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Retrieved on 16 December 2010 from www.calpeacepower.org
From *Peace Power* volume 2, number 1, Winter 2006

en.anarchistlibraries.net

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his economic concept of trusteeship. Hence, Gandhi was a compromising Anarchist.

To Gandhi, ideas were worth having. He defended his vision of Anarchy in India on this point, "It may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought… Let India live for the true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want, before we can have something approaching it."[15]

By trying to understand Gandhi's worldview, certain questions jump out with contemporary relevance. First off, what is our culturally appropriate "utopian" picture of America or of the communities in which we live? Secondly, what practical steps can we make towards swaraj amidst the current global empire? Finally, if Gandhi is right that all power resides in individuals, and that power is derived from an "indomitable will" than how do we reclaim the latent power within us, both individually and collectively?

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[15] Ibid. p. 189.

> never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose center will be the individual. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it."[11]

In apparent contradiction to these ideals, Gandhi battled for national liberation and he expressed a lot of patriotism towards Indian civilization. He redefined the terms 'nationalism' and 'patriotism' to fit his vision. Nationalism, for instance, meant many different things. Gandhi said, "Every Indian whether he owns up to it or not, has national aspirations — but there are as many opinions as there are Indian Nationalists as to the exact meaning of that aspiration."[12] Gandhi's nationalism stood to disband the Congress Party upon independence, "Its task is done. The next task is to move into villages and revitalize life there to build a new socio-economic structure from the bottom upwards."[13] He also understood patriotism differently than his contemporaries, "by patriotism, I mean the welfare of the whole people."[14]

But Congress did not disband after independence in 1947. Gandhi recognized that there would be a national government, and his anarchic, oceanic circle would not yet be possible. Nevertheless, he used the terms of nationalism to move towards the ideal of Anarchy. He advocated for a minimal level of State organization to fund some education programs and to promote

[11] Ibid. p. 189.

[12] Murthy, Srinivasa. *Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy Letters.* Long Beach Publications: Long Beach, 1987. p. 40.

[13] Jesudasan, Ignatius. *A Gandhian Theology of Liberation.* Gujarat Sahitya Prakash: Ananda India, 1987. p. 225.

[14] Parel, Anthony (ed.) *Hind Swaraj and other writings of M.K. Gandhi.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1997. p. 77.

Visionary promoted decentralized, direct democracy as key to peace; power resides in the individual and in self-rule

Anarchy is about abolishing hierarchy. According to the original, Greek meaning of the word, Anarchy stands to create a world where there is no separation between the rulers and the ruled — a place where everyone rules themselves. (Anarchy in Greek means without rulers.) An anarchic vision of society is nonviolent, self-managed and non-hierarchical, and Anarchist thinkers hold dear to the ideal of democracy — rule by the people. They suggest political confederations of local organizations; a "commune of communes" was how the 19th century Parisians Anarchists articulated it. Anarchists seek to dissolve power instead of seize it. Therefore, they seek a social revolution instead of a political one. The social revolution throws into question all aspects of social life including family organization, schooling, religion, crime and punishment, technology, political organization, patriarchy, environmental concerns as well as others. Anarchists are identified "as enemies of the State," because they do oppose the existence of a hierarchical, top-down State.

Mohandas Gandhi opposed the State. The State is the military, police, prisons, courts, tax collectors, and bureaucrats. He saw the State as concentrated violence. "The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence." Gandhi recognized that the State claims to serve the nation, but he realized that this was a fallacy. "While apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, [the State] does the greatest harm to mankind."[1]

According to Dr. Dhawan, Gandhi was a philosophical Anarchist because he believed that the "[the greatest good of all] can

[1] Jesudasan, Ignatius. *A Gandhian Theology of Liberation.* Gujarat Sahitya Prakash: Ananda India, 1987. pp. 236–237.

be realized only in the classless, stateless democracy."[2] While Gandhi advocated democracy, he differentiated between direct democracy and western democracy. Commenting on the parliamentary system, Gandhi says, "If India copies England, it is my firm conviction that she will be ruined. Parliaments are merely emblems of slavery."[3] He had no more appetite for majority democracy of America, "It is a superstition and an ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority."[4] By centralizing power, western democracies feed into violence. Thus, he thought decentralization was the key to world peace.

In Gandhi's view all the political power that was concentrated in the State apparatus could be dissolved down to every last individual. He stated "Power resides in the people, they can use it at any time."[5] Reiterating the idea of Anarchy, Gandhi said, "In such a state (of affairs), everyone is his own rulers. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbor."[6] Gandhi had no illusions about the enormity of the task, but he took it on anyways. He believed that by reforming enough individuals and communities, society at large will change. Gandhi's concept of swaraj elucidates the connection between the individual and society.

Swaraj translates into "self-rule" or "autonomy". For Gandhi, every individual had to take steps towards self-rule in their lives; then India would naturally move towards self-rule as a nation. Gandhi insisted, "Everyone will have to take [swaraj] for himself."[7] He continued, "If we become free, India becomes

[2] Bhattacharyya, Buddhadeva. *Evolution of the Political Philosophy of Gandhi.* Calcutta Book House: Calcutta, 1969. p.479

[3] Parel, Anthony (ed.) *Hind Swaraj and other writings of M.K. Gandhi.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1997. p. 38

[4] Ibid. p. 92

[5] Jesudasan, Ignatius. *A Gandhian Theology of Liberation.* Gujarat Sahitya Prakash: Ananda India, 1987. pp. 251.

[6] Murthy, Srinivasa. *Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy Letters.* Long Beach Publications: Long Beach, 1987. p. 13.

[7] Ibid. p. 112.

free and in this thought you have a definition of swaraj. It is swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves."[8]

Gandhi angered some of his cohorts by extending his notion of power and swaraj to the history of colonization. While acknowledging the British Empire's cynical intentions in India, he places the responsibility of the disaster of colonization on the Indian people. "It is truer to say that we gave India to the English than that India was lost… to blame them for this is to perpetuate their power."[9] Because power resides in the people and they can only lose it by relinquishing their own power (often through coercion by others), petitions to the government get a new meaning with Gandhi. "A petition of an equal is a sign of courtesy; a petition from a slave is a symbol of his slavery." Gandhi will petition the government as an equal and he used love-force to back himself up. "Love-force can thus be stated: 'if you do not concede our demand, we will be no longer your petitioner. You can govern us only so long as we remain the governed; we shall no longer have any dealings with you.'"[10]

The principle of swaraj ultimately leads to a grassroots, bottom-up, "oceanic circle" of self-ruling communities. In 1946, Gandhi explained this vision:

> "Independence begins at the bottom… It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its own affairs… It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without… This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbors or from the world. It will be a free and voluntary play of mutual forces… In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be every-widening,

[8] Ibid. p. 73.

[9] Ibid. p. 41.

[10] Ibid. p. 85.