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ECOFEMINISM AND GANDHI: THINKING IN HARMONY

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Abstract:

It is surely not accidental that Gandhi's thoughts are vividly exemplified as a prototype of truth and non-violence, without mentioning his pursuance of conserving the ecology as per the solicitude of contemporary concerns. Operating in a land of impoverished and exploited, the Mahatma's role was to deconditioning the sexual attitude of oneself ousting the dichotomy of public versus private. This certainly has the reinforcement of the theory of feminist foundations, speaking about the hermeneutics of self-abolition of a cognitive methodological masculine assertion. This paper attempts to understand Gandhi's critique of man's relationship with nature, drawn heavily on his formidable socio-biology. It finds that Gandhi revalued the primordial relation, renewing the spirit of attainment of womanhood. It points to the fact that Gandhi had done his moral experiments which progressed with his belief that women have an intense vocabulary of resistance and inclination towards nature. This paper uses the concept of Gandhi's restoration affinities towards the universe, as a practice of living and thinking. Non-violence was fundamental in his conceptualization of feminine attributes, which adopts the critique of industrial civilization. This insistence on non-violence strengthens the Gandhian ideology to prescribe the women's role in a given society. Attempting to ascertain whether the practical struggle and spiritual aspirations have led Mahatma Gandhi to see himself more closely to the female existence. He reflected the holistic and pragmatic consciousness, derived from nature not enslaved by industrialization and exploitation. This is a study of that consciousness that has been marginalized over the past many decades. It then focuses on the zeal of Gandhi to emulate the ideal of suffering, even made him able to think more of demasculinized characteristics. It has to be seen whether all of Gandhi's philosophies and outlooks affect environmental consciousness as a human ecologist or more precisely as an ecofeminist.

Keywords: Environment, Man-Nature Communion, Feminism, Ecology

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6.1: INTRODUCTION:

The consciousness of surroundings is one's physical needs, necessarily restricted to the time of living. That is to say, the purpose of living pushed many of us towards the pursuit of moral conquests over the body, mind, as well as space, inhabited. One of the first men who applied the process of asking difficult questions around the surrounding of his thereby begun to feel the growing presence of evil in the dichotomy of masculinity and femininity was Mahatma Gandhi. Others were very few.

And so we get, the ideologue whose moral captivity turned the national, regional, and specific form to emerge as a weapon for the revolution. For years, Gandhi has been read as the author of the text which prescribes a command over the self and the physical world. The science of rejecting domination provided for the first time in the Indian nationalist scene within moral bargaining. Thus, while the search was for the truthfulness to unite the whole of the exploited against the exploiters. But the quest for discovering the exploiter was within the soul besides the external foe as taught by Gandhi.

Gandhi's thinking could not be located within only the political, moral versions of understanding the meaning of life, the holistic view of Gandhi needs to be understood to get his narrative of life.

Ramchandra Guha once asked the question in his essay on the position of Gandhi as an early environmentalist. He was not certain about the particular role that Gandhi played in the conservatism of ecology but Guha made a fine balance toward the overall purpose of Gandhi for nature.

"Nature lovers and those with a focus on the urban environment would, therefore, find little direct help from Mahatma Gandhi. But between the wilderness and the city lies a vast terrain, home to the seven hundred thousand villages Gandhi spoke of so often, and so eloquently. It is here that his life and message admit of more direct application, in the resistance to environmental destructive projects or in the restoration of the relationship between the agrarian economy and its natural environment. (Raghuramaraju, 1977:236).



From this piece, it is tempting to question the direct involvement of Mahatma Gandhi in the business of restoring nature's order but one could, without doubt, share the belief of Gandhi for the moral upliftment of people, to make them believe in their works that affected nature and surrounding. In the nationalist form, where the idea of freedom and political control was of supreme significance in the interest of the entire community, Gandhi's political ideal did not dissociate from the moral, social, and ethical values.

The power to control the minds of people by logic and ethics has a compulsive strength carried by Gandhi. He led the nationalist struggle with the same vigor as analyzed the moral, ethical conduct of people fought in the movement.

The direct physical form in which Gandhi laid the harmonious principle of nature was with his economist, Joseph Chelladurai Cornelius 'Kumarappa'. Gandhi envisioned the ideal of India as a village economy where large masses of people could make independence in every principle of economy and politics. Kumarappa seemed to give a definite design to the principle by "advocating a burgeoning utilization of the renewable resources like water, solar power, etc. with the exploration of scarce mineral ores of iron, which can be used for next generation. (Unnithan & Sivakumar, 2017).

6.2: GANDHI AND ECOLOGY:

Within the agrarian principle envisioned by Gandhi, the human environment relation required a reconstruction where nature would not treat as the slave of man's need.

"The eco-centric Gandhian economics underlined the need for bio-industrial development the balance between resources and exploitation, man and nature."The earth, the air, the land, and the water are not an inheritance from our forefathers but on loan from our children. So we have to hand over to them at least as it was handed over to us." (Unnithan & Sivakumar, 2017).

To Gandhi, the responsibility towards nature has not been separated from the morality towards oneself. It is true, that Gandhi had not discussed the ecological concern as an authorized discipline like his other political ideas but the concern for food, water, air, and non-violence towards the creatures had always affirmed in his lifestyle parameters. When we look



at the knowledge he has about man's greediness, the unjust exploration from nature, we may discover that Gandhi probably is not a modern environmentalist but his discursive thoughts about nature are ahead of his time. In the philosophical essence of criticizing the modern industrial civilization, Gandhi called for the cooperative ways of life where the central metaphor would be the village and the deurbanized ways of living. The moral supplement by Gandhi raised awareness regarding the consumerist stand of the capitalist economy, where nature seemed to be its reservoir of fulfilling unlimited desires. He said,

"I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use and keep it .I thieve it from somebody else. I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no more dying of starvation in this world. But so long as we have got this inequality, so long we are thieving." (Gandhi, 1960)

The Gandhian philosophy, If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women "sums up her inspiration. (Unnithan & Sivakumar, 2017).

When the conventional employment of ecofeminism is understood in terms of Gandhi's way of seeing nature, I do not see the exact armed solution or the statements propounded by Gandhi. The same problem appeared when the problem of conserving nature and its resources required the elicit explication from Gandhi's encyclopedia of ideas.

The emergence of ecofeminism as an ideology and a movement born with the resistance against the power and exploitation that flowed directly into the women and nature's locus. Technically, the term ecofeminism was coined by the French writer Francoise d 'Eaubonne in 1974. (Rao, 2015:125). The idea behind the feminist integration with the ecology has to raise the consciousness about the feminine linkage with nature directly. In a word, the aim is to change the thinking of the mind where the woman has been considered a passive object with no trouble adjusting to the outer world. A certain degree of harmony and balance is necessary to satisfy everyone's needs. Nothing short of this will work. For Gandhi, people, in general, follow the idea of strong and powerful. But this has inherent negative consciousness



about the degree of behavioral question. The domination and exploitation became a general guide for a man in the course of evolution, but for Gandhi, this domination and muscular obedience solely accommodate the limitless range of fear, cowardice, and compromises. Gandhi knew the phenomenal poverty, scarcity, and non uniform dispersal of resources in the Indian context. The threat according to Gandhi was not the limited resources of the universe, but the real problem was the social hierarchies where the one seemed to lost in his interest, without thinking for others. For Gandhi, to intervene in the matter of nationalist discourse undoubtedly required an understanding of India, where people have been subjected to inequality, oppression, and sickening.

Gandhi's idea of identification of Indian realities seems to be the most important advent of his political-social philosophy. Nothing which has not gained any significance for the people was most criticized by his philosophy. There ought to be the importance of every little bit which makes the life of people non alienated. The importance of every object remains which makes the distinct relation with men.

Also essentially Gandhi is a pragmatist. He understands equal rights for all people. The prejudice against modern science and the technology to harness nature's resources was no doubt very much understood by Gandhi. He insisted on the same progressive idea of utilizing natural resources but with logic and precision with originated in Gandhi's acquaintances with the need of the people of India. Gandhi's argument was to meet all the demands of the last men in India. He admitted the pace of modern science and its ability to carve civilization but he also admitted the foundations of India which rest on the non -violence and the balance between nature and man. This pragmatic attitude related to nature and daily problems provides the people of India a far more wide guide for solving the practical problems that embedded within nature and human relation.

6.3: CONCLUSION:

For Gandhi, the political battle against colonial rule could not be solved without the restructuring of the society. His every principle and idea suggesting the transformation in viable terms into the concrete and balanced idea of the application. For him, the inadequacy of modern science in the Indian Perspective lies in the non-application of it at a ground level. If



the people would not benefit from it, it would be the futility of the theory and principle no matter how modern it would be. Gandhian way of thinking has all by means a radical and instrumental thought system that aims to decondition the mentality of society by making them free from the slavery of thinking ,and balancing the harmony between men and nature.

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