The Social Cultural Moorings of Gandhi's Ideas

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Abstract

Gandhi's ideology was deeply rooted in India's socio-religious practices and traditions and he drew inspiration from them to develop his concepts of Satya (truth), Swaraj (self-rule), and Swadeshi (self-reliance). Gandhi believed that seeking and upholding the truth was essential for personal and societal transformation as it has potential to help India achieve true independence and self-sufficiency. For Gandhi, truth as a universal principle transcended all religions and cultures, and he encouraged individuals to live their lives according to the principles of truth and nonviolence. He believed that political independence was not enough, and that true independence could only be achieved when individuals and communities were self-sufficient and had control over their own lives. This idea was rooted in India's long history of village self-governance and decentralization, which Gandhi saw as a model for the nation as a whole. Finally, Swadeshi, or self-reliance, was a concept that Gandhi promoted as a way to break India's dependence on foreign goods and institutions. He believed that India could only achieve true independence if it developed its own industries, agriculture, and education systems. This idea was also influenced by India's history of self-sufficient villages and communities, and Gandhi saw Swadeshi as a way to revive and strengthen these traditions.

Key Words: *Satya Swaraj, Ram Raj, Swadeshi, Moksha, Karma, Dharmic, Advaita Vedanta, Upanishad, Nishkam Karma, Atma, Moksha, Brahmana, Nirguna Brahman, Sagun Brahman, Deha, Manas, swabhava, maitri, Gita, Ramayan, Mahabharata, ethico-religious traditions, om tat sat*

One of the most outstanding aspects of Gandhi, that set him apart, from all of his preceding, contemporary as well as succeeding fellow nationalists, was the remarkable way in which he used his experiences and insights – largely taken from the rich social, cultural, economic and religious practices of India with the purpose to carry out political drives and streamline actions (Parekh B.). This strategy equipped Gandhi with not only the ability to garner and develop a vivid picture and understanding of the society but also facilitated him to effectively interact and develop an inner bonding with the multitudes.

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