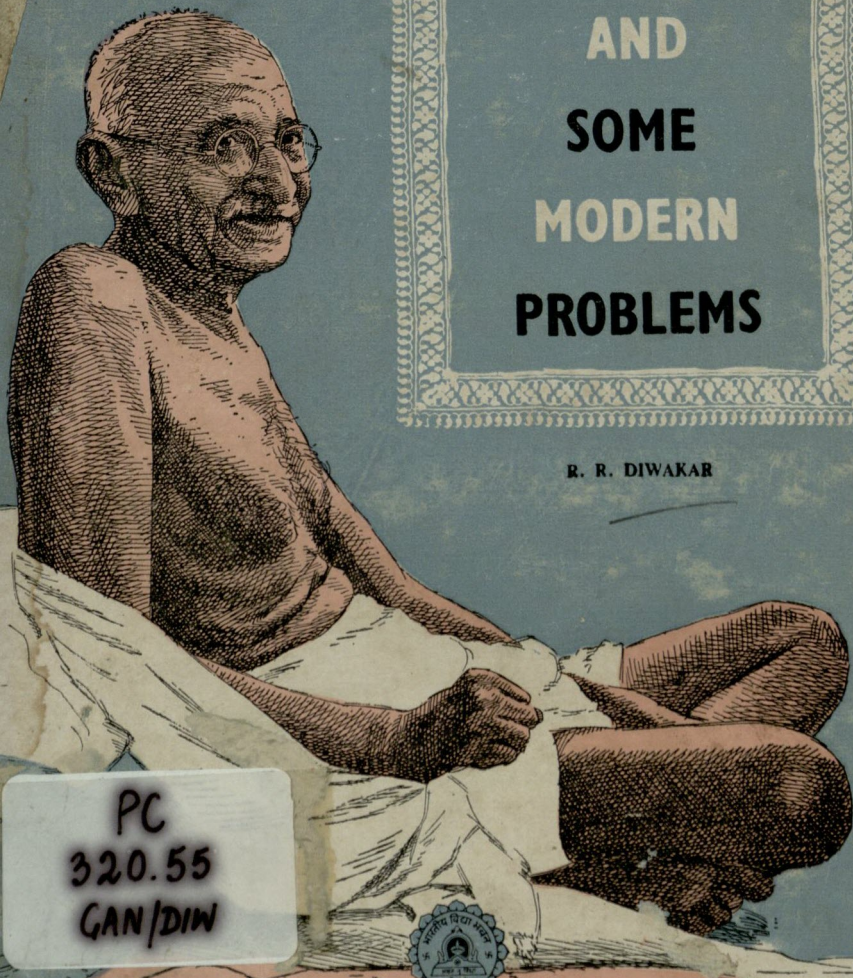


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# GANDHIJI'S BASIC IDEAS AND SOME MODERN PROBLEMS

R. R. DIWAKAR

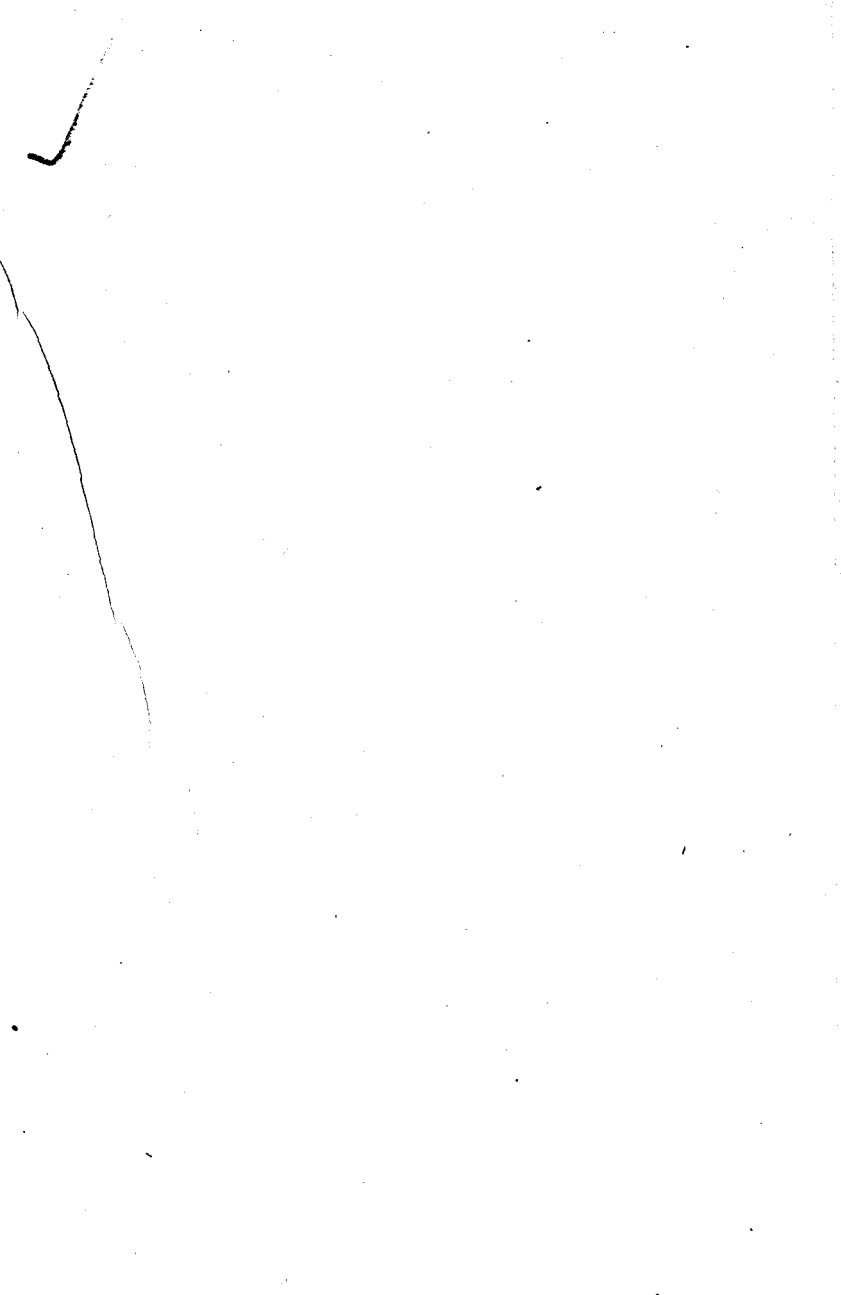


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By  
R. R. DIWAKAR



1963

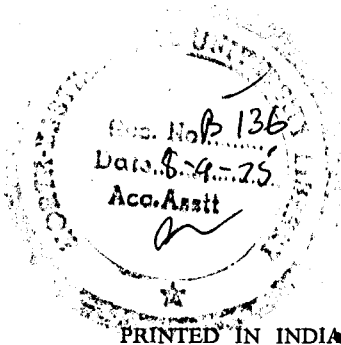
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### *PUBLISHERS' NOTE*

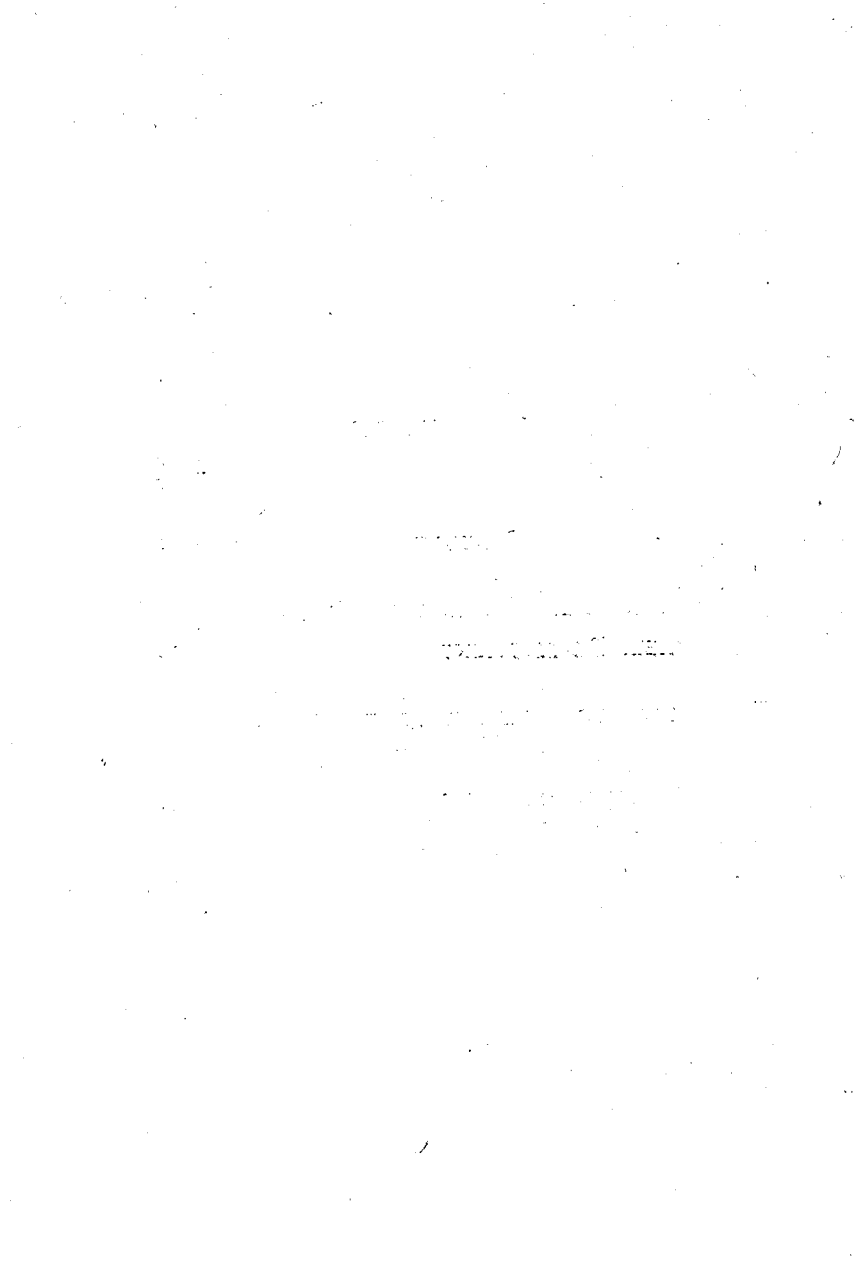
Shri R. R. Diwakar delivered a series of three lectures at the Gujarat University under the Ministry of Education's Scheme entitled 'Promotion of Gandhian Philosophy' in Ahmedabad on 12th, 13th, and 14th of December 1962.

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## I. BASIC IDEAS OF GANDHIJI

If one were to write about the thoughts and philosophy of Gandhiji, it would swell into volumes. It is a vast subject, as comprehensive as life and its manifold aspects and problems. No one in modern times has thought, spoken, written and acted so extensively, so frankly, so forthrightly and so boldly as Gandhiji. He always acted and thought in the perspective of practical life, its problems and their rightful solution. His thoughts therefore are of immense value to every man and woman. Whether he lived in a cottage in some remote village or moved in the glare of world publicity, he had always before him the whole of humanity, its problems, its welfare and its future.

His writings, which are being published by the Government of India, will run into about fifty-three volumes of royal octavo size of approximately five hundred pages each. He wrote mainly in English, though it was not his mother tongue, nor an Indian language. He wielded it with great mastery and power. He wrote also in very homely Gujarati which was his mother tongue and in Hindi too which he sought to make the *lingua franca* of India.

If we want to understand him and the significance of his actions, we must try to know his approach and his basic ideas about life and its problems. By basic ideas I mean the ideas, from which other ideas stem and derive. I can deal here only with a few of them. I limit the scope to four ideas, and words embodying them. I shall try to give their derivation and meaning, their significance and connotation in this chapter. In

## II. THE SOURCES OF GANDHIJI'S IDEAS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

In the last Chapter, I have dealt with four seminal ideas of Gandhiji, the Sanskrit words representing them, their derivation, meaning, significance and full connotation. It would be very interesting to know how and from where he got these great ideas and in what way he developed them and how they have come to embody a whole philosophy of individual as well as social life.

One usually draws his ideas from his parents and home-life, from his environment, from traditions, from reading and from studying books, men and events. In this connection, three remarkable characteristics can be observed in Gandhiji from his early life. He had always the curiosity, earnestness and open-mindedness of a scientist in his search after truth. He was always eager and willing to learn. Constitutionally, he was always bent upon 'doing' things more than only knowing, and therefore, he looked at ideas from the point of view of bringing them into action. He was practical and pragmatic in his approach to ideas and ideals. The third trait was that he never liked merely to imitate. He was for originality, adventure and newness. That is why words and ideas which are as old as the hills found new meanings and fresh application at his hands. They are not the same words but their reincarnations which we have to deal with in the context of Gandhiji's thought, action and interpretation.

*Satya*: Gandhiji has said that Satya or truth caught

### III. GANDHIJI'S IDEAS AND SOME MODERN PROBLEMS, ESPECIALLY WAR AND NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Generally great men can be said to be of two types, those who are great in their own time only and those who are great for all time. Gandhiji undoubtedly belongs to the latter type but at the same time he was great in his own time too. Buddha, Socrates, Jesus were not very much known perhaps beyond their own communities in their time; but now they occupy the highest places in the world stage. Gandhiji became a world celebrity in his own time and now he 'belongs to eternity'. He is no longer merely a great individual; he was already an institution in his own lifetime and now he is the originator of a whole system of ideas and ideals which can guide humanity to ways of peace. He was born an Indian and worked in Africa and India but now he belongs to the whole of humanity.

Gandhiji has to be studied as a great social philosopher, as a man of great ideas and as a far greater man of action who put his ideas into practice. He is the author of Satyagraha, a new technique for bringing about social change. He has to be studied as a revolutionary who sought to bring about radical changes without bloodshed, without destruction and without hatred. One may coin a new word for him and say that he was 'an evolutionary' of no mean order.

Many of us are likely to think that Gandhian ideas are gone with Gandhiji and are no more alive or practical. He has left his imprint on India no doubt, during the thirty years in which he was undisputed leader;

