

## **MAN AND SOCIETY: AN ANALISIS ON GANDHI'S PERSPECTIVE**

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### **Abstract**

Man is the most wonderful creature of the world. He possesses a freedom which makes him different from other animals. It makes man the master of his own life by deliberation and choice. Gandhiji's theory of human nature is basically based on his idealistic cosmology. He believes man to be a complex being. Man is not merely a physical being but also possesses consciousness, will, reason, emotion etc. He has also an aesthetic sense, a feeling of sensibility and an insight into the nature of good and bad. Gandhi believes that there is only one supreme God and man is an expression of that one reality. Every man is a mixture of body and spirit. Man is said to be rational as well as social animal. As a social being, man is dependent on society for the content of his thoughts, dreams and aspiration. Gandhi believes that the origin of society lies in man's realization that there is no place for complete selfishness in man's life. Gandhi deals with the upliftment and development of man and society. His whole concept of social development is based on the upliftment of man as well as the society.

**Keywords:** Society, Morality, Humanism, Sarbodaya, Ram Rajya, Gandhian Economy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Social Philosophy begins with the question regarding the formation and origin of society. The word 'society' derives from the Latin word 'sequi' which means 'to follow.' In this sense, society is the group of people following some common purpose. According to Hobbes, society came into existence as a result of some kind of contract. The individual understood that it was not possible for them to have everything by themselves. They also felt that some kind of understanding with the fellow-men was essential to live in a peaceful and healthier way. Thus they made a contract to live together peacefully. But Gandhi is not interested with the problems regarding the origin of society and its relation with man. He does not even oppose to the Hobbesian view regarding the origin of society. Gandhi derives a moral basis from this social

contract theory which is known as the ethical basis of society. Gandhi believes that man should realize that there is no place for complete selfishness in his life .

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

To analyse the relation between man and society, reflected in Gandhi's Sarvodaya with relevance to the present day society.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The method is purely analytic and the work is based on mainly secondary sources. Gandhi believes that there is essentially some goodness which is present in every human being .The origin of society lies in the man's conscious effort to transcend his egoistic ways that to rise above his selfish motives. The reason for the formation of society was to avoid violence, present among themselves. Man has to work not only for his personal needs but also for the needs of others. He believes that 'work' becomes the basis of society. He develops his theory of society in terms of love and co- operation .Thus, in the formation of society, Gandhi believes on the principle of love, non- violence and co- operation .There should be an inner arrangement inside a society so that every member of a society can share his work for the betterment of the society .

Regarding the status of man in society, Gandhi emphasizes the development of the individual from moral point of view.He believes in the basic goodness present in every man. Individual is the combination of both good and evil and we should hold the good and reject the evil.

Gandhi is a great social thinker. In his thoughts, he includes social life, religious life, political life and certain other aspects. His philosophy includes all the aspects of human social life. He deals with the upliftment and development of man and society. He lays great emphasis on improvement and reform of India. In his way of teaching what is true of man is true of society as well . Because he thinks that man and society are interdependent .Man has some obligations towards his society. He values individual freedom but at the same time his freedom is restricted by the obligations towards the society.

Gandhi wants to establish a society of his dream which is casteless and classless. His attitude towards man is absolutely humanistic. His humanism may be called truly international in spirit .It is not personalistic . His humanism overcomes all the barriers of caste , religion and culture . He wants man to be disciplined , moral and honest not at the cost of society, not by withdrawing himself from society but by striving for the well-being of society .In this way he links up humanism with the well- known social concept of Sarvodaya . The concept of Sarvodaya stands for 'welfare of all ' . It is based on love and proceeds on the faith that a Sarvodayi will be prepared for maximum possible self-sacrifice for the good of others. The end of all activities whether social or political has to be nothing but the upliftment of everybody.

Gandhi says that his ideal society is based on non-violence and aims at maximum independent for the citizens . According to him, it will be a state based on village autonomy and each village will be more or less independent and autonomous. Instead of his concept of centralization there will be decentralization. The people will be self-disciplined and restraint. Everybody will be ready to perform their duties by persuasion. In fact, according to Gandhi, his ideal society is based on his concept of Ram Rajya.

Gandhi believes that the state is an instrument of oppression. Instead of state, he wants to establish a samaj known as 'Sarvodaya samaj'. The basis of this samaj is morality, humanitarianism and equality. It wants to establish a society in which there will be no oppression of one class by another class. He is not in favour of establishing equality with the help of the state machinery. Instead he relies on moral consciousness of the people for the ushering in of the society. In such society there should be economic equality. In his society he wants that every member should get training to be a useful citizen who is capable of bearing the responsibility and fulfilling the duties which he owes to the society.

In fact the philosophy of Gandhi is based on self-sufficiency. He thinks that village republics shall be units of decentralized power set-up and shall take care of the needs of the people through love and co-operation. The aim of Sarvodaya is to abolish the social evils and to make the villages as independent units. Sarvodaya also aims at establishing a classless society governed by the laws of truth, non-violence and love.

Although, Gandhi has not recognized himself as an economist, yet he has propounded theory of economics for his Sarvodaya society. In Sarvodaya society, economics does not recognize the wants and their fulfilment. It gives emphasis on the principle of simple living and high thinking. The economics of Sarvodaya society is based on self-sufficiency and dignity of labour. There should be no unemployment in this society where the means of production shall be owned by the village republic.

Besides, Gandhi holds that in Sarvodaya society, export shall be allowed only when there is surplus in production. There shall be no problems of distribution such as rise in price, non-availability of essential goods, hoarding, profiteering etc. in this type of society. He lays emphasis on the theory of changing heart than the realization of other things.

Gandhi's Sarvodaya is based on non-violence and so it does not recognize war. He wants to settle the differences through peaceful means. Gandhi says that when it is impossible to settle any dispute through peaceful means, Satyagraha should be restored to. According to him woman is the symbol of non-violence. He believes that in order to build the future of the society, we have to give proper status to women. Man and women should enjoy the status of equality. He holds that morally woman is more strong and powerful than the man. God has given the right to the woman to look after the family and so she should deserve a higher place in the society.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of nation was one of the greatest thinkers of the world. His importance is not confined to the modern world but he shall be remembered so long as the humanity continues to suffer from social and spiritual ills. He has lots of contribution in the social, ethical, political and economical fields of Indian society.

The present system of Indian democracy is against the Gandhi's idea of swaraj. But India at present needs decentralized democracy of Gandhi's dream where the village is at the root. The Panchayat should be the executive with committees which are responsible and answerable to the villages for their activities. In the present political situation of India, the picture of democracy given by Gandhi is relevant for the benefit of the common people.

India today faces several failures in the political system. The political parties are functioning with anti-democratic ideals. For the success in politics in India Gandhian principles should be followed so that we can build a casteless and classless society of his dream. His aim

was to build a Sarvodaya society which believes in the greatest good of the greatest number. It must be achieved by means of love and non-violence. If we want to build up a society of Gandhi's dream, religion is the first necessity. He gave more emphasis on morality and he made it clear that the most important consideration of the government is to lay emphasis on the welfare of the individuals. His ideals may require certain modifications. Gandhi was not against modifications of his principles to suit the conditions of any situation. He did not claim any rigidity for his methods and ideals. A total moral transformation of the people is necessary for the successful implementation of Gandhi's ideal of Sarvodaya. Gandhi's Sarvodaya is based on truth and non-violence. It believes in social equality. To attain social equality everyone should have faith in the maxim "All men are brothers". If the people of India have ethically progressed Gandhi's ideas will succeed a lot.

We believe that in the modern world of chaos and confusion, Gandhi's ideal of Sarvodaya will be fruitful in future also. Nobody can ignore his ideal for the common good of mankind. His ideal of Sarvodaya can only succeed if the people of India sincerely try uprooting all social anomalies.

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