

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

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TWO ANNAS

REFLECTIONS ON INDIA'S FUTURE

[Extracts from Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's concluding address in the Constituent Assembly on November 25th.]

Anxious Future

Here I could have ended. But my mind is so full of the future of our country that I feel I ought to take this occasion to give expression to my reflections thereon. On January 26, India will be an independent country. What would happen to her independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she lose it again? This is the first thought that comes to my mind. It is not that India was never an independent country. The point is that she once lost the independence she had. Will she lose it a second time? It is this thought which makes me most anxious for the future.

What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the treachery of some of her own people. In the invasion of Sind by Mahommed-bin-Kasim, the military commanders of King Dahar accepted bribes from the agents of Mahommed-bin-Kasim, and refused to fight on the side of Dahar. It was Jaichand who invited Mahommed Ghori to invade India and fight against Prithviraj and promised him the help of himself and the Solanki Kings. When Shivaji was fighting for the liberation of the Hindus, other Maratha noblemen and Rajput Kings were fighting the battles on the side of the Moghul Emperors. When the British were trying to destroy the Sikh Rulers, Gulabchand, their principal commander, sat silent and did not help to save the Sikh kingdom. In 1857, when a large part of India had declared a war of independence against the British, the Sikhs stood and watched the event as silent spectators.

Will history repeat itself? It is this thought which fills me with anxiety. This anxiety is deepened by the realization of the fact that in addition to our old enemies in the form of castes and creeds we are going to have many political parties with diverse and opposing political creeds. Will Indians place the country above creed or will they place creed above country? I do not know. But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost for ever. This eventuality we must all resolutely guard against. We

must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood.

Future of Democratic System

On January 26, India would be a democratic country in the sense that India from that day would have a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The same thought comes to my mind. What would happen to her democratic constitution? Will she be able to maintain it or will she lose it? This is the second thought that comes to my mind and makes me as anxious as the first.

It is not that India did not know democracy. There was a time when there were many republics in India and even where there were monarchies, they were either elected or limited. It is not that India did not know parliaments or parliamentary procedure. A study of the Buddhist *Bhikshusanghas* discloses that not only there were parliaments—for the *sanghas* were nothing but parliaments—but the *sanghas* knew and observed all the rules of parliamentary procedure known in modern times.

They had rules regarding seating arrangements, rules regarding motions, resolutions, quorum, whip, counting of votes, voting by ballot, censure motion, regularization, *res judicata*, etc. Although these rules of parliamentary procedure were applied by Buddha to the meetings of the Bhikshu Sanghas, he must have borrowed them from the rules of the political assemblies functioning in the country in his time.

This democratic system India lost. Will she lose it a second time? I do not know. But it is quite possible in a country like India—where democracy from its long disuse must be regarded as something quite new—there is danger of democracy giving place to dictatorship. It is quite possible for this new-born democracy to retain its form but give place to dictatorship in fact. If there is a landslide, the danger of the second possibility becoming actuality is much greater.

Stress on Constitutional Methods

If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what must we do? The first thing in my judgment we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. It means we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution. It means that we must abandon

the method of civil disobedience, non-co-operation and Satyagraha. When there was no way left for constitutional methods for achieving economic and social objectives there was some justification for unconstitutional methods. But where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for these unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but the grammar of anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned the better for us.

Hero-worship Deplored

The second thing we must do is to observe the caution which John Stuart has given to all who are interested in the maintenance of democracy, namely, not "to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or trust him with powers which enable him to subvert their institutions." There is nothing wrong in being grateful to great men who have rendered lifelong services to the country. But there are limits to gratefulness.

As has been well said by the Irish patriot, Daniel O'Connell, no man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty. This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country. For India, *bhakti* or what may be called the path of devotion or hero-worship, plays a part in its politics unequalled in magnitude by the part it plays in the politics of any other part of the world. *Bhakti* in religion may be road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, *bhakti* or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.

Need for Social Democracy

The third thing we must do is not to be content with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life.

These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. Without equality, liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become as a natural course of things. It would require a constable to enforce them.

We must begin by acknowledging the fact that there is complete absence of two things in Indian society. One of these is equality. On the social plane we have in India a society

based on the principle of graded inequality which means elevation for some and degradation for others. On the economic plane, we have a society in which there are some who have immense wealth as against many who live in abject poverty.

Life of Contradictions

On January 26, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value.

How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up.

The second thing we are wanting in is recognition of the principle of fraternity. What does fraternity mean? Fraternity means a sense of common brotherhood of all Indians — of Indians being one people. It is the principle which gives unity and solidarity to social life. It is a difficult thing to achieve.

Our Nationhood

I am of opinion that in believing that we are a nation, we are cherishing a great delusion. How can people divided into several thousands of castes be a nation? The sooner we realize that we are not as yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of the word, the better for us. For then only we shall realize the necessity of becoming a nation and seriously think of ways and means of realizing the goal.....

These castes are anti-national. In the first place because they bring about separation in social life. They are anti-national also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste. But we must overcome all these difficulties if we wish to become a nation in reality. For fraternity can be a fact only when there is a nation. Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint.

Urge for Self-realization

These are my reflections about the tasks that lie ahead of us. They may not be very pleasant to some. But there can be no gainsaying that political power in this country has too long been the monopoly of a few and the many are not only beasts of burden, but also beasts of prey. This monopoly has not merely deprived them of their chance of betterment, it has sapped them of what may be called the

significance of life. These down-trodden classes are tired of being governed. They are impatient to govern themselves.

This urge for self-realization in the down-trodden classes must not be allowed to devolve into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would indeed be a day of disaster. For, as has been well said by Abraham Lincoln, a House divided against itself cannot stand very long. Therefore, the sooner room is made for the realization of their aspiration, the better for the few, the better for the country, the better for the maintenance of its independence and the better for the continuance of its democratic structure. This can only be done by the establishment of equality and fraternity in all spheres of life. That is why I have laid so much stress on them.

I do not wish to weary the House any further. Independence is no doubt a matter of joy. But let us not forget that this independence has thrown on us great responsibilities. By independence we have lost the excuse of blaming the British for anything going wrong. If hereafter things go wrong, we shall have nobody to blame except ourselves. There is a great danger of things going wrong. Times are fast changing. People including our own are being moved by new ideologies. They are getting tired of government by the people. They are prepared to have government for the people and are indifferent whether it is government of the people and by the people.

If we wish to preserve the Constitution in which we have sought to enshrine the principle of government of the people, for the people and by the people, let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path and which induce people to prefer government for the people to government by the people, nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country. I know of no better.

(From the *Hindustan Times*)

Hindustan Sabha Centres in South India

From its very commencement the Hindustani Prachar Sabha has received demands for opening its centres in South India also, so that the people of the South may also benefit by the Sabha's activities. However, the Sabha kept its centres in Northern India only. It has been decided now to extend them in South India also, with the co-operation of Shri M. Satyanarayana (Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindustani Prachar Sabha). It is hoped that the people of South India will take to this important constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi and thus discharge their duties in the nation-building work.

AMRUTLAL NANAVATI
Secretary,
Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha

FIRST STEP TOWARDS NON-STEALING *

It is glad tidings to learn that Ahmedabad Textile Labour has, in response to the appeal made to the nation by our beloved leaders, — Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Gulzarilal Nanda, Khandubhai Desai and others — taken a pledge to make every effort to increase production. Ahmedabad textile workers deserve congratulations for giving this lead.

Since 1917 — thirty-two years ago — till death, Gandhiji always taught that he who laboured honestly and used his tools carefully would ultimately become the *de facto* manager of his factory and the *de jure* owner would have to accept the position of being a nominal manager only. The worker has to realize the power of labour and by putting his full labour into the factory, acquire the strength of transforming legal ownership into Managing Trusteeship of the industry.

No hatred or jealousy is involved towards the Directors in this transformation. It is not even to their disadvantage. Because ultimately even labourers are but trustees of their factory. God alone is its true owner; for the whole world is His, and whatever small or big exists therein belongs to Him. Every one must use it carefully, work on it, increase it and give its benefit to the world. None has the right to spoil, destroy, or wastefully consume anything. It is the duty of all to see that it reaches those who need it and who suffer on account of its scarcity. He who does not do so, wants to take it without working for it, or take more than what is just, or receives unjust consideration for making it available to others, or puts obstructions in their way, is a thief — whether the laws of the State consider it to be theft or no.

It is not that the rich alone so thieve, and the poor never. Indeed, the present situation is so evil, that hardly any of us can be acquitted under God's Law of Theft. We have all to make an effort to get out of this evil. The first step towards *asteya* (non-thieving) is to give up idleness and do more work.

And so at present the paramount duty of every thoughtful person — be he an owner, a labourer or a middleman — is to contribute towards increasing the wealth of the country, to be satisfied only with reasonable return to himself and to dedicate all extra gains to the country.

Fortunately the Labour of Ahmedabad was the first to receive this training from Gandhiji. It has earned its benefits also. May the workers apply that training further with greater effort.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

(Translated from Gujarati)

* Message sent to the 32nd Anniversary Day of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Union on 4-12-'49.

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1949

INDIA'S CONSTITUTION

The Constituent Assembly has come to the end of its prolonged labours and on 26th November 1949 enacted the Constitution, which through the Assembly the people of India have given to themselves. It declares that from 26th January 1950 India shall be a "Sovereign Democratic Republic" pledged

"to secure to all its citizens *Justice*,—social, economic and political,—*Liberty* of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, *Equality* of status and of opportunity; and

"to promote among them all *Fraternity* assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation."

It is a lengthy document consisting of 395 articles and eight schedules, and is perhaps the longest among the constitutions of the governments of the world.

The last few days of the Assembly session were devoted to expression of opinions by the makers themselves upon their joint product. Some were completely satisfied with their labours, a few were hopelessly disappointed with it and a good many approved it with some 'but's' and 'provisos'. But the right judgment could not have been better pronounced than by Dr. Ambedkar himself, to whom was entrusted and by whom was ably discharged the heaviest responsibility that could have been laid at the most momentous period of India's national life, namely of drafting its first Constitution. In his last reply-speech at the Assembly, he said :

"I shall not enter into the merits of the Constitution. However good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it, happen to be a bad lot. However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out to be good if those who are called to work it, happen to be a good lot. The working of a Constitution does not depend wholly upon the nature of the Constitution. The Constitution can provide only the organs of a State such as the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. The factors on which the working of these organs of the State depend are the people and the political parties they will set up as their instruments to carry out their wishes and their policies.

"Who can say how the people of India and their parties will behave? Will they uphold constitutional methods of achieving their purposes or will they prefer revolutionary methods of achieving them? If they adopt the revolutionary methods, however good the Constitution is, it requires no prophet to say that it will fail. It is, therefore, futile to pass any judgment upon the Constitution without reference to the part which the people of India and their parties are likely to play.

".....the principles embodied in the Constitution are the views of the present generation or, if you think this to be an overstatement, I say they are the views of the members of the Constituent Assembly."

Very wisely, to quote Dr. Ambedkar's words again,

"the Assembly has not only refrained from putting a seal of finality and infallibility upon this Constitution by denying to the people the right to amend the Constitution as in Canada or by making the amendment of the Constitution subject to the fulfilment of extraordinary terms and conditions as in America or Australia, but has provided a most facile procedure for amending the Constitution."

The procedure for amendment is provided in Article 368 of the Constitution. Subject to certain provisos, it can be done by a Bill in either House of Parliament, and passed by a majority of the members on roll and two-thirds of the members present and casting their votes.

It is not inconceivable that the Constitution may require such amendments in the course of its working and, may be, even of a radical nature. Even if this is regarded an imperfection, there is nothing to feel ashamed of it. If a child outgrows its clothes, so that they have to be cast off, it is good for the child, and also there is no blame on the tailor who made the first set. The dissatisfaction arises when the guardian begins to plan clothes several years ahead of actual use. A great deal of dissatisfaction with regard to the Constitution that has been passed is due to the fact that the goal of the Congress always rose much higher than and far ahead of its actual achievements, and so when a lower goal was reached, having intellectually fixed quite another and higher one, the Congress was never in a mood to feel satisfied with what is reaped at the time.

Thus, there was a time when the Congress aimed at nothing more than "Local Self-Government" and "association in administration". But before it could get it, it had begun to aspire for complete Provincial Autonomy, so that Local Self-Government and appointments in the Executive Councils ceased to bring it any satisfaction. Before complete Provincial Autonomy was obtained, it had changed its goal into "Dominion Status", to be turned thereafter into *Swaraj* and *Purna Swaraj* respectively. Similarly, social and economic ideals of the younger elements always rose much higher than the stage actually lived by the people and aspired after by them. The result is that aspiration, legislation and the life of the people have not kept pace together. At times legislation has been far in advance of actual life, and at others it has not been able to satisfy intellectual aspirations of the younger generation. Factually, whether it pleased her or not, the country had to pass through all the stages, shall I say, biologically necessary in the course of its growth. Thus between the Act of 1935 and the Constitution that will come into operation on 26th January 1950, if we examine carefully, we would see that we have passed politically through all those stages which had been the cherished Congress goal at some period of its life or other. We had a period of Provincial Autonomy, of partial Dominion Status, of complete Dominion

Status, *Swaraj* within the British Commonwealth, *Purna Swaraj*, and so on, until we shall be a Republic with still a kind of connecting link with the hitherto British Commonwealth.

So, too, economically we have gone through various stages and shall, I think, go through more. We are witnessing capitalism in all its forms; we might have a taste of Socialism and 'nationalization' sooner or later; to the world we have often presented Gandhism and declared that "in it lies the ultimate salvation" of all nations, — though actually very few are prepared to accept it or work for it in the present. But in God's good time it will also have its period of supremacy, though, may be, at that time people might have begun to dream of a new 'ism' at present unknown.

Socially also we have established in theory a Secular State, abolished untouchability, and declared equality of all irrespective of caste, creed or sex. In actual practice, we may have to work our lives out before we see it actually accomplished.

The Constitution may be looked at from this aspect. It marks a particular stage of our national life.

Of greater importance than the written document is, as its great draftsman said, the way in which we shall implement it. His final speech is one of the greatest speeches made in that Assembly. He is gravely anxious about the future of the nation. His anxiety is fully justified. Long extracts from that speech are published elsewhere in these columns and I hope readers will carefully ponder over the very wise counsel he has given to the nation.

In his speech there is only one piece of counsel — I mean his reference to Satyagraha — which requires to be examined at length. I shall refer to it in a separate article.

In substance I endorse his opinion, "the sooner we realize that we are not as yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of the word, the better for us." He has regarded the belief that we are a nation to be a great delusion. This is perhaps as much an overstatement as that of the *Qaid-e-Azam* that we are several nations. I would prefer to say, India is certainly not peopled by several nations. But the Indian nation is not yet fully and homogeneously developed. The existence of a single political government is essential for our full harmonious development and strength as a nation. But the difference between a free and united Indian nation in the eye of law and politics and existing social and economic realities is very great and will require all the energies and abilities of nationally-minded workers to obliterate it. But in substance, this is not different from what Dr. Ambedkar has said. How happy it would have been if the communalist organizations of our country had realized and would still realize this!

Dr. Ambedkar's appointment to the Chairmanship of the Drafting Committee reminds me of a similar incident recorded of Buddha. Incidentally, the campaign against caste and untouchability is as old as Buddha. Unfortunately the campaign is still as necessary. It was Upali, regarded by the then society as a person of a low caste, who was appointed by his comrades to be the senior disciple of Buddha, so that every one else would have to pay his respects to him. It was not a mere gesture of generosity. Upali later became the compiler of the Buddhist *Naya* (Laws of the *Sangh*). The selection of Dr. Ambedkar as their Chief by his colleagues (four of whom are traditionally Brahmans and one a Saiyyad) to this task of still greater magnitude than that of Upali, is creditable to his colleagues as well as the nation. The able manner in which Dr. Ambedkar has discharged his responsibilities shows that intellectual ability is not a preserve of any race or caste. Given the opportunity and the training, every caste and race can produce men of great ability and intelligence.

Wardha, 30-11-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

"TO VANASPATI CONSUMERS"

This is the heading of a form which is being widely distributed throughout India on behalf of the *Vanaspatti* Industry through its agents. It is translated in every Indian language. Retailers are asked to get these forms signed by their customers and forward them to "appropriate authorities". The form is in effect of the nature of an application by consumers of *vanaspatti* to Government that that industry should be encouraged by Government being a 'boon' to its users.

The Industrialists with the help of the immense resources which they command are carrying on this propaganda in an intensive manner. Agents, it is reported to me, are being told that unless they get a certain number of forms duly signed and returned, they would not be continued. These, therefore, resort to all sorts of tricks to get signatures from customers.

Pressure will then be brought upon Government to allow the industry to be carried on as it is in the interest of and because demanded by the consumer. All this trouble and artfulness is unnecessary. The fundamental issue is moral, as I have said often. If a consumer wants to use *vanaspatti* because he "likes" it, he may do so in a form, in which it cannot be mixed with ghee and with the knowledge of its correct value and composition. But those who do not want to take the hydrogenated oil should not be compelled to do so under the impression that they are taking ghee. The demand is for the removal of the deceitful and fraud-encouraging false garb. To this there is no answer.

Wardha, 26-11-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

INDIA AND CHINA

The civil war in China which had been going on for the past many years has come to an end and a Communist government is established. The Big Powers have now to decide whether and how the new government should be recognized. But that is only a matter of time and not very important by itself, because what has happened or been allowed to happen, will have to be recognized somehow or other whether willingly or otherwise.

Generally India's sympathies have been with China, because both have gone through sufferings and both have been exploitee-countries. India and China are friendly neighbours from very ancient times. Both are thickly populated and together constitute more than one-third of the world's population. There has been from olden days both exchange of goods as well as exchange of ideas and culture between the two countries. History mentions many missions which went to China from India to spread India's message; the one under the leadership of Paramartha is particularly noted. From China also Fa-Hien and Hiuen Tsang and many other learned pilgrims came to this country, to see the birthplace of Lord Buddha. They come to this day.

In the middle ages, however, there was a break in these contacts. Speaking broadly, it would not be wrong to say that in spite of being neighbours and the feeling of friendliness on both sides, our physical contacts with China have been very few. An opportunity has come now to increase such contacts. The north-east frontier of India and the western frontier of China have both come nearer and in these days of quick communications, their distances have become reduced.

But, for these very reasons, some are afraid that China being a Communist nation, the influence of her ideas and methods would very quickly spread into India. I do not share that fear. There would be reason to be afraid if we wanted to establish a Capitalist regime here. But since our aim is the establishment of an order in which there should be the welfare of all beings and we have been attempting to do something in that direction (howsoever slowly and unsatisfactorily at present), there is no reason to be afraid of a Communist neighbour. If we are properly touched by such important events around us, we must derive strength and inspiration and believe that all will go well.

While we have great sympathy with Communist ideas, our disagreement with their methods is also equally great. If we adopt their means, there is danger not only to India but also to the world.

But on the question of methods, I am afraid that the danger is as much from Communists as from Capitalists. Not only that, there is danger even from those who call themselves democratic nations and at the same time rely on militarism.

I mean the danger of achieving desired ends by violence. It is a fundamental question which stands before the whole world. The world has to solve that question and the important question is how India will act in that matter.

How I wish that India could say that so far as she was concerned she had solved the problem already! For thirty years we have conducted a non-violent fight and seen the advantages of non-violence. We have witnessed the sufferings of the world and our own on account of violence. We have also seen the achievements of our traditional ideology which lays stress on concordance, large-heartedness, sympathy, etc. It should be possible for us to declare that we have already solved the problem. I, for my part, believe that we have done it.

Even then we are weak. We have been kept disarmed for years. We had the experience of shouldering responsibility for long centuries, but there was a break in the middle. Hence it looks as if we are new to facing responsibility. Under these circumstances it is not a matter for surprise, though it is one for regret, that at the present moment some people are unable to keep to any firm resolve. I hope that we would get out of this uncertain situation quickly and reiterate our faith in non-violence.

As a matter of form, not only Congressmen but Socialists also accept non-violence. It is not that either of them practise non-violence; nevertheless, they do talk of it. I hope that not only their ideas but circumstances themselves will also compel them to act according to their ideas.

A few Communists have been creating trouble and disturbance in the country. But if we act according to our faith and engage ourselves in the service of the poor and insist on purity of means, they will also understand. If they are intelligent people, they would cease to create trouble and then they will find that India welcomes their ideology. If they are not intelligent, they will weaken their own ideology by their acts. Even then, that ideology will not disappear, because whatever is good in it has been accepted in *Sarvodaya*, which we want to spread and have been working for.

In brief, there is no need to be afraid of the events in China. Rather I feel enthused. We must now develop good mutual contacts. It is said that the Chinese are a more practical people while we Indians are more idealistic. I do not know how far these opinions are correct, but there might be some substance in them. By mutual association, these two peoples should supplement what the other is deficient in. If we make use of the Chinese events from this standpoint, it will be possible to establish a world government, that is, an order for all humanity throughout the world.

Pavnar, 2-11-'49

VINOBA

(Adapted from the *Sarvodaya* of November, '49)

AHIMSA IN SINO-INDIAN CULTURE *

I

If the question be asked, "What is the main thing in common between China and India?" I would answer, it is our common culture. If it be further asked, "What is the chief characteristic of this common Indian and Chinese culture?", my unhesitating answer would be, it is *ahimsa*. Hence the title of this article: *Ahimsa in Sino-Indian Culture*.

'Sino-Indian Culture' is a new term coined by myself about fifteen years ago. It has come into current use since the foundation of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society in both the countries, India and China, in 1934 and 1935 respectively.

Culture, in my humble opinion, and to put it in a very simple way, is the cultivation of the whole of human life, and not only of the spiritual side of civilization as is usually regarded. It is the compass, as well as the pilot, of the progress of human society. It gives significance to human life and distinguishes human life from that of plants and animals. It helps man to realize at the first stage the real meaning and value of life, and ultimately to reach its real goal, in which alone there is eternal peace, love, joy, freedom and blessing. In this respect, there is not only much similarity but much identity between the culture of India and that of China. The most striking feature and analogy of these two cultures is the spirit of *ahimsa*.

Ahimsa is a word negative in form but with a positive sense. Mahatma Gandhi translated it into English as 'non-violence'. The ancient Chinese Buddhist scholars translated it into Chinese as *pu-hai*, meaning 'non-hurting'. Its positive form is 'love', 'universal love'. That is *maitri* in Sanskrit; *jen* in Chinese. These couples of words, *ahimsa* and *maitri*, or non-violence and universal love, or *pu-hai* and *jen*, were born married. And they could never and would never be divorced or separated. They always carry the same message and disseminate the same gospel together. But the Chinese prefer to use the positive form rather than the negative, while Indians on the other hand prefer to use the negative one. Therefore the Chinese and the Indian have also become an unseparated couple in culture.

Why was the negative word preferred by the Indians? Gandhiji once explained this by saying: "All life in the flesh exists by some violence. Hence the highest religion has been defined by a negative word, *ahimsa*. The world is bound in a chain of destruction. In other words, violence is an inherent necessity for life in the body. That is why a votary of *ahimsa* always prays for ultimate deliverance from the

bondage of flesh". (C. F. Andrews: *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, p. 138)

The Chinese sage, Mencius, put it in another way. He said: "Men must be decided on what they will not do, and then they are able to act with vigour in what they ought to do." If a man wants to do things good, he must first not do things evil. So also if a man wants to love people and other beings he must first not hurt them. If a man preaches love or *maitri* or *jen*, but does not practise *ahimsa*, or non-violence, or *pu-hai*, then his love is no reality. It is merely a false expression or hypocrisy. Therefore almost all the great religions in the world uphold a set of precepts to govern the acts of their followers.

Ahimsa in Sino-Indian Culture is not only a very prominent feature but also an ancient tradition. It is as ancient as the culture itself. Or as Gandhiji said: "Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills." (*Harijan*, 28-3-'36). In India, *ahimsa* is one of the most cardinal virtues and doctrines of almost all the religious and philosophical sects. It had been repeatedly taught and expressly stated by the *rishis* in the ancient scriptures, such as the *Aitareya Brahmana*, the *Shatapatha Brahmana*, the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, the *Vamana Purana* and *Manu's Book of Law*. Therefore it was thus declared in the *Mahabharata*: "*Ahimsa* is the Supreme Religion." And Gandhiji did recite the same words on several occasions. (C. F. Andrews: *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*).

But the gospel of *ahimsa* was first deeply and systematically expounded and properly and specially preached by the *Jaina tirthankaras*, most prominently by the 24th *tirthankara*, the last one, Mahavira Vardhamana. Then again by Lord Buddha. And at last it was embodied in the thoughts, words and deeds and symbolized by the very life of Mahatma Gandhi.

As *ahimsa* is one of the cardinal virtues and doctrines of almost all the philosophical and religious systems in India, so also it is in China. The only difference is, as mentioned above, that instead of using the negative word *ahimsa*, the Chinese preferred to use the positive word *jen*.

Confucius

Jen has a vast volume of meanings and a lot of diversities of interpretations. Different scholars of different schools have explained it at different times. Even the greatest saint of China, Confucius, gave a good many different explanations to different persons on different occasions. Once asked by a disciple named Fan Chieh, "What about *jen*?", the Master said: "To Love all people." (*Confucian Analects*). At another time asked by another disciple, called, Yen Yuan, about the same, he said: "To subdue one's self and return to propriety; this is *jen*." (*Confucian Analects*). Again answering the same question asked by another disciple, named Chung Kung, the Master said: "Don't do to others what you would not wish done to yourself." (*Confucian Analects*). Again at

* Paper read by Professor Tan Yun-Shan, Director of Vishwabharati Cheena-Bhawan, and Cultural Representative of China in India, at the Public Library, Jaipur, on October 16. By the courtesy of the Publicity Officer, Rajasthan.

another time another disciple, called Tzu Chang, asked the Master about the same topic, and he said in answering: "To be able to practise five things everywhere under heaven constitutes *jen*." When asked what they were, the Master said: "Gravity, generosity, sincerity, earnestness and kindness." (*Confucian Analects*). Confucius also said on several other occasions: "A man of *jen* will always rest in perfect virtue." "Only the man of *jen* can always love people." "A man devoted to *jen* will have no hatred." (*Confucian Analects*).

Chinese Scriptures

In *Yi-Ching*, the book of change, (the Vedas of China), it has been said: "The superior gentleman realized in the virtue of *jen* will nurture people." "The great virtue of Heaven and Earth is life. The great jewel of the saint is his position. How to maintain his position? It is by *jen*." In *Shu-Ching*, the Book of History, it is written: "The people have no fixed affection, but always think of the virtues of *jen*." In *Chung-Yung*, the Doctrine of the Golden Mean, it was said: "*Jen* is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving all people, especially relatives."

Such passages in ancient Chinese scriptures are rather too many to be quoted one by one here. In general, *jen* means universal love. Some European savants rendered it into English as benevolence and perfect virtue. The Chinese classical scholars of the Sung Dynasty also explained it as "the entire virtue of the heart." I think the Sanskrit word *maitri* as understood by Buddhist religion and philosophy is the nearest equivalent to it.

This gospel of *jen* was first properly taught and preached in China about twenty-five centuries ago by the greatest Chinese saint Confucius (551-479 B.C.). Then again it was more profoundly and systematically expounded and disseminated by the great Chinese sage Mencius (372-289 B.C.). Afterwards almost all the classical scholars of all the dynasties of China's long history cherished, promoted and propagated the same message but explained and interpreted it according to their own ways. In modern times, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the Father of the Republic of China, had scientifically employed the lofty ideals of *jen* in his *San Min Chu Yi*, the Three People's Principles, for his national movement for the emancipation of China and the renaissance of Chinese culture.

TAN YUN-SHAN

Extension of Date

The last date for submission of contributions announced by the undersigned in the *Harijan* of 6-11-'49 has been extended to 31st December, 1949.

NANIK G. MOTWANE
Hon. Gen. Secretary,
Sindh Hindu Seva Samiti,
P.B. No. 459, Bombay

GO-SEVAKS WANTED

All over India there is an awakening for cow-breeding work in a scientific manner, but for want of qualified workers it does not progress. Therefore, the Go-Sevak Sangh, Wardha, has decided to take ten workers this year for training. The course will be for a period of 1½ years, the first one year being devoted for training in cattle breeding and the rest six months for practical experience in running a dairy.

The new class will commence from 1st January 1950 and intending trainees should reach Wardha by the end of December 1949. A stipend of Rs. 20 per month will be given to each trainee, which will meet the charges for food. No tuition fee is charged.

The qualifications needed for the trainees are that he should be a *khadi*-wearer, must know Hindi and should have the capacity to run an independent dairy, he should also have some knowledge of English and fondness for agriculture and cattle-breeding and a will to stick to it. He must be prepared to do hard physical labour. Such workers will, after their training, be sent wherever required. As far as possible, efforts will be made to find employment for the trainees in their own provinces.

Pay will vary according to the capacity of the worker, and will range between Rs. 75 and Rs. 150 per month, including all allowances. The Sangh cannot at present undertake to provide employment for every one; but considering the demand for such workers from all provinces, it is hoped there will be no dearth of employment for qualified workers.

There is also need for such adult workers who will devote all their time to this work with or without remuneration, which will range between Rs. 75 and Rs. 200 per month.

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ
Secretary,
Go-Seva Sangh, Gopuri, Wardha

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