discontent across Europe. Can we reflect on Gandhiji’s advice and localize the global economy so that the enormous power of globalization can be utilized in a way that benefits rich and poor alike? For this we will have to find a more human ideal for society. Maybe if we can go heed Gandhiji’s idealism it will not be impossible! Gandhiji

who saw the village as his world with regard to economy and polity and the world as his village in the realms of culture and religion has a lesson for our times.

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**ACCESSIBILITY TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
ASPIRATION: A SAGA OF YOUNG GIRLS FROM INFORMAL
SETTLEMENT OF MUMBAI**

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Negotiating the terrain of uneven path of development laced with multivarious hurdles like caste, gender, region, religion and industry ready level of educational attainment etc., it is all the more competitive for youth to chart their road between their dream, aspiration and employment in their crucial phase of their lives. The journey becomes all the more complicated and challenging when one dwells in the informal settlements of the glittering mega city like Mumbai.

Introduction:

In a developing country like India, major hurdles like poverty, illiteracy and low human capital formation (in the form of education and skills) restrict the access not only to formal labour market but also entry into informal labour market as labour entry point is laced with socio-economic barriers.

This paper attempts to explore a saga of young girls staying in glittering city of Mumbai, albeit in dark oblivion of Informal Settlement of this otherwise ever shining city. A distinct way of progressions through successive level of schooling (primary, middle, secondary, tertiary) and the ability to seamlessly transition from school to the labour market are important determinants of productivity of those engaging into the workforce. These two tenets – progression and transition would determine the level of harnessing the human capital potential of those entering labour market with proper knowledge, skill and required capabilities every year to fulfill their potential to chart the path of their lives.

The researcher used the qualitative enquiry to examine the nature of accessibility to education, quality of education, socio-economic conditions and resultant attaining job opportunities by the young girls in their teens from the informal settlement of Sivajinagar Police Station, Govandi, Mumbai. Here, I would be using three case studies.

Theoretically the neo-classical assumption of labour market is criticized on the basis that the real labour market is not free from the socio-economic influences. There are evidences that entry barriers through discrimination, screening and signaling are in vogue incessantly in most of the labour markets. Post liberalization, there are plethora of opportunities that are thrown open to the youth, especially, youth in urban areas. Against this came a move away from socialist inspired policy outlook without adequate social safety nets which resulted into widened economic gaps. Although India's development policy almost always acknowledged youth, it has been *for* youth and never been *about* them.

Now, here the argument looms large about the very conceptualization of youth as 'category'. It does matter as how and where youth are placed in framing the policies and formulating the programmes that determine the direction over such course of actions. When such actions view youth as only mere producers who would use their skills to enhance nation's productivity, then providing them employment turn into an instrumental exercise and fix the youth only as mere dispenser of output. On the other hand, market regards the youth as an important category as consumers. Creating young buyers and augmenting the segment surely result into job creation in Industry and turn as benefits to the economy.

But the question arise, will that exercise allow youth to be in charge of their work and lives? Are their voices heard? Do youth have a clear understanding of 'education today and employability tomorrow'? Is there any comprehensive idea about socio-economic impediments and its possible effect on their work lives? Are they prepared to bridge the gap between the attainment of education and being employable?

A distinct way of progressions through successive level of schooling (primary, middle, secondary, tertiary) and the ability to seamlessly transition from school to the labour market are important determinants of productivity of those engaging into the workforce. These two tenets – progression and transition would determine the level of harnessing the human capital potential of those entering labour market every year in the country.

With these above explanations, it would be necessary to look into the matter of rapid urbanizations in India, the rural to urban migration, lack of

infrastructural facilities in urban setting, lack of public amenities, inequality in accessing education, cultural ghettoisation and its impact on education and choices of jobs etc. Another related issue is that of information asymmetry regarding jobs. Often young people are advised to go forward for white collar jobs. However, a large proportion of jobs are created in the informal sector. Then, youth find them neither prepared for it and nor are they in sync with their aspirations.

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Methodology :

The qualitative method was used to conduct the study in Rafique Nagar and Umarchadi area under Shivajinagr P.S. The original informal settlement was established to clear the part of Mumbai city to build skyscrapers and people were pushed to this north east end of the city, close to the mangrove near the Vashi creek to somehow lived their lives. The area was known as Lotus Colony. Later part, Lotus colony saw an enormous volume of increase in incoming people from different parts of India in search of livelihood. Actually speaking 'space' was never a habitable place, but evicted marginalised citizens were forced to make it a habitat for them albeit as informal settlement beyond Bombay Municipal Corporation area in the beginning. Later , the settlements increased many fold and BMC did recognise certain part of it to cater to basic amenities. But inflow of settlers increased in volume and the area of settlement increased without having BMC recognition and hence, there is serious lack of civic amenities. Umarchadi is one of such area emerged much later. There are no arrangements of civic amenities like potable water, street lights, school, park,

public toilets, medical centre etc. The settlers need to navigate a bit far off to avail such amenities.

Rafique Nagar and Umarkhadi are having only one tiny Anganwadi each run by NGOs. There are no primary school of Bombay Municipal Corporation in the vicinity. A junior college is situated almost 8 KM away. The local transport depot is atleast four KM away from these two places. I collected data from these two areas in the month of August to October 2024 and went with Snowball method to reach the respondents. I conducted unstructured in depth Interviews and utilised Atlas-ti software for the analysis.

Urban Fringe and Education

Urban marginality and inequalities in education are complex issues with multiple factors contributing to the problem. Uneven distribution of resources within the area of informal settlement, resultant lack of basic infrastructure like enough space for building primary and secondary school, lack of basic amenities like a proper hygienic toilet and enough water to use during the menstruation cycle by adolescent girls from marginalised communities, are disproportionately affected low enrolment rates in schools, high dropouts and poor learning outcomes.

With continuous flow of people into the city in search of livelihood ended at the initial stage to take refuge in informal settlement with the help of kin network. Due to economic reasons, often they settle at the periphery of the informal settlement where the baic civic amenities are a foreign idea only. Ceaselessly, these areas under physical, social, economic and environmental changes which allow breeding of inequality in each space. Again, within such inequality along with spatial segregation, space is accessible in different way to men and women – hence, there is inequalities ‘within’.

Case Study -1

Shahnaz (name changed), a girl in her teens, reached Informal settlement at Baigonwadi, Govandi under Shivajinagar P.S. area of Mumbai while she was just thirteen, from Badaun, Uttarpradesh. Her family took shelter along with her Uncle's family in the initial four months. Later, once her father got himself into vegetables selling on the roadside to earn his livelihood, the family settled in a shanty at the end of the settlement. After a year, her mother started going to neighbouring place to stitch the clothes during the afternoon after finishing household chores. Shahnaz was left at home to take care of household duties like fetching drinking water, cleaning vessels, preparing tea and snacks taking care of her sibling aged six. Her younger brother, aged ten, was enrolled in local municipal school in third standard to continue his studies.

Shahnaz, received schooling until second standard in her village school and was prevented to continue thereafter with a pretext of managing his younger brother. She barely knows to write her name in Hindi script and somehow manage to remember how to do addition and subtraction. She is unable to remember the tables of four clearly. She came out of her village and saw bus and train for the first time while travelling to Mumbai with family.

That was an experience for her as she expressed. She has opined that they have to adjust within one small shanty room in Mumbai having blue sheet over the temporary bamboo structure calling it as their home. She said in her village hut they had two room mud hut with a sprawling *angan'* (courtyard) where they play, they rest and have their food during the summer evenings as family. Here she feels claustrophobic as she is not allowed to step out of her shanty room alone and has no chance to move around the space as she used to in her village along with her friends.

During the discussion she expressed that she had a dream to get back to school when her father first broached the issue of shifting to Mumbai. She thought that she could restart her study a fresh or learning something new. But reaching here, her family had restricted her movement and denied to put her in school. Her father explained the financial burden of bearing the cost of living in Mumbai and chose to put her brother in school but not her. She overheard her parents talking about her teen age and vulnerability of a girl at this age in an unknown area of a big city. Although she was dreaming

big before starting from her village, now she had to put her dream at rest from being fulfilled. She is now fifteen years old. She expressed that she learnt to live with' the reality of inequality being practiced at the social institutions like family coupled with State apathy to its young citizens, especially girls, at the *margin*. She being forced to reside at the margin, turned entirely shanty bound living creatures to just 'live with'!

Negotiating inequality at margin is everyday affair for young girls living in informal settlement of otherwise glittering city of Mumbai. Mobility even if it is to study is absolutely an unknown word for them and its literally punctuated with many unsurmountable social and economic hurdles to go through.

Dream and Aspiration?! Really?

Migration is of paramount issue for the informal settlements in the city like Mumbai. Most of the current settlers are appearing in this puerperal region of the city as migrant in search of two square a meal to bring at home. Girls in their adolescent at such informal settlement are the worst hit of migration process.

Case Study – 2

Firdous (name changed) is 18 year old girl from a village from Sitamarhi district, Bihar. She reached Mumbai after clearing her Xth with reasonably good marks. She wished to finish her XII. She expressed in clear terms that she wanted to be an airhostess as she often watches the airplanes are moving above her settlement on the skyline. She met a girl on her maiden train journey with family to Sagardweep three years before whose sister was an airhostess herself based at Kolkata. They two became friendly during their journey. That girl narrates that her sister is encouraging her to get trained and to try for a similar job as she attained the age 18 then. Hence, she was making the journey to Kolkata after finishing her XII standard.

From that time onwards Firdous was catering to a dream to be an airhostess herself. Once her father decided to bring their entire family in Mumbai as he was settled in his daily earning being an autorickshaw driver who obtained his own vehicle after a struggled life of eight years in this city as driver, she was determined to complete her study upto XII standard and try to plunge for her dream, thus the dream became an aspiration one day on reaching Mumai.

But upon reaching Mumbai, as she started settling with her family of three other younger sisters and one kid brother, she discovered that the path to fulfil her dream is truncated. Soon her mother started her job as garland seller near the railway station in the evening to earn extra buck and passing off the household responsibilities to her shoulder and preparing garland, arranging flowers, preparing news paper covers to deliver those garland on time everyday. This left her with little time to fancy. She broached the issue to parents about her further study to hear that she is to be married off soon after attaining the legal age and that required her to be a good bride with certain specific qualities to perform as good wife which ultimately brings in honour to the family rather chasing such dream which is a foreign idea for a girl from their family.

She declared smilingly after this, she kept her this wish alive as dream only. She categorically expressed that none can '*snatch*' this dream from me at any cost. She didn't stop there. As she was the only person cleared tenth in family, she started taking tuitions of her own brother and youngest sister as well as five other children from neighbourhood during afternoon.

With a tone of sadness, she informed that her family has already arranged her marriage with a boy whose family hails from the same village and she will be ‘migrated’ soon back to her native place. She is of opinion that protecting family honour is most important to her family over her education and job prospect in Mumbai. Dreams and aspiration of young girl is being engulfed by the darkness of periphery of this otherwise *shining city of opportunities*.

Training and Education to be industry ready?! What’s that?

The educational attainment of an incumbent does not guarantee him or her a job in market driven economy. One needs to be industry ready to land up with a proper job. The gap between the attainment of educational qualification and to be industry ready requires one to undergo a process to get acquainted with the skills and right aptitude to claim the job position.

Case No -3

Ismet , 19 years old girl, was born and brought up in Rafique Nagar area. Her mother is single parent deserted both by her husband and maternal family with two children in tow alone to cater to her young children by working as a cook. Her employer and his family spent on the education of her childrens' primary education in nearby school. Her mother struggled to make her way to continue her job once she was detected with tuberculosis. She lost her job and the children had to discontinue their studies as it was touch even to get two meals a day at home. Seeing her condition and stress her doctor got her in touch with a NGO which brought a respite to the family. Her elder brother got trained to do repair services for small electronic gadgets and managed to get a job in a shop in Chembur. She had to discontinue her studies and taking care of her mother and did all household chores. She studied upto IVth standard. She was unable to complete her Xth although she wanted it badly. The expenditure of food for the family of three was somehow being met by her brother with the meagre income. Nevertheless, it was not enough to go on with as he was fired by the shop owner and intermittently jobless.

Since she was cooking at home, one of her aunt from neighbourhood suggested her to take up the job related to cooking and housekeeping. She contacted the NGO representative and requested for help. The NGO asked her to join a small group of four girls to go out of Shivajinagar area to get trained in a hotel in Bandra Kurla Complex to learn housekeeping by being a trainee with some honorarium per day. The parents fo other girls and her mother got convinced by the session taken by the NGO and she started going to the hotel to get trained. The condition that all the guardians that put forth was that all four of them would be travelled together during day time only. Until three months things went well, they picked up the skill of housekeeping and basic etiquette to be maintained in hotel industry. Things turned upside down once the training period was over and they were put on job roll to perform their duty. Their duty hours were different and it required them to travel in and out of their home during odd hours. The entire neighbourhood started vigilant about her timing and sometimes it was increasingly difficult for her to negotiate her path inside her own Mohalla during late night where she was born and brought up. Her mother and brother were served with a dictum from so called Mukhiya of her Mohalla that she has to discontinue her job.

This particular case brings a question before us - is the road in the mega city safe for girls / women to travel alone in the middle of the night? Can we guarantee safety and security to our citizens in such informal settlement that they could learn new skill and start earning to be self-reliant?

Conclusion :

All the three cases reflected the social barriers that are standing tall on the path of adolescent and teenaged girls residing in the informal settlement of this city of ample opportunities. Some are denied the access to education, some are denied mobility even if they are having required education, some are denied even to pick up the required skills to fulfil their potential as human being.

Education and skill upliftment are considered to be the strengthening force to build human capital of a society. The catch here is, while rest of the city is having immense opportunities and facilities to be availed, the people, especially the girls/women at the periphery of this shining city is comfortably obliterated, hence, they are marginalised, allowed only to “*breath to live* ”(Shahnaz’s parting expression).

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NATIONALIST AND REFORMIST PERSPECTIVES OF MAHATMA GANDHI

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This article makes an effort to critically reflect on the reformist ideals of Gandhi and his resistance towards injustice. His social, economic and political standpoints are based on the eternal values of truth, god and non-violence. His positioning of himself in the affairs politics is itself a great concept of reformism, he never craved for any position or leadership rather upheld the spirit of nationality and strived for its true liberation.

Introduction

Gandhiji's national initiatives of non-violence, which started from the railway platform in Pietermaritzburg and continued through the plantations of Champaran, the Chauri Chaura incident held in Gorakhpur, Dandi Salt march has had far reaching effect during his fight against independence. Gandhi is seen as a phenomenological figure of all times for the values he followed, the way he choose to live, the truth he shared, for the simplicity he preached, for the ideals he lived. There is more to Gandhi than just interpreting him as a freedom fighter, he reformed himself and thus reformed others' lives with great courage, morality, faith, truth and non-violence. His ideals stand beyond the test of times proving its strength through timeless truth and wisdom.

Nationality and Gandhi

Gandhi initiated a methodical process of building 'Indianness' as a means of establishing connections between the groups that would prevent the 'newness' of nationality from encroaching. Through his Charkhah he represented Swadeshi, self-sufficiency and interdependence. Gandhi interpreted it as a symbol of dignity of labour and equality. Thus, Gandhi provided the immigrants with a return trip home, funded by his trader patrons, even though the immigrants themselves may not have had the luxury of doing so. Members of Congress from each of his political constituency groups are among his 'subjects'. The 'coolies' of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, the Christian Natal-born Indians who had previously been isolated from the rest, and women lacking of their rights by discriminatory laws are among the groups it starts with—the Muslim the investors. His creation of the 'Indian' has to be considered a significant critique of the era's racial ideologies. In the 1890s, Gandhi travels to South Africa, a time when many claim that the colonial architecture of India's people already mirrors European epistemes. A coherent discourse of alterity, embodied in Hindu-ness as Indianness, has replaced the taxonomic (an overview of the various cultural identities types) and Social Darwinist (ranked on a scale from 'prehistoric' to 'modernized') approaches (Rai, Amit, 1995: p.34.).

Gandhiji's Political decolonization

In addition, the era signifies a shift, according to Kaviraj (2020), between political and cultural nationalism, or the post-Gandhi program of political decolonization as a workable project, and nineteenth-century anti-colonial cultural ideology. Therefore, he constantly uses cultural exploration in nutrition, sanitation, Satyagraha, and ahimsa to support his geographical and civic rights struggles. He identifies the components of the new 'Indianness' in his writings: an all-India consciousness that draws from different spiritual traditions but is united against contemporary civilization, free of excessive regionalism and prejudice based on caste and religion (vol. 23). We should take note of his extensive training in comprehending all of India's religions at this point. Gandhi's attempt to use South Africa as a site for the construction of the "Indian" nationality is noteworthy in that it marginalizes the African residents of that country. Tolstoy Farm and Phoenix Settlement, which

are both near Zulu villages, serve as his testing grounds for creating 'Indianness'. Phoenix Settlement is meant to serve as a nursery for developing the right Indians and men (and women) - a 'suitable place for making experiments and gaining proper training' (Gandhi 1997: vol. 22-23; quoting Gandhi vol. 9: 382). Gandhi's words, 'I shall strive for constitution which will release India from all thralldom and patronage' is a purest example of his vision beyond the independence gained.

Modernity functions and Gandhiji's vision

Ideologies of Socrates, Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Ruskin, as tools to coordinate Gandhiji's non-modern experimentation, as Patrick Brantlinger has pointed out, *'these texts themselves show a post-Renaissance, if not post-Enlightenment, global transcultural modernity enabled by print'*. There is a desire for social and civic order that goes beyond the essentialist 'Indianness' in which Gandhi's definition of 'Indianness' would embrace those who followed his rigid, at times brutal, rules at Phoenix Settlement and Tolstoy Farm, but it would exclude those who wished to use alternative tactics to oppose Western civilization. His 'Indianness' entails a deliberate separation from a subset of foreign expatriates, namely the radical terrorists who call for the overthrow of British rule through violence (Gandhi 1997, vol. 23). The most significant aspect, however, is that his clever application of the term "modernity functions by enforcing his personal vision on the public domain rather than by rejecting the fundamentals of civil society.

Gandhiji's ideals for Modern Times

Gandhiji negotiates the terrifying modernity of diaspora thus: he uses modern methods; and he observes the people's non-modern ways, and how they struggle to survive and build communities from tattered pasts. Though he ignores textually the reliance on superstition etc., he is himself a strong votary of *bhakti*, and an unquestioning faith almost akin to superstition. In Phoenix and Tolstoy Farms, he constructs a 'modern' Indian, but declares himself to ally with the 'non-modern' subaltern. The next section attempts to convey some of the twists and turns in Gandhi's modern anti-modernity. Of necessity, the tracing of this process involves a larger history: that of India's displaced Farmers (*Kisans*), who left their traditional, millennially rooted land-locked villages to find themselves

catapulted into modernity not unlike the one articulated by Toni Morrison for black women:

Modern Life begins with slavery: From the perspective of a woman, black women in the 19th century and before had to deal with post-modern issues in order to face the challenges of the current world. Black people have long had to deal with these issues: specific types of instability loss and the need to rebuild specific types of stability. Some types of insanity, such as purposefully becoming insane to, as one of the characters in the novel puts it, 'avoid losing your mind.' The truly modern person was created by these survival techniques. (cited on page 221 in Gilroy, Black Atlantic 1993)

Gandhiji's philosophy of Free-will

Gandhiji's view of Indian nationality in Durban's Atlantic Harbour. Typical of contemporary surveillance practices, it is linked to his perspective on power, which is linguistically represented by his gaze. Metaphors involving images predominate at the point of arrival: 'I viewed,' 'I noticed,' and 'I could not fail to notice'. Gandhi creates a highly unique counter public space in South Africa as a result of his prominence as a 'nationalizing' force (Fraser 1990: 57–59). He keeps a close eye on the constitutional discussions surrounding the issue of indentured 'Indians' in the Caribbean and then turns his attention to the 'woman question' in connection to the region. He tackles the three-pound tax issue in South Africa. Gandhi intervened when the coolie Girmitya, who had an agreement to return home, was refused a plot of land and instead had to pay a tax. He writes about their ability to survive. The persistence of India's transplanted peasant agricultural classes has a profound effect on him as an anglicized lawyer, though, as I have mentioned previously, he prioritizes the practical over the symbolic or superstitious. During Gandhi's visit to South Africa, his view is intended to be one of surveillance one that is gender-specific, classified, and provided various privileges in service of his new constituency, the subcontinent's affected individuals. Gandhi's shrewd non-modernity, chosen as proclaiming the real strength of the Indian, is borne out by a very interesting contemporary text. In this, the coolie as abject in the overt ideology of the plantation is reversed to reveal the coolie as object of envy. Rather than follow the European on his modern path to

industrialization, the Indian must go back to the village and its values, wherein his real strength lies.

Triarchic belief systems: God-Truth-Nonviolence

Gandhiji's fundamental goal was to serve God as Truth by nonviolence, which he described as "the largest love" for everyone, in all of his endeavors, whether they were political, social, or religious. The three metaphysical pillars of truth (absolute and relative), active nonviolence, and voluntary suffering supported the entire structure of Gandhiji's *satyagrahas*, despite the fact that he was not a metaphysician. Gandhi consequently converted metaphysical thought into ethics and ethics into politics itself. Gandhi's above approach to God can be explained in two ways. Initially he rationally acknowledged the Advaita (non-dualistic) Vedanta tradition's assertion that God is actually 'impersonal' and that God is Sat-Chit Ananda, or The fact which solely is, pure intelligence, and pure happiness even though he still deeply worshipped God as 'personal'. The very essence of life, God is pure undefiled consciousness that permeates the entire universe despite being invisible, indescribable, and formless.

Gandhiji's stated choice for the impersonal and the translucent does not stop him from realizing that God is personal for individuals who need to feel his existence and inherent to those who long to feel his touch, as stated by Glyn Richards (1983). The core of the Vedanta philosophy is found in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad, which Gandhi loved. It states that all that is visible and invisible, manifest and unmanifest in this universe, is filled with Isha, or God, and that everything belongs to God alone. As such, embrace what God has given you, but only after you give up the conception of owning it.

Second, Gandhiji's view of 'God as Truth' continued to develop, beginning with the child Mohandas' simple belief in the holy name of Rama and culminating in his intensely felt perception of God as a living being that is more real than the material world. Gandhi's observation that spiritual growth is a structural process and that "the concept of God itself keeps evolving with the advance of the emotional, intellectual and spiritual life of man" has been confirmed by K. L. S. Rao's observation (1978).

Central Tenets of Gandhi's ideals

Gandhiji's three central tenets - all of which make sense when considered together form the foundation of his philosophy of truth. First, there is a fundamental unity of existence if the spirit of God, or Truth, permeates the entire universe. Gandhi thought that all life, including human life, is interconnected, which includes the natural realm (plants, trees, herbs, and all), the sub-human world (animals), and the entire sustainable globally (air, water, fire, earth, sky, and other planets). Gandhi also held the conviction that 'one must be willing to embrace the most cruel aspects of creation as oneself' if all life is fundamentally one. This is ahimsa, which is a proactive philosophy of positive love instead of a passive virtue of non-harming; it is more akin to Christian agape, which is an unconditional, all-encompassing, and all-forgiving love that springs from the core of the human spirit. Gandhi's definition of ahimsa is comparable to the Buddhist idea of karuna, which is profound empathy for or recognition with all living things. But Gandhi's innovation lay in taking this receptive virtue of ahimsa and turning it into a workable strategy for achieving truth. Gandhi's unique contribution, according to Joan Bondurant (1965, 112), was to give the idea of ahimsa significance in both the political and social domains. Gandhi employed ahimsa as an effective armor to struggle against social and political injustice, settle disputes between people from every phase of daily existence, and oppose lies wherever it may be found.

Religion as Gandhiji's Self

Gandhiji contended that all people are 'sparks of God' because they are all descended from the same transcendental source and as such have the innate capacity to love, trust, and reciprocate love and trust from others. He thought that trust creates trust and that love breeds love. Gandhi's personal relationships and his Satyagraha philosophy were based on this specific trait of having faith in the other person's ability to be trustworthy. He believed that there is an endless supply of kindness, love, and forgiveness inside each and every person all they have to do is reach for it. Gandhi exhibited this capacity for love and trust.

Gandhiji's as spiritual seeker

Gandhiji wished to be remembered for his unwavering pursuit of perfection and purity, as well as his ongoing struggles to overcome his shortcomings and grow closer to God, rather than for his accomplishments. He believed that while his goals were challenging, they were not insurmountable. Speaking for himself, he stated, 'I have no doubt in my mind that any man or woman can accomplish what I have, provided they put in the same amount of work and nurture the same amount of hope and faith' (1958). The three most crucial phrases in the following line are faith, hope, and effort. Gandhi believed that faith necessitated ongoing effort and self-awareness.

This clarifies the significance of his self-austerities, which included non-possession, Brahmacharya, and others, to him as a spiritual seeker. Gandhiji's Indian ancestry, which places a high value on the spiritual disciplines of self-purification and self-control (yama-niyama) in order to achieve self-realization, must also be kept in mind. Gandhi's 'saintly mother', Putliba, taught him the principles of self-purification, self-control, fasting, and vow-keeping. Putliba was the one who introduced him to the discipline and enjoyment of living his body and mind in harmony with his spirit. Her own cheerful self-discipline and altruistic giving made her Moniya the inspiration for 'Mahatma Gandhi: The Son of His Mother' later on. Gandhi's faith was given a strong foundation by his mother's exemplary examples of faith, but it still needed to be strengthened and expanded in the face of life's obstacles. In order to help us understand Gandhi's ongoing process of developing themselves and the implicit structures of his constantly expanding faith in God or Truth, Fowler's Theory of Stages of Faith is most useful here.

Gandhiji developed an overwhelming sense of one's own identity throughout his entire time in South Africa, or as religious terminology puts it, his 'executive ego.' Interestingly, though, the driven young barrister in South Africa accomplished all of his dreams - plus something unexpected. According to the theory of faith development, he also 'found his God in a God-forsaken country.' From this point on, Gandhi's gradual transformation into a different person started; it was cemented by his vow to become a brahmacharya and his resolve to dedicate his life to serving the poor and oppressed. Gandhi was only prepared to give up his

ego identity his sense of the 'self' in order to discover his 'truer Self' in India.

Gandhiji's progressively declining self-interest and increasing selfless human service were consistently developed and culminated throughout his Indian saga. He developed a deeper, more austere inner life as he got more deeply involved in the Indian independence movement, 'constructive initiatives,' and social reforms.

According to Gandhiji, his life served as his sole testament to the strength of the human spirit. He lived according to the conviction that 'every individual reflects the divine as his inalienable core of Truth' (Iyer 1986, 1: 9). He had unwavering faith in the ability of nonviolence and Truth to drive out all darkness, including ignorance, apathy, and violence among people. He stated, 'I am growing every moment, and so is my faith in truth and nonviolence'. Regarding them, I see new implications. Every day, I perceive them in a different way. Gandhi saw faith as a path from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, and eventually from death to immortality rather than as a goal unto itself.

Social Reforms

Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation in India, was not only a leader in the political struggle for independence but also a visionary reformer who sought to transform Indian society from within. His reforms touched upon various aspects of life—social, economic, political, and ethical—and were deeply rooted in his philosophy of non-violence (Ahimsa) and truth (Satya). This essay explores Gandhi's multifaceted role as a reformer and the enduring impact of his work. Gandhi's social reforms were aimed at eradicating the deep-seated injustices and inequalities in Indian society. One of his most significant contributions was his campaign against untouchability, a practice that relegated millions of Dalits to the margins of society. Gandhi called these marginalized people "Harijans," meaning "children of God," and tirelessly worked to integrate them into mainstream society. He opened temples, wells, and schools to them and encouraged inter-caste marriages as a way to break down caste barriers. Gandhi also championed the cause of women, advocating for their education and active participation in the freedom struggle. He believed that women were equal to men and had a crucial role to play in

both the domestic and public spheres. His efforts to involve women in the nationalist movement were a significant step towards gender equality in India.

Economic Reforms

Gandhiji's economic vision was centered around self-sufficiency and the empowerment of rural India. A pillar of his economic reform was the Swadeshi movement, which promoted the use of local goods and the boycott of British goods. The spinning wheel, or charkha, became a powerful symbol of this movement, representing self-reliance and resistance against economic exploitation by the British. Gandhi was also a strong advocate of the village economy. He believed that the strength of India lay in its villages and that the country's development should be rooted in its rural areas. His emphasis on cottage industries and traditional crafts was a call to decentralize economic power and reduce reliance on industrialized urban centers. Gandhi's economic reforms were not just about resisting colonial rule but also about creating a sustainable and equitable economy that could uplift the poorest sections of society.

Political Reforms

Gandhiji's political reforms were guided by his principles of non-violence and civil disobedience. He believed that unjust laws should be resisted peacefully, and his method of Satyagraha—holding onto truth—became the hallmark of his political activism. The Salt March and the Non-Cooperation Movement are prime examples of how Gandhi used civil disobedience to challenge British authority. His approach not only questioned the legitimacy of colonial rule but also redefined the nature of political resistance worldwide. Gandhi was also committed to promoting unity in a diverse and often divided India. He worked to bridge the communal divides between Hindus and Muslims, advocating for a unified national identity that transcended religious and regional differences. His fasts, undertaken to prevent communal violence, were both a moral and political tool to foster harmony.

Religious and Ethical Reforms

Gandhiji's reforms were deeply influenced by his religious beliefs, yet they were marked by inclusivity and respect for all faiths. He drew inspiration from various religious traditions, including Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam, and advocated for interfaith harmony. Gandhi's idea of Satyagraha stressed the value of living by the ideals of truth, peaceful resolutions, and moral integrity. It was not just a political tactic, but also an approach of life. Gandhi also sought to reform individual character through his emphasis on simple living, self-discipline, and service to others. He believed that true reform began with the individual and that personal transformation was essential for societal change. His life itself was a model of ethical living, and he urged others to adopt similar principles in their own lives.

Gandhiji's vision of Social Justice

Gandhiji's vision for education was encapsulated in his concept of Nai Talim, or "Basic Education." He believed that education should be holistic, combining intellectual, physical, and moral development. Nai Talim emphasized learning through productive work, with a strong focus on vocational training and the needs of the community. Gandhi's educational reforms were a departure from the colonial model of education, which he saw as disconnected from the realities of Indian life. He envisioned an education system that would empower individuals and contribute to the overall development of the nation.

- Mahatma Gandhi's reforms were a testament to his deep commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity. His efforts were not limited to the political struggle for independence; they extended to transforming the very fabric of Indian society. Social justice, nonviolent protest, and human rights movements all across the world are still motivated by Gandhi's reformer legacy. His vision of a just and equitable society, where individuals live in harmony with one another and with their environment, remains as relevant today as it was during his lifetime. Gandhi's reforms were not just about resisting oppression but about creating a new social order based on the principles of truth, non-violence, and mutual respect.

- **Nai Talim (Basic Education):** Gandhi proposed the principle of Nai Talim, or Basic Education, emphasizing learning via useful labor. He promoted a system of education that combined academic study with practical training, tailored to the requirements of rural India.
- **Focus on Character Building:** Gandhi believed that education should not only impart knowledge but also build character. He promoted an education system that integrated moral and ethical teachings, along with practical skills.

Mahatma Gandhi implemented several key reforms during his lifetime that aimed to address various social, economic, and political issues in India. These reforms were rooted in his principles of non-violence, truth, and self-reliance. Below are some of the significant steps Gandhi took to bring about reforms:

Abolition of Untouchability

- **Campaigns Against Untouchability:** Gandhi worked tirelessly to eliminate untouchability, a practice that discriminated against Dalits (previously known as "untouchables"). He launched the Harijan Sevak Sangh in 1932 to promote the rights and upliftment of Dalits.
- **Temple Entry Movements:** Gandhi led efforts to open Hindu temples to Dalits, challenging orthodox practices that barred them from religious spaces. His efforts included negotiating with temple authorities and organizing public campaigns to allow Dalits entry into temples.
- **Promotion of Inter-cultural Dining and Marriages:** He encouraged inter-caste dining and marriages to break down the social barriers created by the caste system.

Swadeshi Movement

- **Promotion of Indigenous Goods:** Gandhi was a strong advocate for the use of Swadeshi (indigenous) goods. He encouraged Indians to boycott British goods and instead use products made in India, thereby fostering self-reliance and economic independence.
- **Revival of the Spinning Wheel (Charkha):** Gandhi promoted the spinning wheel as a symbol of self-reliance. He urged people to spin their own cloth (Khadi) as a way to resist British economic exploitation and to empower rural communities.

Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-1922)

- **Boycott of British Institutions:** Gandhiji called for a nationwide boycott of British goods, schools, courts, and government offices as a peaceful form of resistance against British rule. This movement aimed to weaken British authority and promote Indian self-governance.
- **Mass Mobilization:** Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement saw the participation of millions of Indians, making it one of the largest and most widespread movements against colonial rule.

Civil Disobedience Movement (1930)

- **Salt March (Dandi March):** In 1930, Gandhi organized the 240-mile Salt March, a protest against the British monopoly on salt production, to the Arabian Sea. This civil disobedience act gained national prominence as a potent symbol of resistance and sparked other such actions.
- **Breaking Unjust Laws:** Gandhi encouraged Indians to peacefully defy and disobey unjust laws imposed by the British, such as the salt tax, leading to mass protests and widespread civil disobedience.

Promotion of Village Industries

- **Village Self-Sufficiency:** Gandhi believed in the economic empowerment of rural India. He promoted the revival of traditional village industries, such as handloom weaving and handicrafts, to create employment and reduce dependency on industrial goods.
- **Grama Swaraj (Village Self-Governance):** Gandhi's concept of Grama Swaraj emphasized the importance of local self-governance and economic self-sufficiency at the village level.

Advocacy for Women's Rights

- **Involvement of Women in the Freedom Struggle:** Gandhi encouraged women to actively participate in the independence movement. He believed that women were essential to the success of the struggle and promoted their leadership in various campaigns.
- **Promotion of Women's Education:** Gandhi advocated for the education of women and their economic empowerment, believing that educated and self-reliant women would be better equipped to contribute to society and fight against social evils.

Promotion of Interfaith Harmony

- **Campaigns for Communal Unity:** Gandhi worked to foster harmony between different religious communities, particularly Hindus and Muslims. He organized prayer meetings, fasts, and peace marches to prevent communal violence and promote understanding.
- **Advocacy for Religious Tolerance:** Gandhi drew from various religious traditions to a message of tolerance and unity, urging people to respect and learn from each other's faiths.

Simplified Living and Ethical Conduct

- **Promotion of Simple Living:** Gandhi himself lived a life of simplicity, and he encouraged others to do the same. He believed in reducing material needs and focusing on spiritual and moral development.
- **Focus on Ethical Living:** Gandhi's concept of Satyagraha was not just a political tool but also a way of life. He urged people to adhere to truth, non-violence, and moral integrity in all aspects of life.

Gandhi's ideals and Global relevance

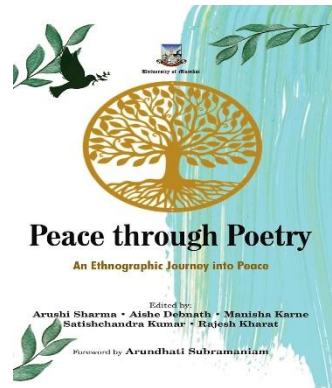
Gandhi's reforms addressed India's socioeconomic and political structure and were extensive and varied. In addition to being instrumental in India's fight for independence, his work established the groundwork for a society that is fair and just. Gandhi's legacy as a reformer is enduring and inspirational, and his reforms continue to impact social and political movements globally. His words, 'My politics are subservient to my religion' ideates modern political perspectives of non-participant leadership through which his integrity had stood far from other political contemporaries of his times. Gandhi's concept of non-violence is evident based on his religious belief systems which gave him the power to resist and throw the British out of power in India and achieve India's Independence. His global familiarity as a torch bearer of ahimsa asserted his power as an individual in the global context. A great soul, 'The Mahatma' is forever immortalized as the 'Father of Nation' for his eternal imprints he has left with the times by his virtues and actions. Gandhi choose good instead of evil, non-violence instead of violence, choose the path of truth than falsity, non-attachment instead of attachment, commitment instead of denial. He stands as a symbol of light with his values upheld as torch that will shine to guide the present to the future and to the future.

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BOOK REVIEW BY PROF. VIBHUTI PATEL



Arushi Sharma, Aishe Debnath, Manisha Karne, Satishchandra Kumar, and Rajesh Kharat (eds).2022. *Peace through Poetry: An Ethnographic Journey into Peace*, Adroit Publishers, pages: 154, Price: Rs. 699/-

This edited compendium encompasses various thematic areas concerning contemporary peace discourses. Foreword by Dr. Arundhati Subramaniam sets the tone and provided the context for the book that includes collection of 91 head and heart touching poems on Peace. This anthology is really engaging, raises several important points to ponder and reflects on plural perspectives to offer new insights about peace. Renowned poets have penned their revolutionary ideas, stressing optimistic moral visions, ideation on conflict resolution, and the fostering of ethos of sustainable peace and long lasting harmony. This publication encourages readers to explore the countless standpoints on peace keeping, peace making and peace building captured in a creative poetic expression.

Peace through poetry is a timely and much needed publication, as our planet has been facing traditional wars at 48 geographical locations. Wars between Ukraine and Russia on the one hand and between Israel and Palestine on the other are not only refusing to stop but are resulting in more and more intense devastation and deaths. Diplomatic interventions have not been able to bring cease fire but have polarized the global communities with the threat of almost entering a world war like situation resulting in unsurmountable human miseries. The world could not have borne the cost of another world war as most of the countries are still struggling to recover from the economic

hardships faced during the global COVID-19 pandemic and thus would have suffered huge losses due to a possibility of such an international conflict that has polarized the global governance into two mighty camps. The wars are negatively impacting the world economy as a whole and economies of the nation states, are facing huge consequences due to supply disruptions, shortages of essential survival needs, high levels of inflation, stagflation, and unemployment in their countries.

The war is also greatly affecting the economies all nation states in general and the post colonial economies of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The world economy is also undergoing an economic slowdown after the corona virus pandemic during 2020.

According to World Health Organization, each year, more than 1.6 million people worldwide lose their lives to violence. Many more are injured and suffer from a variety of physical, sexual, reproductive, emotional and mental health problems. Violence has a huge impact on national economies in terms of education, physical and mental health care, employment, quality of life, law enforcement and lost productivity. Development oriented resources get diverted for destructive purposes. Growing economic inequality is worrisome challenge.

At the national level too, there is increasing tensions due to poverty, unemployment and high rate of inflation in India. Though India's performance has been better than other post colonial economies and is expected to become the third largest economy in the world by 2029, multi dimensional inequality is a major challenge for India as per the report of Niti Ayog released in December, 2024.

The COVID-19 has affected each section of society differentially but enormously. Intersectional vulnerabilities and multiple marginalities due to social location of caste, class, ethnicity, disability, religion and gender have compounded the challenges for the humankind. Large majority of women and elderly people have faced loss of income and employment during the post-pandemic period. So many families are still grieving the loss of their loved ones, and so many children have lost their both parents and have been

orphaned. The disruptions of mental peace and stress were common sentiments among people, even with those who were not affected much directly by the pandemic.

In this collection of poems, the poems convey the quest about peace. Though peace is very difficult to define, world must think of peace beyond absence of conflict. Peace, prosperity, well being and most important justice should go hand in hand. There can not be peace without justice. States throughout the world must strive hard to achieve the goals of economic justice, social justice, environmental justice and distributive justice. To achieve these lofty goals, we need to humanise systems and structures for public good.

Peace and progress is not only an absence of any social conflict, but also peace and well being at the individual level, which should be the ultimate goal of human development. Each one of us is entitled to achieve well-being and we can relate to this ultimate goal of human development.

One must commend Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Research Centre for supporting this publication of this collection of poems. I felt really inspired by reading this anthology. I strongly recommend this book to all peace lovers and poetry lovers!

OBITUARY DR. SUNIL PANDYA

By Dr. Amar Jesani,
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On 17th December 2024 the country lost a doctor who lived his professional life committed to medical ethics and in struggle to make healthcare ethics. Sunil K. Pandya was a role model for ethical practice. In the late 1980s he was instrumental in crystallizing a nucleus of doctors and those interested in healthcare ethics to work actively for ethics reforms in healthcare professions and services.

Born in 1940, Sunil Krishnalal Pandya studied medicine at the Grant Medical College and the Sir J J Group of Hospitals in Mumbai. After obtaining his postgraduate degree in general surgery in 1965, he trained in neurosurgery under Dr Gajendra Sinh. He completed his further studies under Prof Valentine Logue at the Institute of Neurology, Queen's Square, London. In 1975, he joined the Department of Neurosurgery at Seth G S Medical College and KEM Hospital in Mumbai. After 23 years of service at this public hospital and prestigious medical college, he retired in 1998 as Professor and Head, Department of Neurosurgery. Post-retirement he

worked as a consultant neurosurgeon at the Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre in Mumbai.

In the later part of the 1980s I came to know about him as a doctor dedicated not just in treating his patients but also educating and informing him. Later, when I met him, I could see how, despite the heavy workload of patients in a public hospital, he respectfully interacted with the patient and diligently prepared medical record. And he always used carbon paper to create it's copy to hand it over to the patient. This was at a time when as Bombay Group of Medico Friend circle we were agitating and had also help in filing a Public Interest Litigation in the High Court for patients to get a copy of their medical records. Here was a doctor who always did it without fail.

He never preached what he did not practice. He did this to such an extent that he would not request donation for any good cause without first making his own donation. He also did not fear telling the truth to the power. It was this fearlessness that helped the group in 1991-92 to take plunge in a campaign against corruption and unethical practices in the medical profession. He led a panel of 8 doctors, called Forum for Medical Ethics, to contest elections of Maharashtra Medical Council, not to get power but with a manifesto to make it committed to medical ethics. Of course, the panel lost elections, but not without getting lots of public support and exposing corruption in the medical council elections. A report of the electoral malpractice was published as a newsletter titled "Medical Ethics" in 1993. The demand for such publication turned out to be so good that it emerged as a journal now known as IJME - Indian Journal of Medical Ethics (www.ijme.in).

He was the first editor of the IJME. He could have continued as its editor as long as he wanted, but he believed in building a team, and ensuring that all with capabilities have an opportunity to lead this work. He stepped down in 1998 after laying down a solid foundation but continued to write and help the journal. His work and the journal promoted ethics reforms in healthcare and helped in the emergence of bioethics as a discipline in India. Now there are institutions offering short courses, diploma and master's degree courses in bioethics. The IJME has continued uninterrupted publication for the last 32 years, as an online open access journal and subscription-based print copy.

In addition to medical ethics, he was deeply involved in the study of the history of medicine. He documented the founding years of his *alma mater*, the Grant Medical College and Sir JJ Hospital, Mumbai. The same was published in a book by the Cambridge University Press in 2021. At the time of his passing, he was working on the history of the GS Medical College and KEM Hospital.

Sunil K. Pandya will be remembered by his friends and colleagues, and also by the future generations both for his dedication to ethics and for his contribution in promoting a movement for healthcare ethics.

OBITUARY

PROF. ANITA GHAI (1958-2024)



By Prof. Vibhuti Patel, ICBE, Mumbai

Email: vibhuti.np@gmail.com

Untimely passing away Prof. Anita Ghai (23-10-1958 to 11-12-2024) former president of Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS) has really shocked the women's studies and disability studies communities all over the world. Prof. Ghai was a pioneer in Gender and Disability Rights.

Prof. Anita Ghai regularly visited SNDT Women's University's Research Centre for Women's Studies when she was President of IAWS and later on, Centre for Special Education. Her infectious smile and mind-blowing speeches on Gender and Disability are unforgettable. She nudged, scolded and sensitized us to challenge rigid systems and structures in our workplaces and community-based organisations to make them accessible for persons with Disabilities. She explained, with a smile on her face, the

semantics of 'persons with Disability', 'differently abled' and 'special needs persons'. She challenged binary of 'able' versus 'disable' and provided an understanding on 'inter dependence'. We were all ears to her words. She embodies greatness in speaking truth. Whenever she spoke in the seminars, conferences, consultations and workshop, the participants listened to her with a rapt attention.

Knoweldge Production

Dr. Anita Ghai (Ph.D. in Psychology) was a professor at School of Human Studies, Ambedkar University, Delhi. She retired a professor at School of Human Studies, [Ambedkar University](#), Delhi in November 2023. She made a path-breaking intellectual contribution on [sexuality, gender](#), health and education rights from the lens of disability studies. Her 3 authored books are considered to be landmark academic contributions in the field of disability studies. They are *(Dis)Embodied Form: Issues of Disabled Women* (2003), *Rethinking Disability in India* (2017) and *Disability in South Asia: Knowledge and Experience* (2019). Prof. Anita Ghai was also on the editorial board of *Disability and Society*, and *Scandinavian Journal of Disability*. Her insightful and grounded writings will always be a guiding light for understanding multifaceted intersectional vulnerabilities faced by differently-abled persons.

She also enthusiastically participated in the online panel discussions on "Gender and Disabilities" and online courses on "Engendering Health" chaired by me for Gender Equity Series of IMPRI Impact and Policy Research Institute.

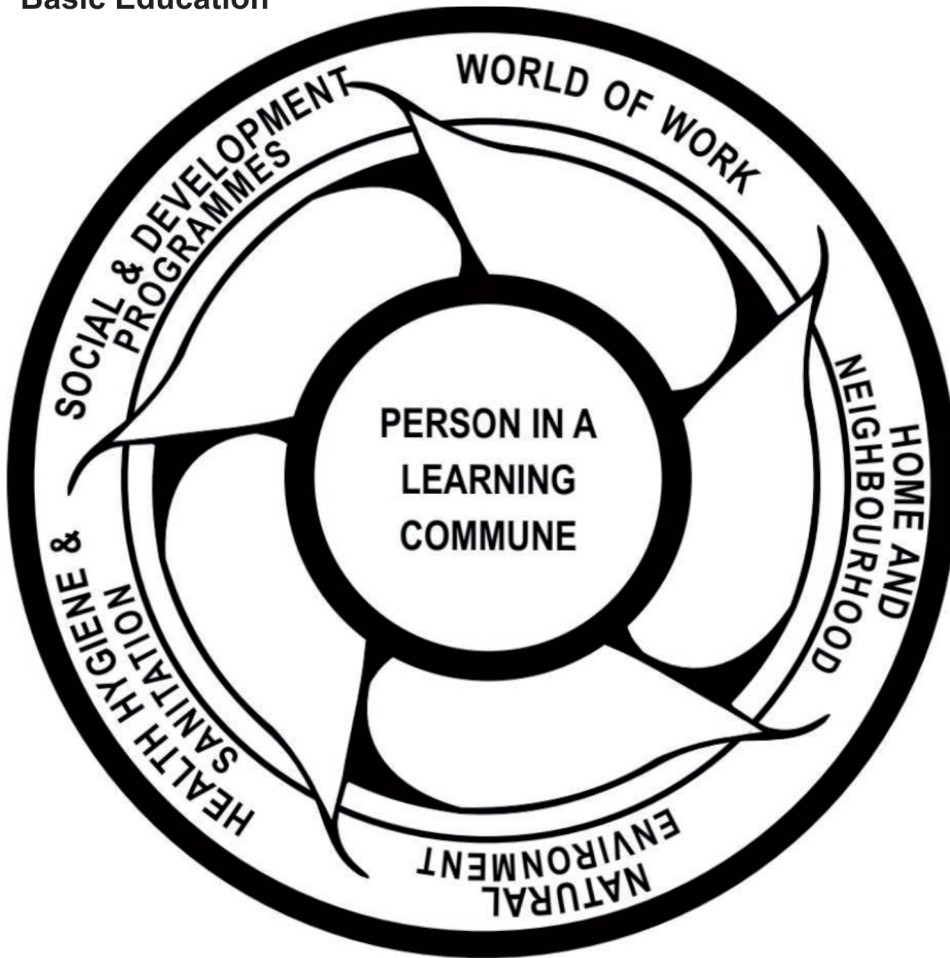
Prof. Gahi used to conduct workshops on [sexuality and disability](#), as part of an online course run by feminist organisation, CREA. She wrote about how the Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques ([PCPNDT Act](#)) is harmful to disabled children, since it allows abortion after testing for a foetal "anomaly". She critiqued it "Socio Darwinism" rationalising "Survival of the fittest". In 2008, she coauthored an insightful research-based article with Dr. Rachana Johri, titled, "Prenatal Diagnosis: Where Do We Draw the Line?". *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*. **15** (2): 291–316.

GANDHI SHIKSHAN BHAVAN

Functional Education

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Development of well-integrate personality is possible if :

- a. Educational experiences and work experiences interweave, intersect and reinforce each other.
- b. Students and teachers participate actively in the community services such as adult education, promotion of better health, hygiene and sanitation etc.
- c. Curriculum provides for self-directed learning and
- d. Education concerns itself with the development of the human person.

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