

Hind Swaraj: A Fresh Look

Excerpted from Hind Swaraj: A Fresh Look - N. Prasad, (Ed.)

1985. New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation

"Moral Foundation of Hind Swaraj and Nonviolence"

Ramashray Roy

Read Hind Swaraj if you love the human family and this earth which is our home. Read it if you wish to do your little bit to halt man's mad race towards self-extinction.

T.K. Mahadevan

Preface to Dvija: A Prophet Unheard

To turn to Hind Swaraj, after a full seventy-six years after its writing, must connote more than an intellectual curiosity to know what a "crank, prophet, genius, human. . ." in Mahadevan's words, had to say about modern civilization and how far what he says stands the test of time and logic. Gandhi's Hind Swaraj has little to do with a careful analysis of social conditions, the institutional structures and individual motivations and their interactions that produce an outcome which he labels "the satanic civilization." Gandhi does not "provide a rigorous social analysis from which his political conclusions could be logically derived." His was a moral response to what he perceived as the evils of modern civilization. Hind Swaraj represents a moral condemnation of modern civilization; it is, therefore, all the more penetrating, compelling and unsettling.

A fresh look at Hind Swaraj can, then, only frustrate an intellectual approach that seeks either to lay bare the structure of Gandhian thought as a means to reducing Gandhi to a formula or to sharpen one's understanding of the forces that have created or sustained modern civilization in its present form. The sensibility underlying Hind Swaraj has its roots not in the intellectual but in the moral. As such, what is thus essentially a moral sensibility cannot be fully grasped by an intellectual effort alone. No doubt, intellectual effort is necessary to make clear what is only dimly perceived and to provide a rationale

to what is only clear to one's innermost being. But this intellectual effort will bear fruit only after it has been touched with the transforming illumination of moral sensibility.

What is this moral sensibility and what is its source? But before we turn to discussing these questions, two things need to be made clear at the outset. First, *Hind Swaraj* was written, as Gandhi himself says: in answer to the Indian school of violence and its prototype in South Africa. I came in contact with every known Indian anarchist in London. Their bravery impressed me, but I felt that their zeal was misguided. I feel that violence was no remedy for India's ills, and that her civilization required the use of a different and higher weapon for self-protection.

While Gandhi was responding in *Hind Swaraj* specifically to violence as a method of attaining *Swaraj* or self-rule, he saw violence rooted in modern civilization. Violence was, for Gandhi, an inevitable result of the values that underlie modern civilization and its institutions. As long as modern civilization continued to shape man's destiny, violence, he believed, would be the natural consequence. He, therefore, directed his moral sensibility to exposing what he considered the cancerous elements growing in the womb of modern civilization producing contradictions that would ultimately bring its downfall.

Second, Gandhi's critique of modern civilization is total. Most of the critiques of modern civilization focus only on some aspects of it, expose their faults and defects and show how they distort and despoil the meaning of life. It is assumed that once these aspects are set right, the wholesomeness of life will be restored in its full effulgence. Such criticisms, it must be noted, are predicated upon a world-view that treats social life as a mechanism which goes wrong, not because its central organizing principle has gone wrong, but because some of its parts have either worn out or become wayward to throw the whole mechanism in disarray. No doubt, such critiques are important and provide important insights into the functioning of modern society. However, they remain within the perimeter of the world-view that constitutes the foundation of modern civilization. Their principal objective is not to question and replace the basic tenets of modern life but to create appropriate conditions for their effective realization by overcoming perceived obstacles.

In contradistinction to the perspectives that offer severe critiques of modern civilization, and yet remain within the framework of its metaphysics, Gandhi projects an entirely different perspective. He moves beyond the central assumptions and the world-view implicit in modern civilization, and rejects them totally. Moving beyond, he replaces the living centre of modern civilization with one that lies at the root of his vision of a

desirable society. His critique is total and his rejection of modern civilization final. That is why his condemnation of modern civilization is so forthright, brutal, and upsetting.

Gandhi does more than simply reject the basic premises of modern civilization. He offers a concrete proposal for reordering society that promises to do away with the ills associated with modern civilization. The cornerstone of his proposal is provided by his conception of the uniqueness of being human. Rejecting all attempts to reduce the uniqueness of being human to biological, psychological, or sociological considerations, he sees the destiny of man to lie in his ethico-religious quest of self-transformation. But this quest for self-knowledge, far from being pursued in the isolation of a Himalayan cave, occurs in the world of here and now and provides the basis for man's relationship with the outer world that is characterized by an organismic vision emphasizing inseparable unity, harmony, and non-injury.

The moral sensibility that lies behind Gandhi's condemnation of modern civilization springs from his world-view. It is his worldview that gives a concrete shape to his moral perspective and defines its contents. Constituting an integral component of his world-view, Gandhi's moral perspective cannot be understood apart from his world-view. It is therefore necessary to appraise the moral foundation of Hind Swaraj in the context of his worldview. Given these considerations, this paper seeks, first, to outline in brief, Gandhi's critique of modern civilization. Second, it then moves on to dwell, again very briefly, on the central tenets of modern civilization that Gandhi attacks and rejects. Third, it attempts to reconstruct Gandhi's world-view that permeates his moral perspective.

It should be emphasized here that the concerns outlined above go much beyond a simple appraisal of Hind Swaraj. While Hind Swaraj delineates in bold strokes Gandhi's deeply-felt perceptions of the ills of modern civilization, it does not fully develop either his world-view or his moral perspective. It is, therefore, necessary to treat Hind Swaraj simply as providing a contour of the alternative edifice of a desirable social order and go beyond it in order to fill this contour with necessary details.

As has been indicated earlier, the provocation for Gandhi to write Hind Swaraj came from the attempt of some individuals and political groups to free India from the bondage of the British rule through violence. Disputing the View of Swaraj that took its inspiration from English people, their institutions and their way of life, Gandhi argues that it is equivalent to wanting English rule without the Englishman and having the tiger's nature, but not the tiger, that is to say, to making India English. "And when it becomes English", says Gandhi, "it will be called not Hindustan but Englistan. This is not the Swaraj that I want." Gandhi does not want this Swaraj because if India copied

England, she would be ruined. And her ruination will come about not because of the fault of her people but because of her acceptance of modern civilization as definitive of her way of life.

But what ails modern civilization? For Gandhi, the propelling force of modern civilization is what he calls "the hunger for wealth and the greedy pursuit of worldly pleasures." Constituting the core of modern civilization is the craving for material aggrandizement that influences the life of the individual in such a way that he thinks of nothing else; and devotes his whole energy to increasing wealth for adding to bodily comforts. The desire to amass wealth in a situation marked by resource limitations leads inevitably to violence both at the individual and the collective levels. Amassing of wealth by one individual or group means preventing others to have access to the resources one wants for himself. This creates a situation in which, as Rousseau puts it, "every man finds his profit in the misfortune of his neighbours."

To profit from the neighbours' misfortune may not always inflict physical hurt, but it leads to more severe consequences than physical hurt. It creates a social order in which inequality, oppression and deprivation prevail to mutilate and destroy human dignity. Gandhi would ask us to reflect with Rousseau "what must be the state of things when all men are forced to caress and destroy one another at the same time; and when they are born enemies by duty, and knaves by interest." At the collective level, this is reflected in imperialism and the frequent wars it provokes.

Modern civilization, in Gandhi's opinion, places the pursuit of: self-interest at the centre of man's existence. Given the goal of material well-being, the individual's entire effort focusses on acquiring as much riches as possible for his own use. This elevates the pursuit of self-interest to the highest pedestal and makes it the pivot around which men build their world. Since the pursuit of self-interest is deemed as rational as well as desirable, any restraint imposed on such a pursuit is considered to be restrictive of the full flowering of individuality itself. But once the pursuit of self-interest is recognised to be central in life, certain consequences follow. First, the pursuit of higher things—morality, spirituality, etc.—gets crowded out of the individual's life. As Locke long ago recognized:

We are not born in heaven but in this world, where our being is to be preserved with meat, drink and clothing, and other necessaries that are not born with us, but must be got and kept with forecast, care and labour, and therefore we cannot be all devotion, all praises and hallelujah, and perpetually in the vision of things above. ...

The pursuit of self-interest not only crowds out the "vision of things above" but also renders the search for morality and spiritually insignificant and irrelevant as well. It is true that the search for individual happiness compatibly with others becomes necessary for individual well-being and the health of the social-order. However, the latter is only a second order goal considered important for the promotion of the first order goal, i.e. individual happiness.

Second, when the pursuit of self-interest becomes the central value, it makes violence the dominant characteristic of modern civilization. Since the criterion for judging as to which appetites to satisfy and which to suppress and for ascertaining where to stop is not available, life becomes a ceaseless struggle for acquiring more and more for oneself. This should not become a problem if resources were abundant and every desire could be satisfied without sacrificing others or without coming into conflict with other individuals. Since this is not the case, a process of what Gandhi calls "life-corroding competition" ensues leading to exploitation, domination, inequality and oppression. This is reflected not only in the relationship of one country with another. That is why Gandhi describes modern civilization manifesting the maxims of "might is right" and "the survival of the fittest." Modern civilization based as it is on violence "does not respect all life and, in its progress onward, it has not hesitated to resort to wholesale destruction of even human life."

Third, the quest for material well-being leads, on the one hand, to 'ceaseless activity and, on the other, to the annihilation of time and space. The rich and the not-so-rich, as well as the poor, have to engage in ceaseless activity; the rich because they want to preserve and, if possible, increase their riches and the others because, caught in the vortex of rising expectations, they wish to improve their lot relative to the well-offs.

The growing hunger for material goods would not have wrought disaster for mankind if man's capacity to subdue and exploit nature would have remained very limited as it was before the continuing revolutions in science and technology opened the way for technologically induced and sustained economic growth based on mass production. This brought into operation two tendencies-tendencies towards physical and social mobility. The availability of quick modes of transportation has greatly removed the constraints on physical and social mobility. The more these constraints are overcome, the more does the movement across space and time get intensified. In addition, it has also made it possible for one Country to expand outwards and colonise distant lands and people. This leads Gandhi to "detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction."

The relentless competition for acquisition as a means of raising the level of material well-being expresses itself in the opposition of man to man and of one group to another. Discontent, unrest, and conflict become endemic in modern civilization. As Gandhi wrote to a friend in 1919: Economic distress, political repression and an awakening amongst the masses in particular in all countries have all played an important part in bringing about the present world conditions where, enquiring of every country, you find them affected without exception by unrest of deep-seated character. In America, it is class warfare; in England it is labour unrest; in Russia, Bolshevism; and in India, it is all-round unrest due to repression, famine and other causes. This situation which now faces the Western nations was inevitable; for Western civilization, based on the basic principle of brute force as a guiding motive, could have ultimately led only to mutual destruction.

Given the primacy of the pursuit of self-interest and its concomitant antagonism, and mutual forbearance as the principle of interpersonal relationships, the state and its laws must intervene to control and regulate chaotic impulses of individual freedom. However, political institutions fail to do so, as is evident from Gandhi's depiction of "the Mother of Parliament" as a "sterile woman and prostitute." People's representatives in the Parliament, instead of promoting and protecting the interest of all, become prisoners of particular interests. They become "hypocritical and selfish. Each thinks of his own little interest." Independent thinking is not only discouraged and ruled out. "Members vote," Gandhi notes, "for their party without thought. Their so-called discipline binds them to it. If any member, by way of exception, gives an independent vote, he is considered a renegade." Even the Prime Minister, who is supposed to see that common good Moral Foundation of Hind Swaraj and Nonviolence is served, fails to do so because he "is more concerned about his power.... His energy is concentrated upon securing the success of his party. His care is not always that parliament shall do right." In other words, the incompatibility that modern civilization creates between vested interests and justice overshadows the true purpose of the Parliament and makes it an instrument of protecting and furthering particular interests.

While Parliament becomes the vehicle for the promotion of particular interests, ignoring the claim of morality, there are other factors too, such as modern professions like that of lawyers doctors and the institution of modern education that reinforce this tendency. As products of modern civilization, they partake of some of its essential characteristics and help in maintaining and strengthening its hold on the people. Space does not permit a detailed discussion of Gandhi's views on these except to point out that if lawyers have a vested interest in encouraging quarrels and have been instrumental in consolidating British rule in India, doctors encourage indulgence and therefore are instrumental in

weakening of the control over mind. Similarly, modern education, oriented as it is towards imparting information on various subjects, does not become an instrument of transformation of life. It does not help in character-building on which depends the performance of one's main role in life. "It does not make men of us. It does not enable us to do our duty."

Most of all, Gandhi is greatly pained by the hypocrisy of modern civilization. He argues that even while modern civilization promises to increase bodily comforts, it fails miserably in doing so. The necessity for millions of workers to toil, at the risk of their life and limb, in the most dangerous occupations, for the sake of millionaires, is itself a testimony to this fact. Men and women have to work in trying conditions for the sake of more pittance. The constant struggle for earning enough bread and butter exhausts the energy of the people and they need to keep up their energy with the help of intoxicants. The projection of material acquisition as a desirable goal for everyone impels each individual to strive unabashedly to attain an ever-rising level of bodily comfort, and luxury creates a situation where only a few can succeed in this and even that at a great cost. The very expectation that one can make good, conceals from his gaze the hopelessness, the cruelty, the oppression, the exploitation, the indignity and the misery inherent in modern civilization. Herein lies the hypocrisy of modern civilization. It is "like a mouse gnawing while it is soothing us."

Modern civilization wields the sword of violence but at the same time displays its "cross" to soothe wounded feelings and afflicted humanity. However soothing it may be, modern civilization remains, for Gandhi, the Upas tree. The Upas tree of modern civilization is rooted in, thrives on, and irradiates immorality because of its preference for and active propagation of the cult of bodily welfare as the prime object of life. Surely, the claim of bodily welfare cannot be ruled out. Gandhi recognizes this but argues:

A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness.

In the quest for material well-being, modern civilization has definitely made voluptuousness a common virtue and in the process "takes note neither of morality nor of religion."

What Gandhi condemns in modern civilization is only the external manifestation of the world-view that became dominant in the Western world in the seventeenth century when industrial revolution began to take long strides. The source of Gandhi's critique of modern civilization is, again, a world-view that is almost as ancient as the history of human civilization itself but one that has been eclipsed by the dominant Western world-view and to which Gandhi subscribes with certain modifications. Thus at the back of Hind Swaraj and at a higher plane there is a confrontation between two antithetical world-views. It is this confrontation that lends Hind' Swaraj its significance. In order, therefore, to comprehend fully the significance of Hind Swaraj, it is necessary to grasp the nature of this confrontation and see what the two antithetical world-views signify.

The dominant Western world-view replaced the view that considered man as forming a part of a larger order whether conceived in terms of Platonic World of Ideas or in terms of the Christian divine order. The important point about these two positions is that they made a distinction between the world of here and now—the real world—and a conceptual world. In both these versions, man is conceived not as a self-sufficient entity capable of legislating laws for regulating his own behaviour and his relationship with the outer world. The conceptual world contains the true structure of the real world and it is the responsibility of man to see what the true structure of things is and to act according to this true structure. To act according to this true structure is considered both as rational and natural. "For, if man is rational and to be rational is to be connected to this larger order in having a true vision of it, then man can only be himself in being so connected to this order."

If man is a part of a larger order, and if this larger order provides criteria for judging the purity and perfection of the real world, then, it is the larger order that is the locus of norms and values that shape man's ideas, his customs and his institutions. These norms and values exist a priori and are independent of the vagaries, whims, and arbitrariness of individuals, institutions and societies. The natural law symbolized in the "participation of the eternal law in the rational creature" provides the ideals which men should live and guide their destiny by in the real world. As such, the transcendental origin of norms and, values means that man must submit to them in order to retain this rationality and preserve his freedom since both rationality and freedom consist in conforming to the laws of the conceptual world.

Once the existence of a larger order was denied, as it was consequent upon the emergence of a scientific world-view in the seventeenth century, the conception of man and of his relationship with the outer world underwent profound changes. The denial of trans-individual authority as the source of norms and values left man to his own devices and his search for a sure ground for apprehending reality and truth ended up in a fissure

between the realm of ideas and the realm of events This entailed a further split within man himself, a split between reason and desire. Man emerged as a self-defining and a self-sufficing subject who constitutes society and uses it for his own purposes. Further, with the denial of a larger order, the material world came to be viewed as devoid of any spiritual significance and therefore without intrinsic purpose, meaning or value. Nature, then, is a mere object for dissection and measurement by the observing mind, a collection of functions to be analyzed, managed, manipulated, and used.

The shift in the world-view that considered man as an integral part of a larger order to the one that made man the centre of the universe entails what Iris Murdoch calls a "broken totality." It is this "broken totality" that stands at the centre of the predicament of modern man. Man is defined as a subject capable of rational thought and decision. But he is also a subject of desires and his desires cannot be judged at the bar of reason. The positing of desires as given for moral reasoning reduces reason to "reckoning" and practical, prudential reason responsible for intelligent calculation of how to encompass and determine means. The relegation of reason to an instrumental role created the necessity of identifying a con-trolling principle capable of regulating passions some of which are turbulent and destructive. Recognizing passions as the dominant traits of human personality and recognizing, too, the inadequacy of moralizing philosophy and religious precepts, solutions for restraining passions came to centre around, first, entrusting the state to repressing the destructive consequences of passions, and, subsequently, harnessing passions instead of simply repressing them. The central passion called on to harness other passions came to be identified with interest in the sense of "augmentations of fortune" and "the desire of bettering one's material condition." Man came, in this perspective, to be considered nothing more than an 'externalized' creature, an object. Interest in effect replaced man's inner being; and man became simply the reflexive creature of external, largely material, objects which attracted or repelled him, his relation to those objects, of course, being to a great extent determined by his class and economic position. Man became, in essence, a receptacle of interests.

It is, thus, in self-interest that the fleeting, fluid self of the empiricists finds a firm anchor which lends it a particular character and prompts it to action. In this process, however, the Cartesian dictum of "I think, therefore, I am" is reduced to "I own, therefore, I am". Self turns out to be pure ego, an acquisitive and possessive ego. "I" is totally represented in "mine" and it is "mine" that becomes the guiding principle of the individual's interaction with the outer world. Human consciousness is treated, in this perspective, as representation, turning the outer world into a picture, to use Heidegger's phrase. "What is distinctive about persons, then, is their ability to conceive different

possibilities, to calculate how to get them, to choose between them, and thus to plan their lives. The striking superiority of man is in strategic power. The various capacities definitive of a person are understood in terms of this power to plan. Central to this is the power to represent things clearly. We can plan when we can lay out the possibilities clearly, when we can calculate their values to us in terms of our goals, as well as the possibilities and the cost of their attainment. Our choice can then be clear and conscious."

The power to plan an acquisitive and possessive ego perceives the outer world into potential means. To quote Taylor again:

His world is one of potential means, which he understands with a view to control. He is in the crucial sense disengaged. To understand things in the absolute perspective is to understand them in abstraction from their significance for you. To be able to look on everything, world and society, in this perspective would be to neutralize its significance, and this would be a kind of freedom –the freedom of the self-defining subject, who determines his own purposes, or finds them in his natural desires.

It is the working out of this world-view in reality that has made modern civilization a "Satanic" civilization in Gandhi's view. And it is against this that Gandhi counterposes his own world-view in order to mend the "broken totality" and restore the fulness and wholesomeness of the human being. As has been indicated earlier, Gandhi conceives the uniqueness of being human in terms of ethico-religious pursuit. He recognizes that man, while he is rooted in and springs from the animal world, has also the capacity to rise above it and can, only if he so recognizes and wills, set on a journey to give free play to his moral and spiritual propensity for self-development. He also recognizes that attributes of being uniquely human are neither fixed for all times nor immutable. He insists on the goodness of human nature as the real basis for self-realization. He pegs his hope on the perfectibility of human nature.

Recognizing self-realization as the true orientation of a person, Gandhi insists on demolishing the wall of separation between one part of man and another and between man and the outer world. Self-enclosure which is the hallmark of individual must yield to self-disclosure. The process of self-disclosure assumes that beyond all phenomenal things there is self; self, that is the vehicle of truth, Gandhi's view, has to be discovered. This implies a genuine knowledge of self and entails a transforming act upon it. To know this sense is not only to reflect and comprehend but also to shape and create. For, to know oneself is simultaneously to perfect oneself.

Self-knowledge does not depend upon the knowledge of the phenomenal world; nor does it imply turning totally inward ignoring the claim of the phenomenal world. The search for the transcendental centre must be pursued in the world of here-and-now. The phenomenal, the "everydayness," is not only the point of departure but also of eventual return of any significant moral and spiritual journey to reshape, recreate and transform it according to the principles of transcendental freedom. Projecting an organismic vision of the world, Gandhi recognizes the essential unity of existence such a perspective recognizes distinctions but not differences. It also eschews subjectivism, inasmuch as there is a dear recognition that no one individual has a privileged access to truth. Since truth can be viewed and apprehended from various, and not necessarily compatible positions, one has to recognize the "many-sidedness" of reality.

This recognition within the framework of the essential unity of existence eschews exclusivism. Gandhi recognizes the essential uprightness of the many positions that are possible for defining reality. The rejection of exclusivism also implies that one must abstain from imposing one's way on others in order to preserve their integrity. Such an outlook leads necessarily to the adoption of ahimsa (non-injury) as the basic principle of interaction with society and nature.

Self-transformation, as an inner experience, underlines inwardness. However, it externalizes itself because the central thrust of self-transformation lies in seeking dialogues with others wherein self really gives itself and wherein it is really received. This makes it necessary to seek liberation not through conquest but through harmonising oneself with an ever-enlarging network of relationships, which requires going beyond self-centredness and anthropocentrism. Harmony, in this perspective, becomes not only a personal aspiration, but also a social goal and cosmic ideal. The necessity of harmonizing oneself with an ever-enlarging circle of relationships is only the other name of integration. Such an integration becomes possible only by extending the boundary of the self, not for absorption of everything else to oneself but for giving oneself to others. Thus this extended self becomes the ground for sociality. Society then turns out to be a network of extended selves rather than a mechanical aggregate of enclosed selves or an all-consuming totality of a fictional abstraction. Gandhi's perspective, then, retains the primacy of the person but treats him as a drop in the ocean. Also, this perspective locates humanity in a highly complex web of interdependency. Simultaneous development of 'person and society' becomes a sine qua non in Gandhi's view. Self-disclosure becomes the bedrock of self-extension.

Gandhi's world-view projects an outlook which enfolds everything into an embrace of empathy, compassion, and fellow-feeling. However, to care for the world without turning to relate oneself to what is immediate and proximate is an anathema for Gandhi. Gandhi

recognizes the desirability of universalizing one's basic value commitment, but he also recognizes the frailty of human nature and the strength of its attachments. He therefore insists on choosing a concrete path of making it possible for the value commitment to be universally manifested. Such a concrete path offers itself in the principle of Swadeshi, that is, concern for the immediate neighbourhood. Each individual or unit has to strike a universal concrete in terms of the milieu of his own cultural heritage. Only by proceeding from whatever we are—geographical spiritually or emotionally—can we make the integral effort needed for the progress and peace of the whole of humanity.

Thus Gandhi's world-view projects an organismic vision that promises to mend the "broken totality" and seeks to base social relations on respect, cooperation and non-exploitation. It is this world-view that constitutes the fountain-head of morality.

For Gandhi, the primary value of life does not consist in the promotion of bodily welfare for its own sake. As he says:

Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and all other religions teach that we should remain passive about worldly pursuits and active about godly pursuits, that we should set a limit to our worldly ambition and that our religious ambition should be illimitable. Our activity should be directed into the latter channel.

By "godly pursuits" Gandhi does not mean conformity to the outward forms of religion. All religions, even though they may differ in how they formulate certain principles and how they think of the forms through which conformity to these principles can be ensured, have one essential feature in common. This common feature is to do good to mankind. If others become part of the extended self that Gandhi's "organismic" vision of life and world implies, then doing good to others becomes a natural corollary of this orientation. In this perspective, there is no difference between morality and religion for him, "morals, ethics and religion are convertible terms. A moral life without reference to religion is like a house built upon sand. And religion divorced from morality is like 'sounding brass' good only for making a noise and breaking heads." As he notes elsewhere, "... an examination of the world's religions shows that, without morality, religion cannot subsist. True morality covers religion for the most part."

The intimate relationship between the central pursuit of man, i.e., self-realization, and morality means for Gandhi not the abnegation of the phenomenal world that surrounds us but the recognition of its compelling existence and its impingement on us and on our search for higher values. To be immersed in this phenomenal world and its usual

concerns is to be lost; to rise above it is to give it a new organization and harness it in the service of our pursuit of higher ends.

As has been suggested, true morality for Gandhi consists in doing good to the mankind. Gandhi adds another proviso to it, and that is "doing good with the intention to do good." It becomes necessary for two reasons. First, Gandhi recognizes that there reside in human breast two desires:

If we examine our desires, we shall see that we do not wish for what we have already. We always value more that which we do not have. But desires are of two kinds: one is the pursuit of mere self-interest. To attempt to fulfil this kind of desire is immoral. The other impels us constantly to improve ourselves and to do good to others. We should never become overweening with any amount of good that we may do. It is not for us to evaluate it, but rather we should have perpetual longing to become better and do more good. True morality consists in our effort to realize such longing.

To do good to others with the expectation of getting something in return is no morality since it is done not with the intention of doing good to others for its own sake but for advancing or promoting one's own interest. An action prompted by the motive of material gain, comfort, or personal happiness in another world is not moral. Morality requires rising above self-interest.

Secondly, the desire for the pursuit of self-interest does usually conflict with and suppresses the desire for improving oneself and doing good to others. In order to be moral, therefore, it is necessary to discipline and regulate the desire for the pursuit of self-interest. This means transcending one's own powerful desires and aversions and making them subordinate to intelligence and thought purified by the process of self-transformation. It also means the taking of the decision to rise above self-interest against inclination, and against nature. Such a decision must be conscious and call for the application of will, intelligence, and thought. As such, such a decision cannot be mechanical; and it must be free from fear or compulsion.

It is in this perspective that Gandhi's critique of modern civilization becomes understandable. It is also in this perspective that Gandhi's branding of modern civilization as "Satanic" makes sense. As he says, modern civilization takes note neither of morality nor of religion. Its votaries calmly state that their business is not to teach religion. Some even consider it to be a superstitious growth. Others put on the cloak of religion, and prate about morality. But after twenty years' experience, I have come to the conclusion that immorality is often taught in the name of morality.

