

6121 Gandhiji's  
*Life, Thought and Philosophy*

R. R. Diwakar



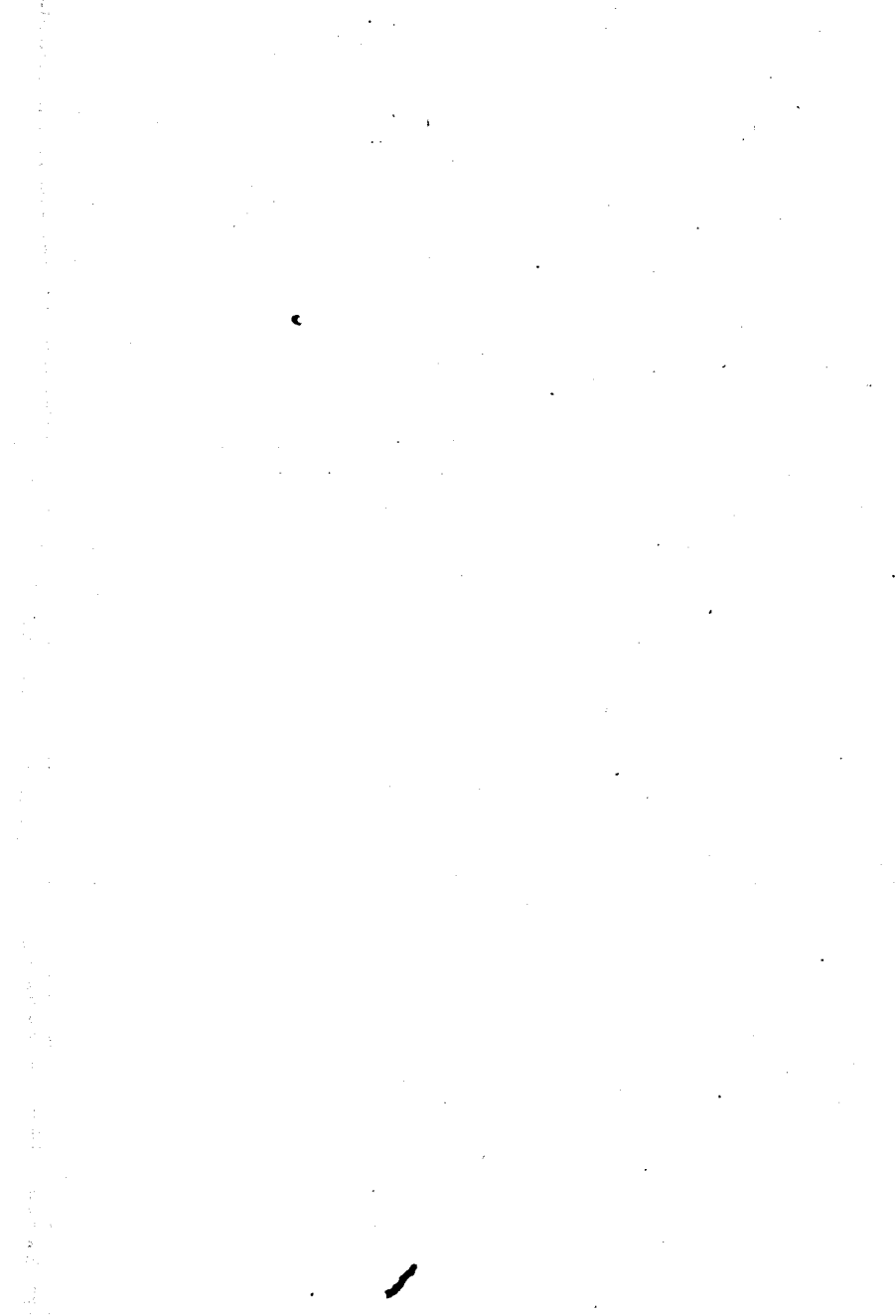
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BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN BOMBAY 7







# GANDHIJI'S LIFE, THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHY

By  
R. R. DIWAKAR



1963

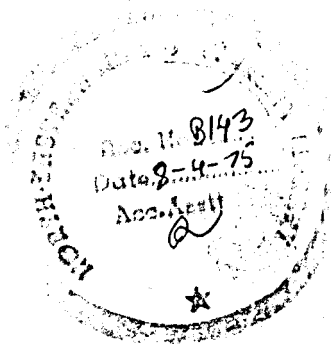
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### PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Shri R. R. Diwakar delivered a series of three lectures at the Karnatak University under the Ministry of Education's Scheme entitled 'Promotion of Gandhian Philosophy' in July 1962.

Our thanks are due to the Ministry of Education for permitting us to publish these lectures in book form and also to Dr. D. C. Pavate, Vice-Chancellor of the Karnatak University, for his Foreword.

## FOREWORD

It was Einstein who said of Gandhiji that ages will pass and the world will scarce believe that such a one walked the earth. The personality of Gandhiji was so rich and so great that even today we may well wonder: what made him, what he was? What were the sources of his greatness? We, who are so near to him, owe it to ourselves and to posterity that we record our answers to these questions.

When, therefore, the Government of India instituted a scheme of lectures on "The life and thought of Gandhiji" to be delivered at some universities, the Karnatak University was very happy to participate in the scheme. The lectures printed in this book are the first in the series, and were delivered by Dr. R. R. Diwakar.

We were, indeed, very fortunate in having Dr. Diwakar as our first lecturer. He is not only a great patriot and politician, but a distinguished man of letters who has studied and written on the philosophy of Gandhiji. What is more, he was closely associated with Gandhiji's life and work for nearly thirty years.

In the course of these lectures Dr. Diwakar rightly points out that Gandhiji was a great man of action (Karmayogi), who derived his strength from an un-

shakeable faith in God. The God of Gandhiji was not any denominational God, but Truth as he saw it. For this truth, Gandhiji fought all his life, not with any material force but with soul-force, non-violence, or better still, love. Dr. Diwakar traces in considerable detail the influences, Indian and non-Indian, which moulded Gandhiji's philosophy. But he rightly points out that Gandhiji never borrowed anything which he did not transform with the magic touch of his personality and in the context of Indian life. It was such a transformation that gave to the world a new mode of social change—Satyagraha. In this age of nuclear weapons, as also of confused imitations, the need to study the nature, limits and potentialities of Satyagraha is very great indeed.

From the vantage-points of personal contact and deep understanding, Dr. Diwakar, in these lectures, makes an important contribution to such a study. They add a new perspective to our understanding of Gandhiji, and in so doing they enable us to understand ourselves—both as a nation and as individuals. Hence we are sure, these lectures will provide a stimulus to all thinkers on Indian life and thought.

August 10, 1963

D. C. PAVATE,

*Vice-Chancellor*

*Karnatak University, Dharwar*

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## CHAPTER I

### CULTURAL HERITAGE OF GANDHIJI

Gandhiji was born on the 2nd of October 1869 and died a martyr's death on the 30th of January 1948. His was one of the most eventful lives in modern times. His life is full of significance for the whole of humanity from several points of view. That he was the "architect of India's independence", is very important; but far more important is the fact that he evolved for the first time a non-violent technique of resistance to evil which could be substantially followed by vast masses. He also proved to the world that non-violent force could be organised and used for fighting economic and social evils. He demonstrated that non-violence could also be an effective instrument of social change. In today's world which is in constant dread of violent and wholesale destruction by nuclear warfare, and in modern human society which relies mainly on physical force for its governance and social changes, the birth of the cult of Satyagraha as a way of life and an instrument for fighting all evils is like a fresh 'breath of heaven' in a stifling atmosphere. The future of humanity depends largely on how we can counteract the tendency to use violence to solve our problems and substitute for it the power and technique of non-violence and love.

In the case of Gandhiji, non-violence or Ahimsa did not mean merely a negative virtue of 'non-injury' or non-hatred but the positive attitude of abounding love

## CHAPTER II

### INFLUENCES OTHER THAN INDIAN

I have briefly referred to the cultural heritage of Gandhiji. I have traced some of the most important trends of his thought and character to Indian origin. I mentioned that the Buddhistic and the Jain thought and philosophy were also Indian in origin and character and were included in Gandhiji's cultural heritage. Now, I would like to speak mainly about non-Indian influences on Gandhiji.

Just as it is impossible to squeeze into a small compass all the influences of Indian origin which moulded Gandhiji, it is impossible to tell briefly all that one has to say about his non-Indian influences. But one important thing I must repeat. Gandhiji was a multiple genius with an originality which was always fresh and unpredictable. He had a single and a simple ideal of living up to the truth of life of his own experience and conviction, and of fully realising it through love and non-violence alone.

I have deliberately used the words I have done in the above sentence. When I say 'truth of life', I mean not mere abstract or speculative or metaphysical truth arrived at by intellectual and logical processes; but I mean, over and above the Reality of life, the truth of daily human life, human affairs and human relationship. This does not mean at all that this truth

## CHAPTER III

### GANDHIJI'S GIFT TO SOCIAL DYNAMICS

I have already said that Gandhiji is not a philosopher in the ordinary sense and that he has not presented us with a worked out logical system of thought explaining the problems of existence. However, I have also said that he is a social philosopher in the sense that he has dealt with the problems of human society in a very comprehensive manner. Now I am going to deal with his most important contribution to what may be called 'Social Dynamics.' Gandhiji was par excellence a man of action, and therefore, whatever philosophy was taking shape in his mind had not much value for him unless it took a concrete form of action in life. His contribution to social dynamics arises out of his intense desire to see that human society was moulded on certain principles and that these principles actually worked and were not merely theoretical or intellectual.

Let us first try to understand what 'social dynamics' means. Dynamics is a term from physics and we cannot very easily connect the same with human society and social matters unless we train our mind to look upon society as a mass of moving energy or force with some laws of its own. Dynamics is the science of energy or force and social dynamics is the science of social forces. Social dynamics would mean the science of human forces operating in all social affairs.

