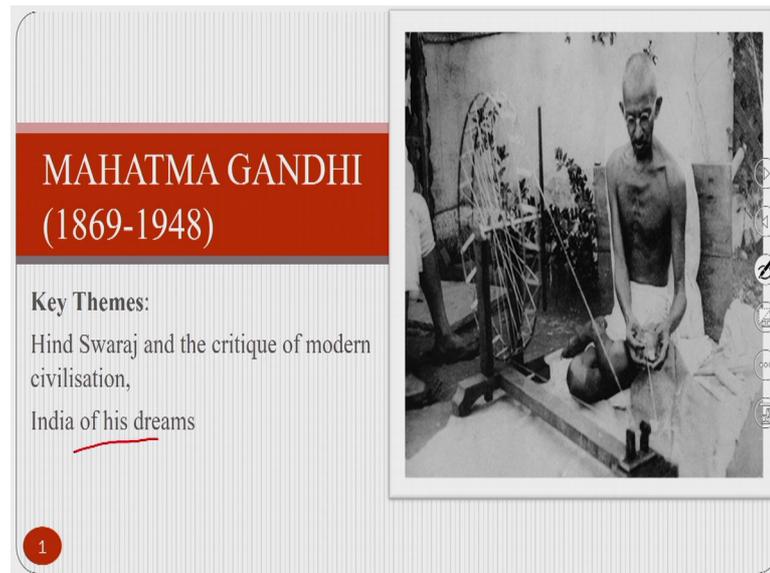


Introduction to Modern Indian Political Thought
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Lecture – 14
Mahatma Gandhi: India of His Dreams

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MAHATMA GANDHI
(1869-1948)

Key Themes:
Hind Swaraj and the critique of modern civilisation,
India of his dreams

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Hello and welcome friends to this third and the concluding lecture on Mahatma Gandhi. In previous to lecture we have discussed his thought on nonviolence, Sarvodaya, Satyagraha passive resistance and also his critic to a modern civilization. In this lecture on the first half we are going to discuss his dreams about future of India or what we can also called his vision of India or his dreams of future India.

So, first part of today's lecture we will discuss his dreams of India hisvision of future India and in the second half of this lecture we will try to critic or try to critically evaluate some of his thought and ideas while looking at his debates with say Rabindranath Tagore or B. R. Ambedkar and many other contemporary modern Indian thinkers as well and what is the relevance of Gandhian thought and that is how we are going to conclude today's lecture.

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India of his dreams

Idea of India

- India, for Mahatma Gandhi, was a *karmabhumi* and not a *bhogabhumi*. It is a land of duty and not a land for mere enjoyment. Gandhiji, on his part, did his duty to his motherland through the practices of non-violence.
- India is unique in her retaining of ancient institutions. Yet she is able to purge the various superstitions related to them.
- India is also unique in the sense of spiritual purification that she has undergone. It can provide the leadership to the world in the fields non-violent struggle and peaceful resolution of conflict.

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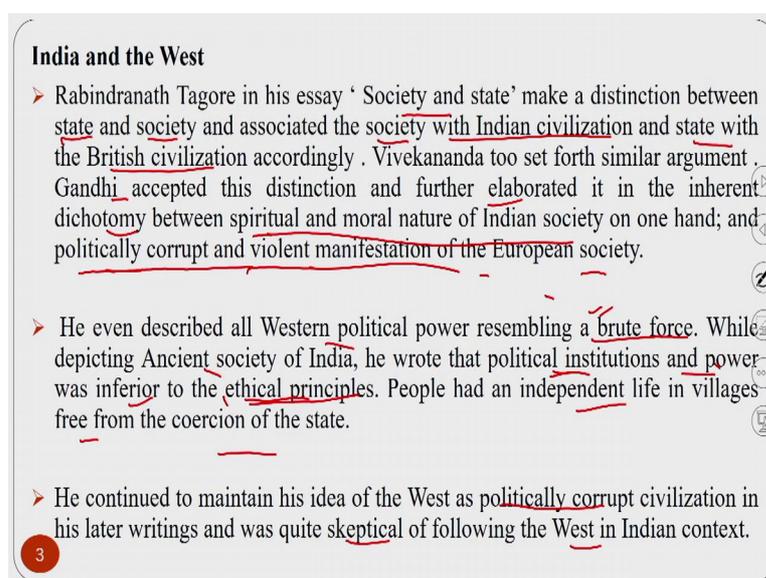
So, to begin with his views on and his dreams about future India for Gandhi, India was not something as a bhogabhumi or what we can also call a land for mere enjoyment, for Gandhi India was a karmabhoomi, a land of duty where it requires your contribution your activities, your involvement in transforming India. So, for Gandhi India was not a land for mere enjoyment, but a land of duty which requires a responsibility the commitment to the transformation of the degrading or the colonized status of our polity and its influence on our society or culture or the degrading status of different section of Indian society

So, for Gandhi the goal the objective was not just to attain political freedom, but also transform India socially, politically, economically by empowering the marginalized the suppressed or the excluded communities of India. So, for Gandhi therefore, the whole idea of politics which for him was revolving around truth or nonviolence was to transform the society to make it a better society for those who are marginalized suppressed and empower them, to enable them, to govern themselves. So, with that objective in mind Gandhi thought of India as a karmabhumi, as a land of duty and he all his life performed this duty through his practices of nonviolence. So, that is something very uniquely original in modern political movement in any country and Gandhi provided that moral and ethical leadership for freedom struggle and also for transforming society economics culture and polity by empowering the masses the marginalize.

So, in his opinion, India has something unique in its character, which it sustain or maintain by retaining the ancient institution. So, many civilizations was destroyed, but India survived because of its capacity or withstand the shock which was coming in different forms of in vision and accommodate them in its on cultural civilizational ethos. So, India has that unique characteristic of retaining the ancient institutions, but also it is able to accommodate or resolve or remove some of the superstitions, which were emerging or which came out of such ancient institution. So, certainly the practice of untouchability or caste discrimination, gender discrimination and other kind of operations and ritualization of whole religion. So, Gandhi was aware of the capacity of India while retaining the ancient culture also to remove some of the superstitions which was related to such institution.

And the a spiritual purification which India underwent from time to time, Gandhi thought will enable India to provide the leadership to the world in the fields of nonviolent struggle and the peaceful resolution of conflict. So, India's uniquely civilizational strength or heritage of a spiritual purification will enable India and place it in a unique position where it can provide the leadership role in terms of resolving the conflict through nonviolent or peaceful mean and that way we see how Gandhi is applicable or relevant not just to India, but also to many other country certainly in Nelson Mandela or Martin Luther King we have discussed in the previous lecture.

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India and the West

- Rabindranath Tagore in his essay ' Society and state' make a distinction between state and society and associated the society with Indian civilization and state with the British civilization accordingly . Vivekananda too set forth similar argument . Gandhi accepted this distinction and further elaborated it in the inherent dichotomy between spiritual and moral nature of Indian society on one hand; and politically corrupt and violent manifestation of the European society.
- He even described all Western political power resembling a brute force. While depicting Ancient society of India, he wrote that political institutions and power was inferior to the ethical principles. People had an independent life in villages free from the coercion of the state.
- He continued to maintain his idea of the West as politically corrupt civilization in his later writings and was quite skeptical of following the West in Indian context.

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So, if we look at the comparison between India and the West, we find that Rabindranath Tagore in his essay society and state makes a distinction between a state and society and considered the society which is associated with Indian civilization and a state which is a more kind of instrumental power, mechanical power or concentration of violence. He associated with a British civilization. Vivekananda too set forth similar arguments about society and state Gandhi accepted distinction between state and society and further elaborated it in the inherent dichotomy between a spiritual and the moral nature of Indian society on the one hand and the politically corrupt and violent manifestation of the European society.

So, Gandhi also accepted along with Tagore or Vivekananda this distinction between state and society and formally exerted the moral and the ethical nature of Indian society on the one hand or politically corrupt and violent manifestation of European society. And therefore, he makes a distinction between Indian civilization, Indian society, Indian moral ethical characteristic on the one hand and how it can help in regenerating India from the colonial rule or from other kind of operations and separation and how it can also lead in the moral and ethical regeneration of the humanity not just India also and there he wanted West or European society to learn from India that is the leadership position he wanted India to undertake.

He even described all Western political power resembling a brute force. So, I hope you remember the distinction we have made between brute force, which is physical force material force and the soul force and for Gandhi soul force is the ultimate most powerful force on the earth. And he acquitted the western political power and the violence that it was or is capable of with a brute force and while depicting Indian society of ancient society of India. He wrote that the political institution and power was inferior to the ethical principles and people had an independent life in village is free from the coercion of the state.

So, the way Indian village society or Indian villages was able to govern itself in maintaining some kind of distance or autonomy from the government or the state or the or the political authority of the day, Gandhi believed and rightly show that the basis of Indian rule or Indian system of governance is a the moral and the ethical principle, which binds both the ruler and the rule together.

So, unlike Western, European society where state represents brute force, for Gandhi Indian society where the political institution and power was also subjected to or in other words inferior to the ethical principle. So, what we call the dharma the notion of dharma in India is not just about religion, but it religion about the righteousness or the duties and responsibility of different sections, different authorities, different institutions and they were all governed by that particular ethical moral responsibilities of the institution.

So, in a sense their ethical principles were considered higher than the brute than these political institutions and the power and people then in that kind of scenario where able to lead a relatively independent and autonomous life unlike the modern state which tries to govern every sphere of individual life and Gandhi was very skeptical of that kind of state. And he therefore, did not want India to follow or imitate the Western model of governance or state either.

So, he continued to maintain his idea of the west as politically corrupt where concentration of power and violence Gandhi was very critical of and scared of such concentration as it leads to separation of individual and his or her creativity which for Gandhi was the basis of or progress or the development. And therefore, he was very critical of the concentration of power at any level and talk about more decentralization of power village republics or Ramarajya bottom up flow of power rather than top down flow.

So, for Gandhi the west remains a kind of politically corrupt civilization and this continuous in his letter writings as well and therefore, he was very critical of and skeptical of following the west in Indian context also. So, while we discuss this critique of modern civilization, we have discuss that capacity of modern civilization to harm the soul force or the spiritual side of humanity was tremendous even when even where it is originative that is in the west and European, but if it is blindly imitated and followed in Indian context then its capacity to do harm become far more worse. And therefore, he always caste and reminded Indian leaders and his followers or his countrymen not to follow the or blindly follow the path of modern western civilization and he went on to argue that India, we can adopt the brute force or the force of the weapon, but it will only offer a momentary victory. So, immediate victory can be achieved by adopting the brute force or the force of weapon.

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➤ India can adopt the brute force or the force of the weapons, but it will only offer a momentary victory. Then, there will be no pride of India left for Gandhi. In his opinion, the hour, when she adopts the path of violence, will be the hour of trial for him.

He further stated:

➤ *If India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will cease to evoke any pride in me. My patriotism is subservient to my religion. I cling to India like a child to its mother's breast, because I feel that she gives me the spiritual nourishment I need. She has the environment that responds to my highest inspirations. When that faith is gone, I shall feel like an orphan without hope of ever finding a guardian.*

(Young India, 06-04-1921)

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Then, there will be no pride of India left for Gandhi. In his opinion, the hour, when she adopts the path of violence, will be the hour of trial for him. So, the way Gandhi thought about and argued about the essential or the essential nature of Indian society and culture where he finds nonviolence or truth as the manifestation of such character or it naturally fit with the Indian context. So, he wanted India to follow the path of nonviolence in pursuit of truth and that is the ultimate objective of individual or the collectively life and that way he wanted India to provide the global leadership as well.

So, as he was historically situated and there was argument for using violence certainly by many revolutionaries and justification of violence in the name of freedom movement and struggle for independence. Gandhi thought that India can attain that momentary or immediate victory by resorting or by adopting these brute force or the force of the weapon, but for him when India adopt such force that will be the hour of trial and he will have no pride in India. So, he takes pride in India precisely because of its inherent nonviolent nature and such after truth.

And he further stated if India makes violence her creed and I have survived I would not care to live India. So, for him India is inherently a nonviolent country and that gives it a unique space. So, she will cease to evoke any pride in me, my patriotism is subservient to my religion I cling to India like a child to its mother breast because I feel that she gives me the spiritual nourishment I need. She has the environment that responds to my highest

inspiration when that faith is gone I shall feel like an orphan without hope of ever finding a guardian.

So, that is how he connect to India and think of India where the pride that he takes from India was because of its nonviolent creed and search after truth and this spiritual nourishment or condition to achieve the highest ambitions of life according to Gandhi is possible only in such condition, but if India adopt the violence path or that violence becomes its creed, then for Gandhi there is no place where he can get such a spiritual nourishment and attain the highest objective of nonviolence and truth.

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• While speaking on appropriateness of soul-force for India, Gandhi said:
India is less in need of steel weapons, it has fought with divine weapons, it can still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute force. The terrible war going on in Europe furnishes a forcible illustration of the truth. India can win all by soul force. History supplies numerous instances to prove that brute force is as nothing before soul force. Poets have sung about it and seers have described their experiences.
Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi

➤ Gandhi wanted India to be independent and strong so that she can engage herself in the mission of betterment of the world.

➤ While glorifying India and its civilisation, Gandhi did not say that there is nothing to be learnt from the western countries. Wisdom doesn't belong to a particular continent or race. But, it also doesn't mean that the Asian countries need to imitate the West in every aspect. Gandhiji believed in the inherent potential of India in offering an ideal of peace and progress to the world.

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So, while speaking on the appropriateness of soul-force for India, Gandhi said, India is less in need of steel weapons, it has fought with divine weapons, it can a still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute force mainly referring to European and modern states the terrible war going on in the Europe furnishes a forcible illustration of the truth. India can win all by soul force history supplies numerous instances to prove that brute force is as nothing before soul force, poets have sung about it and seers have described their experiences.

So, Gandhi again justifying the use and the relevance of soul force not just for those who are using it as a tool for their attainment of objectives, but also against whom it is used. And in that way it will transform the relationship between operator and the operates and there will be the possibility of compassion or mutual cooperation and love between the

between the opposite. So, soul force for Gandhi was something which historically proved as everlasting more powerful than the brute force, which can lead to destruction and perhaps maybe immediate or momentary victories, but for the long turn or to have a kind of sustain influence or effect the soul force remains the supreme power for Gandhi. And therefore, he wanted India to not to call in the trap of this brute force and in this accumulation or acquiring of the weapons or that can enable it militarily strengthen it militarily. But the soul force if it is lost, then India can perhaps in according to Gandhi will never recover or cut itself off from its own strength or civilizational heritage.

So, Gandhi wanted India to be independent and strong. So, that she can engage herself in the mission of betterment of the worlds and that is the point we have discussed in previous lecture. So, unlike Tagore for whom the Indian nation national struggle or nationalism and he discarded all forms of nationalism including Indian form and yet he remained patriotic, for Gandhi if India has to play a role in the global community of nation it must attain independence. So, that is the political articulation of Indian context and why the struggle for freedom or political freedom from the British rule is immediate and necessary for India to play a larger role in the world to in its betterment. And the justification of soul force is not the weapon of the weak or the covered as we have discussed the soul force is the weapon of the strongest or those who are willingly voluntarily ready to sacrifice their life for their cause and Satyagraha we have discussed. So, in that way he wanted India to be morally politically strong and independent to play the larger role in the betterment of the world.

So; however, while glorifying India and its civilization Gandhi did not say that there is nothing to be learnt from the western countries and wisdom does not belong to a particular continent or race, but it also does not mean that the Asian countries need to imitate the west in every aspect Gandhiji believed in the inherent potential of India in offering an ideal of peace and progressed to the world. So, while he believed in the inherent a strength or the soul force or the ethical moral stand of India and that way he communicated the Indian position to the British opinion in the Britain and also in America or north America and mobilize the world opinion in support of liberation struggle of freedom struggle freedom struggle in India.

So, Gandhi a while acknowledging the capacity of India also acknowledge the requirement to learn from the other countries including the modern ah, modern west

which is positive. But he was against the blind or the imitation of that civilization that practices of doctors, lawyers, parliament another thing we have discussed in every aspect of Indian life or Asian, Asian country and that way Gandhi was the first anticolonial thinker as well. So, Gandhi was very confident about India's capacity or India's potential to offer the ideal of peace and progress to the world without resorting to violent of all kind that was happening during the twentieth century.

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- India's destiny is not with the western way of bloody war, but in living the peaceful path which emanates from a life of simplicity and divinity. She must not lose her soul and resist any temptation to imitate the West.
- He said that the European civilisation is suited to its people but not to India. Attempt to blindly copying it will result in ruin. But, at the same time, one should be ready to adopt the good in it. On the part of the Europeans, they should be open to renounce the evils present in it.
- Gandhi criticised the West for its never ending search for material comforts which is making them mere slaves. Upholding the principle of "plain living and high thinking" he stated the necessity of Europeans to remodel their vision.

And first half of the twentieth century we have seen two world war and the rise of nazism and fascism which lead to unimaginable organized destruction of human life and property. So, in that situation he thought India can provide a moral and ethical leadership for world progress through peaceful method.

So, India's destiny is not with the western way of bloody war, but in living the peaceful path which emanates from a life of simplicity and divinity she must not lose her soul and resist any temptation to imitate the west. So, we have the modernizing leads in India which try to modernize Indian society politics and economy they were thinking of reconstructing in society and polity in a very different way than Gandhi.

Gandhi was a kind of reassertion of Indian ethos of simplicity and divinity and how that can help to retain the soul force and he questioned that one should resist any temptation to imitate the west because of the captivating force of modernity and the promises of civilization, but Gandhiji was very clear that modern civilization can at the best promise

to provide bodily comfort, but even if it fails miserably it cannot solve all the problems of material needs of all the sections of society, it can provide that too few. So, even its promises to provide bodily comfort is miserably failed. So, he wanted Indian leaders and his countrymen to understand the trap of modern civilization and resist such temptations which compromise or which obstruct their connection with the soul force.

So, he said that the European civilization is suited to its people, but not to India and attempts to blindly copying it will result in its ruin so, but the same time one should be ready to adopt the good in it on the part of Europeans they should be opened to renounce the evils present in that is inherent corruption in their quality. So, Gandhiji criticized the west for its never ending search for material comforts which is making them mere slaves. Upholding the principle of plain living and high thinking he stated the necessity of Europeans to remodel their vision of constant pursuit of material benefits or to connect with the larger ideal of life to their soul to the highest ambitions in life.

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Vision of future India

- Gandhi's dream India was a spiritually enlightened society. Through the process of self purification; the whole society can be spiritually emancipated.
- It will be an egalitarian without any discriminations based on class and gender and caste. All the persons regardless of their economic status will have an equal say in the polity. At the same time, women and men will enjoy equal status in society. There should be no practice of untouchability in the future India.
- As a political system, India will be decentralized to the utmost level. Villages will work as independent self-sufficient societies to the overall progress of the country.

So, for Gandhi the vision of future India was a spiritually enlightened society through the process of self purification. So, the Swaraj is not just about political freedom, but also about developing the capacity to govern oneself the self is very crucial for Gandhi and the whole society can be a spiritually emancipated. So, this kind of society for Gandhi will be an egalitarian society without any discriminations based on either caste, class, gender, or any such divisions and all the persons regardless of their economic status will

have an equal say in the polity. So, the participation in the decision which affects the collective life should be open to everyone and at the same time women and men will enjoy the equal status in the society and there should be the no practice of untouchability in future India. So, Gandhi envisioned a kind of egalitarian society and polity where there is no discrimination based on class caste or gender. And there is no therefore, any practices of caste based discrimination such as untouchability or gender based discrimination.

So, as a political system India will be decentralized to the utmost level villages will be, villages will work as independent self sufficient society to the overall progress of the country. So, the again the focus on individual the small and the autonomy of them to control their life and to participate in the decisions which affect their life is something which Gandhi define through this idea of decentralization.

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• Gandhi envisioned his dream India of the following words:

The Swaraj of my...our...dream recognizes no race or religious destinations. Nor is it to be the monopoly of the lettered persons nor yet of moneyed men. Swaraj is to be for all, including the farmer, but emphatically including the maimed, the blind the starving toiling millions. We should wipe away tears from every eye.

I shall strive for a constitution, which will release India from all thralldom and patronage, and give her; if need be, the right to sin, I shall work for an India ...in which there shall be no high class and low class of people; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of the intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men. Since we shall not be at peace with all the rest of the world, exploiting, nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable, all interests not in conflict with the interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous. Personally, I hate distinction between foreign and indigenous. This is the India of my dreams....I shall be satisfied with nothing less. (Young India, 10-9-1931)

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So, he envisioned his dream of India through this word that the Swaraj of my our dream recognizes no race or religious destinations nor is it to be monopoly of the lettered persons nor yet of moneyed man, Swaraj is to be for all including the farmer, but emphatically including the maimed, the blind the starving toiling millions. We should wipe away tears from every eye and that becomes the crucial objective when Jawaharlal Nehru presented his famous speech trust with destiny. So, to wipe away tears from each eye becomes the national objective of free India; so, the economy, so we attend the

political freedom, but that was not sufficient. The next and necessary step after attainment of political freedom was to wipe away tears from every eye in other words social and economic regeneration and transformation of India.

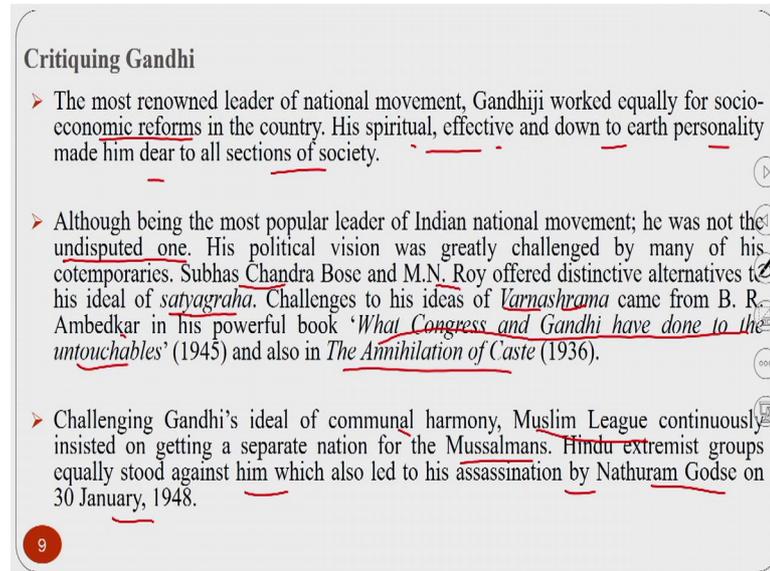
So, Swaraj again is not limited to the lettered class or those who have money, but it must be applicable to all including the farmers, the maimed, or suppressed the blind or the starving toiling million. So, for Gandhiji the criteria for judging the effectiveness or the necessity of any policy is that whether it is empowering the starving toiling millions of India or not that becomes the judgment that becomes the criteria to judge the effectiveness or the desirability of any public policy.

So, Gandhi further rights that I shall strive for a constitution which will release India from all thralldom and patronage and give her if need be the right to sin thralldom or patronage something which he discarded criticized and wanted India to have the right even right to sin. So, I shall work for an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people and India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men; since we shall not be at peace with all the rest of the world exploiting nor being exploited. We should have the smallest army imaginable all interest not in conflict with the interest of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected whether foreign or indigenous. Personally, I hate distinction between foreign and indigenous; this is the India of my dreams. I shall be satisfied with nothing less.

So, the kind of India he dream was India where there is no high class or low class on the basis of their economic position and India all community live in perfect harmony and not in segmented classified status and in such India where communities live in perfect harmony there will be no curse of untouchability or the intoxicating effects of drinks and drugs and women and men will enjoy the same rights. Now he wanted India not to be part of exploiting or being exploited and hence maintain the smallest army. So, that is the practical part of Gandhian thinking where he was supported of nonviolent, but willing to have such measures such as understanding military to protect the national boundary or the nation from any invasions. So, he wanted a smallest army and the interest which is not in conflict with the interest of dumb millions should be respected; now it whether it is foreign and indigenous Gandhiji personally is not bother about such policies or

practices and he wanted India to be such where there is this harmony and absence of sense of you.

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Critiquing Gandhi

- The most renowned leader of national movement, Gandhiji worked equally for socio-economic reforms in the country. His spiritual, effective and down to earth personality made him dear to all sections of society.
- Although being the most popular leader of Indian national movement; he was not the undisputed one. His political vision was greatly challenged by many of his contemporaries. Subhas Chandra Bose and M.N. Roy offered distinctive alternatives to his ideal of *satyagraha*. Challenges to his ideas of *Varnashrama* came from B. R. Ambedkar in his powerful book '*What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables*' (1945) and also in *The Annihilation of Caste* (1936).
- Challenging Gandhi's ideal of communal harmony, Muslim League continuously insisted on getting a separate nation for the Mussalmans. Hindu extremist groups equally stood against him which also led to his assassination by Nathuram Godse on 30 January, 1948.

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So, that is basically about his views on India of his dreams, now if you look at some of the criticism of Gandhi we find at the most renowned leader of national movement, Gandhiji worked equally for the social economic reforms in the country his spiritual effective and down to earth personality made him dear to all sections of society and this will discuss when we read a quote from Sarojini Naidu. So, after this famous trial speech of 1923 or 1922, I will just check yeah its 1922. So, after that trial speech the effect Gandhiji had not just on his followers, but also the country men or the judges or the , administration. So, Gandhiji occupied the space in the hearts and minds of people because of his own personal life and simplicity and leading through his own examples and following intimately in his own personal life.

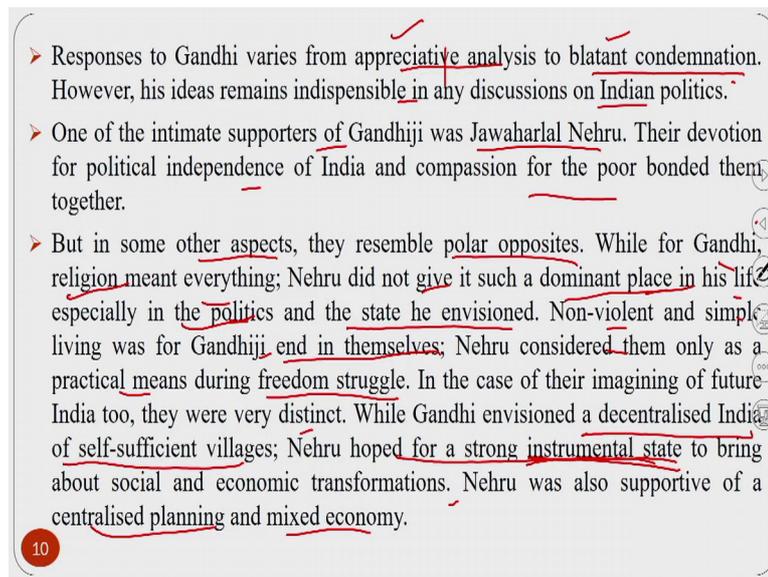
So, Gandhi did play a very significant role in our freedom struggle and provided the moral and ethical leadership from 1920s still India attained independence, but Gandhiji was equally involved in the social and economic reforms in the society which he called positive or constructive programs in Gandhian vocabulary especially from 1930's onwards charaka and disciplining and other things or parts of or a small industries are part of such social and economic reforms his living with the untouchables or the harijans is also a part of such social reforms.

So, Gandhiji was involved in the social and economic reforms including the political struggle for freedom. So, although being the most popular leaders of Indian national movement, he was not the undisputed one and there is many differences and critic to his ideals and political method. So, his political vision was greatly challenged by many of his contemporary including Subhas Chandra Bose, M. N. Roy offered distinctive alternative to his ideals of Satyagraha and challenges to his ideas of Varnashrama came from B. R. Ambedkar which we will discuss in a minute and this ideals or critic of Gandhi's ideal of Varnashram comes through his powerful book which is called What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables and also The Annihilation of Caste.

In these two books B. R. Ambedkar articulated his response to the Gandhian just Gandhiji justification of Varnashram dharma and also the politics of the congress. So, the freedom struggle in the beginning was divided into two direction, one was for the political reforms and the other was the social social religious reforms and till 1920s these movements were held simultaneously this conferences for political freedom and also for social reforms were held simultaneously. In fact, the beginning of Indian renaissance, so called is to begin with the religious and the social reforms movement whether it is evolution of Sathi or the widow remarriage or the emancipation of women or Arya Samaj Brahmasamaj. So, they were all about social religious reforms, reforms movement, but suddenly after 1930s political freedom took the priority offers. So,our social and religious reforms and Ambedkar and many other thinkers where very critical of such positions.

So, the other challenges to Gandhi ideal Gandhiji's ideals of communal harmony comes from Muslim league, which continuously insisted on getting a separate nation for the Muslims in India and Hindu extremist groups equally stood against him which also let to his assassination by Nathuram Godse on 13th January 1948. So, Gandhiji was very open to criticism and he was he was perhaps the greatest leader, but not the undisputed one and there was many sets or many strands of opinions and alternatives to Gandhian ideals when he was providing the moral leadership and of course, he remains the greatest and tallest of them yet there were many other ideals or political methods which were simultaneously in existence and they were very critical of many programs and ideals of Gandhiji.

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- Responses to Gandhi varies from appreciative analysis to blatant condemnation. However, his ideas remains indispensable in any discussions on Indian politics.
- One of the intimate supporters of Gandhiji was Jawaharlal Nehru. Their devotion for political independence of India and compassion for the poor bonded them together.
- But in some other aspects, they resemble polar opposites. While for Gandhi, religion meant everything; Nehru did not give it such a dominant place in his life especially in the politics and the state he envisioned. Non-violent and simple living was for Gandhiji end in themselves; Nehru considered them only as a practical means during freedom struggle. In the case of their imagining of future India too, they were very distinct. While Gandhi envisioned a decentralised India of self-sufficient villages; Nehru hoped for a strong instrumental state to bring about social and economic transformations. Nehru was also supportive of a centralised planning and mixed economy.

So, these responses to Gandhi varies from appreciative analysis to blatant condemnation; however, his ideas remains indispensable in any discussion on Indian politics that is the power and the relevance of Gandhiji and his thought and his political activities where you have a range of responses to his ideals and political activities which may be a appreciative in nature, but it may also are tried condemnation of the whole politics. So, we have seen Muslim League and extreme right wing thinkers like Savarkar and Nathuram activist like Nathuram Godse. So, they were having strong disagreements and condemnation of Gandhian ideals of Charaka or his politics of nonviolence.

So, Gandhiji did face the criticism in his times when he was acting upon and thinking about some of these ideals itself. So, to begin with from appreciative then to the more critical responses to Gandhiji, we can find Jawaharlal Nehru who was kind of very intimate and loyal supporter of Gandhiji and his programs and that comes with their bonding for political independence of India and compassion for the poor which bonds them together and the method of politics that Gandhiji articulated and projected Jawaharlal Nehru intimately associated himself with such politics.

But in some other aspects, they resemble polar opposites while for Gandhi religion meant everything Nehru did not give it such a dominant place in his life especially in the politics and the state he envisioned. So, for Gandhiji religion, ethics, morality is something which essential, but for Nehru such thing is not really as important in the kind

of politics or the state for India he was envisioning. Nonviolent and simple living was for Gandhiji end in themselves, but Nehru considered them only as a practical means during freedom struggle to attain the freedom this means and ends the simplicity that Gandhiji promoted and envision was desirable for attending the political independence enthusing strength or mobilizing the suppressed or marginalized masses, but for Nehru India must transformed itself militarily politically economically and also materially as much as perhaps spiritually.

So, in the case of their imaging of future India too, they were very distinct. While Gandhiji envisioned a decentralized India of self-sufficient villages, Nehru hoped for a strong instrumental state to bring about social and economic transformations. Nehru was supportive of a centralized planning and mixed economy. So, after Gandhiji that Nehru did play very significant role in shaping the institutions and the political of modern India which we will discuss. When we will discuss Jawaharlal Nehru, but here one can also see the difference between two of the greatest leaders perhaps of modern India in their vision of polity, state and future India now this is the quotation which I wanted to tell you about what was the place of Gandhiji in Indian society.

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➤ Sarojini Naidu had lifetime association with Gandhi. She joined in Gandhi's *satyagraha* and shared with him the passion for communal harmony. Gandhi, for her was a mentor cum friend. When Gandhiji was imprisoned for six long years in 1922, she was present during that verdict. Describing that moment, she later wrote:

In the midst of all this poignant scene of many-voiced and myriad-hearted grief he stood, untroubled, in all his transcendent simplicity, the embodied symbol of the Indian Nation its living sacrifice and sacrament in one. They might take him to the utmost ends of the earth, but his destination remains unchanged in the hearts of his people who are both the heirs and the stewards of his matchless dreams and his matchless deeds. ,

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So, Sarojini Naidu had a lifetime association with Gandhiji and she joined in Satyagraha and shared with him the passion for communal harmony. Gandhi for her was a mentor cum friend and when Gandhiji was imprisoned for 6 long years in 1922 she was present

during that verdict describing the moment. She later wrote in the midst of all this poignant scene of many voiced and myriad hearted grief he stood untroubled in all his transcendent simplicity the embodied symbol of the Indian nation, its living sacrifice and sacrament in one they might take him to the utmost end of the earth, but his destination remains unchanged in the hearts of his people who are both the heirs and the stewards of his matchless dreams and his matchless deeds. So, the Gandhian status was deeply embedded in the hearts and minds of Indian people and that cannot be taken away by incarnating the first person of Gandhiji.

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> Bal Gangadhar Tilak despite of his admiration for Gandhiji and his deeds had disagreements with Gandhiji's ideal of the purity of means. Tilak argues: "Politics is a game of worldly people and not of sadhus, and instead of the maxim 'Overcome anger by loving kindness, evil by good' as preached by Buddha, I prefer to rely on the maxim of Shri Krishna 'In whatsoever way any come to me, in that same way I grant them favor.'"

> Rabindranath Tagore too shared a personal bond with Mahatma Gandhi. At the same time, he differed from Gandhiji on many issues: basic education, his defence of varnashrama, etc. . Gandhi and Tagore both believed in the need of spiritual regeneration of India. Their differences were in the perception of power. Gandhi regarded power being of two kinds-brute force and soul force. While he despised the former, the latter was celebrated. But Tagore was suspicious of any form of power. In his own words: "Power in all its forms is irrational, it is like the horse that drags the carriage blind-folded."

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Similarly, Bal Gangadhar Tilak despite his admiration for Gandhiji and his deeds had disagreements with Gandhiji's ideals of purity of means. Tilak argues "Politics is a game of worldly people and not of sadhus, and instead of the maxim "Overcome anger by loving kindness, evil by good" as preached by Buddha, I that we still have prefer to rely on the maxim of Shri Krishna "In whatsoever way any come to me, in that same way I grant them favor." So, Bal Gangadhar Tilak the necessity of ends means is to attain the ends and ends justify the means and not the means we justify the ends as for Gandhiji and Tilak wanted politics to be for the worldly people and not for the sadhus and their maxims like our coming anger with love and kindness or evil by good, but to attain something which will justify the means for such attainments.

Similarly, Rabindranath Tagore too shared personal bond with Mahatma Gandhi at the same time he differed from Gandhiji on many issues such as basic education his defense of Varnashrama dharma and many of his spiritual administerious statement. So, Gandhi and Tagore both believed in the need of spiritual regeneration of India, their differences where in the perception of power, Gandhiji regarded power being of two kinds brute force and the soul force and that we have discussed why he justify soul force over the brute force. So, he despised the former that is brute force and the later that his soul force is celebrated in his thought and politics. But for Tagore he was suspicious of any form of power in his own words power in all its form is irrational, it is like the horse that drags the carriage blind folded.

So, for Tagore the complete freedom or freedom from fear of all kind is necessary for individual creativity to grow and that can lead to a better society more empowered society and the way his envision society, but for Gandhiji the power can be divided into two brute force and the soul force and soul force is desirable, soul force and the power of ah, soul force is desirable for Gandhiji mac techniques of politics and know the Tagore and Gandhi we have discussed in our lecture on Tagore also which you can also refer to understand some of them similarities and also the differences between the two greatest mind of modern India.

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Gandhi and Ambedkar

In the context of *varnashrama*; Ambedkar was the strongest critic of Gandhiji. Gandhiji regarded *varnashrama* as an essential system of social division of labour which helps in social functioning and stability. Although he despised the practice of untouchability; he had no problem with the *varnashrama* system.

- Ambedkar regarded the reorganisation of Indian society on the principle of *varnashrama* as not only impossible but also harmful. He considered the caste system as the factor which ruined Hindus and urged for a society based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.
- Criticising Gandhi, Ambedkar wrote : “As defined by the Mahatma, *Varna* becomes merely a different name for Caste, for the simple reason that it is the same in essence—namely, pursuit of [one’s] ancestral calling. . . . I am sure that all his confusion is due to the fact that the Mahatma has no definite and clear conception as to what is *Varna* and what is Caste, and as to the necessity of either for the conservation of Hinduism. He has said—and one hopes that he will not find some mystic reason to change his view—that Caste is not the essence of Hinduism. Does he regard *Varna* as the essence of Hinduism? One cannot as yet give any categorical answer.”

Now, about Gandhiji and Ambedkar, there is very strange relationship between these 2 thinker and they continue to safe the actual practical politics of our post independent time for and it will continue to be relevant in our political discourse. So, especially on this issue of caste, untouchablity and varnashrama dharma, these two leaders differ from each other and vehemently opposed each other. And at the same time respecting each other also. So, one of the political history is that while Ambedkar critically challenged many of his ideas and articulation about untouchability and caste discrimination. He was also respectful of Gandhiji's and his role and Gandhi when he was giving counsel to them forming of first interim government his supported to Ambedkar's nomination as the first law minister and his role in the drafting of Indian constitution. So, both leaders while opposing each other critiquing each other also acknowledge the contribution and the expertise of each other also.

So, here we will discuss only about their views on varnashrama dharma and the caste practices. So, in the context of Varnashrama Ambedkar was the strongest critic of Gandhiji and the congress and Gandhiji regarded varnashrama as the essential system of social divisions of labor which helps in social functioning and stability. So, Gandhiji although he despised the practice of untouchability, he had no problem with the varnashrama system. So, Gandhiji in his understanding of Indian society thought of varnashrama dharma as a kind of system of division of labor. So, he was critical of untouchability he wanted to abolish untouchability or practices of untouchability, but he was justifying or with the continuance of varnashrama system.

Ambedkar regarded the reorganization of Indian society on the principal of varnashrama as not only impossible, but also harmful and he considered the caste system as the factor which ruined Hindu or Hinduism and urged for a society based on the principle of liberty equality and fraternity a very modern ideas of living and egalitarian life or in a egalitarian society. Now criticizing Gandhi Ambedkar writes that as defined by mahatma, Varna becomes merely a different name for caste, for the simple reason that it is the same in the essence namely pursuit of ancestral calling, what where I am sure that all his confusion a due to the fact that the mahatma has no definite and clear conception as to what is Varna and what is Caste and as to the necessity of either for the conservation of Hinduism he has said and one hopes that he will not find some mystic reasons to change

his view that caste is not the essence of Hinduism does he regard Varna as the essence of Hinduism one cannot as yet give any categorical answer.

So, how to abolish the caste and what is the relationship between caste and varnashram varnashram system and how it can how it is the basis of Hinduism and harming the Hindu Hindu religion ah, Ambedkar wanted the both this practices a varnashram dharma or castism to be made unlawful and therefore, and that is also connected with the scriptural sanction of this practices of caste and varnashrama according to Ambedkar. Gandhiji thought of it as a practices which develop later and it has no sanction in the scriptures or an encestes and varnashrama dharma. Therefore, is something which is justifiable which is based on the division of labour and it has nothing to do with the caste practice discrimination or untouchability, but for Ambedkar that both are same and without abolishing the both one cannot really discriminate the other and it sustain each other each other even. So, he has very strong opposition to Gandhijis views on caste and in fact, he unwilling compromised with Gandhiji in Poona pact when there is shifted communal award to the operate caste of India. And finally, he we will discuss while will discuss Ambedkar finally, he change his religion or converted from Hinduism to Buddhism to create a society which is based on the principal of liberty equality and fraternity.

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Gandhi and Savarkar

Gandhi had a very complicated relationship with the Hindu extremists. Criticising Gandhi's mode of protest, V.D. Savarkar wrote:

The exit from the Indian world of a powerful personality like Lokamanya Tilak [1920] ushered in the mad intoxication of Khilafat agitation conspiring with the cult of the Charka as a way to Swaraj in one year. It is to be won by the perverse doctrine of non-violence and truth. The Non-cooperation Movement for Swaraj based on these twin principles was a movement without power and was bound to destroy the power of the country. It is an illusion, a hallucination, not unlike the hurricane that sweeps over a land only to destroy it. It is a disease of insanity, an epidemic and megalomania.

So, now finally, if we look at the complicated relationship between Savarkar and Gandhi you find this theory very complicated relationship and Savarkar writes that the exit from Indian world of a powerful personality like, Lokamanya Tilak. he said in the mad intoxication of Khilafat agitation conspiring with cult of charkha as a way of Swaraj in one year it is to be won by the perverse doctrine of nonviolence and truth the noncooperation movement for Swaraj. Based on these twin principles was a movement without power and was bound to destroy the power of the country. It is an illusion, a hallucination not unlike the hurricane that sweeps over a land only to destroy it, it is a disease of insanity an epidemic and megalomania.

So, Savarkar was strong's critic of Gandhian principles which he considered as unmanly or which take away the power of, the power of the country in this illusionary hallucination kind of ideas about nonviolence and truth. So, we have seen different critic a starting from most appreciative yet differencing or distancing himself between Gandhi and Nehru to someone between Tagore and Gandhi, but also between Ambedkar, Gandhi and Savarkar and Gandhi. So, Gandhiji remains a kind of tallest leader and yet faced all the criticism during his lifetime and afterwards as well.

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➤ Gandhi was the ardent supporter of the independence of India and he stressed social reform as a means to achieve it. But, his approach was essentially individualistic. He regarded individual transformation as the basic prerequisite of the transformations in the nation. In the letter to his nephew, he stated: Please do not carry unnecessarily on your head the burden of emancipating India. Emancipate your own self. Even that burden is very great. Apply everything to yourself. Nobility of soul consists in realizing that you are yourself India. In your emancipation is the emancipation of India.

➤ Gandhi and his ideals were open to criticism in his life time and are so even in contemporary times. And yet, he remains, perhaps on of the greatest leaders of modern India whose ideals have shaped not only the politics and society in India but also of many political leaders and social and political movements in many other countries in the world.

So, Gandhiji was the ardent supporter of independence of India and he stresses social reforms as a means to achieve it, but his approach was essentially individualistic. So, the in Gandhian oceanic circle we have discussed how individual is at the center of all his

philosophy he regarded individual transformation and while achieving Swaraj he said that Swaraj in our forms and you can have it as and when we want it and the way to have it or to achieve it is by stopping to cooperate with the operator or with the ruler. So, the whole idea of noncooperation with the British and that way one can achieve the Swaraj. So, he regarded the individual transformation as the basic prerequisite of the transformation in the nation and that he writes to related to his nephew which please do not carry unnecessary on your head the burden of emancipating India, emancipate your own self even that burden is very great apply everything to yourself nobility of soul consist in realizing that you are yourself India, in your emancipation is the emancipation of India.

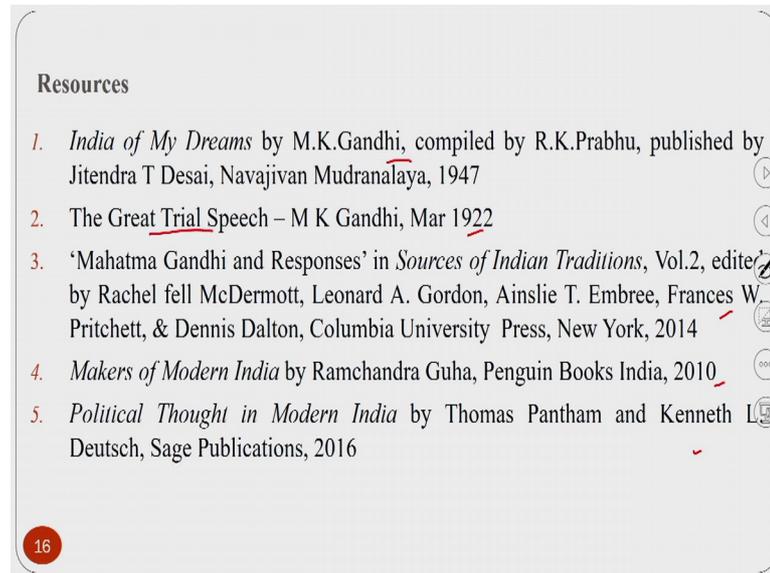
So, Gandhiji very radically inverse the whole struggle for Swaraj which is not something as an objective out there and beyond the biological and the physical expense of individual. He simultaneously associate the individual with India an India with the individual. So, with the emancipation of individualize the emancipation of India with the attainment of Swaraj to govern oneself lies the attainment of Swaraj for India. So, for Gandhiji this individual remains at the center of his philosophy.

So, finally, to conclude what we find is that Gandhi and his ideals where open to criticism in his lifetime and are so even in contemporary times. So, unlike many other thinkers and their followers you see famously Ramchandra Guha said that the followers or shiv followers of Shivaji will not listen to anything that is against or negative onward. Shivaji followers of Ambedkar will not listen to anything that is a negative about Ambedkar, but Gandhiji has the follower is relevant for many movements and the leaders even in contemporary times and yet is open and subject to all kind of criticism that is perhaps the greatest and unique characteristic of Gandhiji and his ideals and why it is difficult to fit him in any particular ism or ideology. So, he was open to criticism in his lifetime and also even in contemporary times and yet he remains perhaps one of the greatest leaders of modern India whose ideals have shaped not only the politics and society in India, but also many political leaders including Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, we have seen and various social political movements including environmental movements in many countries in the world.

So, Gandhiji and his ideals continue to be relevant and indispensable for any discourse on politics in even in contribute India. So, on this lecture you can refer to some of these

books like *India of My Dreams* by Mahatma Gandhi and also the great trial speech by Mahatma Gandhi in 1922 and these other text you have seen in some of the previous lecture also, which you can refer to for this lecture.

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Resources

1. *India of My Dreams* by M.K.Gandhi, compiled by R.K.Prabhu, published by Jitendra T Desai, Navajivan Mudranalaya, 1947
2. The Great Trial Speech – M K Gandhi, Mar 1922
3. 'Mahatma Gandhi and Responses' in *Sources of Indian Traditions*, Vol.2, edited by Rachel fell McDermott, Leonard A. Gordon, Ainslie T. Embree, Frances W Pritchett, & Dennis Dalton, Columbia University Press, New York, 2014
4. *Makers of Modern India* by Ramchandra Guha, Penguin Books India, 2010
5. *Political Thought in Modern India* by Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L Deutsch, Sage Publications, 2016

So, thank you very much for listening let us know what you think about this lecture and we will be happy to respond you.

Thank you.