UNIT 13  LAND REFORMS AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL MEASURES

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13.1 INTRODUCTION

In earlier units, you have read that among the important cause of conflict at any level is sharing of material resources such as land. At societal level it is the non-fulfillment of basic human needs for the continuation of life. You might have read that John Galtung, in his theory of structural violence, asserts that violence is built into unequal, unjust and unrepresentative social structures. You have also read that peace is not just absence of conflict. Peace in the positive sense is characterised by the conditions of harmonious coexistence, human beings – individually and collectively – living a satisfied life without fear of violence both direct and structural. Therefore, for meaningful peace building strategies it is important that we seek to address the underlying causes of disputes, conflicts and crisis. It is necessary to ensure that these problems do not arise in the first place or if they do arise, they would not recur. This is required both at international and national levels to prevent inter-state and intra-state conflicts. In this unit, we will discuss some of the important techniques in the context of creating fair systems of distributing scarce resources and to meet basic human needs for survival and dignity which can lead to creation of conditions where in the first place occurrence of conflicts is prevented and second to ensure non-recurrence of the same if they exist.
Aims and Objectives

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- define the meaning of the terms non-fulfillment of basic needs and structural violence;
- appreciate the important of human security as strategy for conflict resolution and peace building;
- understand the method of land reforms as an important strategy to reduce inequalities and conflicts; and
- know some other development measures important to built a just and peaceful society.

13.2 DEPRIVATION AND CONFLICTS

In earlier units, you have read that among the root causes of conflict are sense of deprivation and not being accepted in society with dignity. These arise from frustration and deprivation. When in a society basic needs are not met and are out of reach of individuals, particularly groups, these cause frustration at times leading to violence. Even if there is no violence, differences between rich and poor, haves and have-nots, sense of deprivation, state’s inability to manage economic and social resources always contain conflict endangering situations. It means even in the situation of apparent peace, it is not positive peace. As is well known, the primary source of human behaviour is the satisfaction of human needs. These needs have to be satisfied within the social context. If the universal needs are not met in socially accepted ways, individuals/communities, and at times even states resort to violence in order to meet these needs. Therefore, as Quincy Wright defines the positive peace as the condition of a community in which order and justice prevail, internally among its members and externally in its relations with other communities.

Conflicts over material resources, have also been there, but have become serious in the present day world. Demands for land, water and other resources are growing rapidly due to increase in population and consumption. Gandhi had very aptly said, Earth provides enough to satisfy every person’s need but not for every person’s greed. This greed also causes presence of non-visible violence in apparent peaceful societies. This violence is known as structural violence.

13.2.1 Structural Violence

We understand by violence the acts of events that harm or kill individuals or groups. There also are acts that may apparently not harm individuals but hurt them both physically as well as psychologically. It may work on the body and soul. Such violence is known as structural violence. It is caused by socio-political structures and decisions that deprive people of their dignity, equality and thereby access to basic needs necessary for fulfilling their full potentials in life. In structural violence, the consequences of the acts may not be traced back to concrete persons as they may not be any particular person who directly harms other structures. These include sexism, racism, caste system as well as class based structures.

The social or structural violence is an important consequence of the abuse of the political and economic powers. An example of this is the caste system prevalent in many societies
particularly in South Asia, including India. The caste system forces people to accept a demeaning role from birth or the one which forces them to remain in demeaning patterns of life. In some societies religious, ethnic or cultural groups may be discriminated in matters of ownership and distribution of resources. Similarly, the unjust economic power structures create conditions due to which certain groups possess more capital than other groups and use their privileged status to exploit other groups.

Consequently, sections of society suffer from poverty, hunger, diseases and deprivation while small sections live in relative luxury.

Structural violence, though not physical, creates circumstances for direct violence and conflicts. The individuals and groups feeling that they have not received a fair share of the benefits and resources available in that society may rise in protest. On the other hand, socially and economically privileged may resort to coercion and violence of so-called lower caste, minorities or workers by refusing to accept their status. Such actions and reactions lead to caste violence, communal riots, labour unrest, lynching mobs, fights among delinquent gangs etc. As such for sustainable and positive peace in society as also for prevention of occurrence and recurrence of conflicts it is necessary to fulfill the basic requirements of masses and eliminate structural violence.

### 13.3 Human Security and Conflict Management

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that for sustainable positive peace and prevention and management of conflicts, it is necessary that both at international and domestic levels efforts need to be made for reducing the gap between rich and poor to extend basic human rights to all, to promote sustainable development and to advance a just and fair society which does not discriminate on grounds of caste, religion, race or gender. As Mahatma Gandhi said, there cannot be lasting peace unless there are equal opportunities for all.

According to Gandhiji, “You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself flaw in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economic system when your social arrangements are imperfect”.

Gandhiji believed that real peace cannot emerge unless the individuals cease to exploit one another. A peaceful community would aim at resolving conflicts by helping its neighbours, alleviate their economic problems and try to remain friendly with them. The other principle of peace is social justice. Peace cannot be established in a society where there are big class distinctions. To achieve the ideals of such a system for peace in recent past has emerged the vision of human security.

#### 13.3.1 Human Security

Various studies and developments in peace studies and conflict management have made it clear that many conflicts whether cross-border or within country exist, when important interests or needs of one or more parties are frustrated, threatened or remain unfulfilled. The notion of peace is linked with a reasonable standard of living and for recognition of identity and worth of human beings. This has come to be known as notion of human security. As Sabina Alkire argues, “the objective of human security is to safeguard the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats, in a way consistent with long term human fulfillment. It focuses on human lives and their protection from critical threats that
are of larger scale and threats that can repeat like diseases, epidemic, etc. It is the safeguard against threats in life like poverty, job insecurity, food insecurity, environmental degradation etc., which can cause severe damage to human development. Human security aims at human fulfillment, though it focuses only on selected human aspects of development and rights.

The concept of human security has vast scope in several areas of human life and endeavours.

Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq, one of the pioneers in the development of the human security notion, suggested that the scope of human security should be expanded to include threats and insecurities in the following seven areas:

1) **Economic Security**: Right to basic minimum income and productive work.

2) **Food Security**: Access to basic food, both physical and economic access, to all people all the time.

3) **Health Security**: Right to minimum protection from dangerous diseases and unhealthy life style.

4) **Environmental Security**: Protecting people from chronic ravages of nature and bad effects of abuse of nature like pollution, degradation of nature, etc.

5) **Personal Security**: Protection from physical violence from stronger people and groups including the state.

6) **Community Security**: Protection from disorders arising from loss of traditional relationship and human values.

7) **Political Security**: People’s establishing to enjoy basic and fundamental human rights necessary for a decent living.

The above are various aspects or elements of human right. Their prevalence may differ from country to country and from advanced to developing countries. In individual countries too there can be differences. As we know that in India and many other developing and less developed countries poverty is chronic and distribution of resources is very much unequal. Therefore, in such societies policies and programmes for economic betterment of the poor and removal of disparities are most essential. Governments in many countries have initiated various measures in that direction, but much more is required. Some important strategies in that direction are discussed below.

### 13.4 LAND REFORMS

Among the resource based conflicts quite serious are issues of rights of access to land. The roots of conflicts are numerous including: structural or historically-based inequalities; economic and social policies and patterns of growth and development; political or territorial disputes; communities in competition with commercial interests, contradictory regulations such as differences in legal and customary ways of managing or mediating land rights and others. As in the case of other forms of conflict, land issues are tied to a complex structure of power, vested economic interests and from historically symbolic attachments to systemic inequalities. Land has important economic and cultural significance to rural communities, particularly, indigenous and tribal peoples for whom cultural identity and survival is inextricably linked to their relationship with ancestral territories.
Whether caused by greed or grievances, land conflicts cause serious social dislocations; suspend or destroy income opportunities; create food insecurity; damage the environment and at times cause serious violence. Poor households bear the heaviest burdens of land-related conflicts for the simple reason that their daily needs and future livelihoods are directly tied to their property rights. These have a disproportionate impact on women, since women tend to already suffer more than men from weak legal systems, limited institutional capacities and traditional/customary practices. In tribal areas, the land and resources of local people are increasingly sought after by outside parties, bringing different understandings of development and conservation into conflict. Therefore, there always have been needs for practical ways to prevent, mitigate, resolve and transform land-related issues.

13.4.1 Land Reforms Measures

The relationship between land and conflicts are extra-ordinarily complex when it comes to land issues, economics, and politics are mixed together with traditions, culture, legal systems and public administration. For instance in India before independence there were three systems of land revenue administration – the Zamindari system, the ryotwari system and the mahalwari system, depending on who was responsible for the payment of rent to the government. In addition, system of community ownership also prevailed in many tribal areas. A number of programmes and policies can be and have been developed by governments to address issues of inequalities and marginalisation and mitigation of conflicts. One of these is land reform.

By land reforms is generally meant measures to help the poor, marginalised, landless farmers developing direct contact with the state in getting tenancy rights with security of tenure and regulated rents, and improving the land ownership, its size and methods of cultivation. The basic objectives of land reforms, introduced in India after independence, for instance were:

1) To remove such impediments to increase in agricultural production as arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past; and
2) To eliminate all forms of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system, to provide security for the tiller of soil and assure equality of status and opportunity to all sections of the rural population.

As regulation of ownership, tenures, revenues and rents are state responsibilities, it is primarily the governments that have to formulate and implement land reform policies and laws. Non-state agencies can play role as catalysts or moderations. All three organs of the government, the legislature, the executive and judiciary have roles in the tasks.

13.4.2 Land Reforms Methods

The basic aim of land reforms is to remove widespread disparities in land ownership, to establish just relationship between land owners and tillers, to manage land revenues and rents in regulated and just manners and provide incentives for agricultural production. Based on various measures formulated and implemented in India, some states in Africa and other countries various measures can be classified as below.

1) Abolition of intermediaries: This measure refers to the abolition of the systems of non-cultivator collectors of rents or owners of lands like that of zamindari system in India. Zamindars were intermediaries between cultivators and the government.
Practically, they were the owners. They collected the rent from the cultivating farmers and transferred it to the government after keeping a small share as remuneration. Zamindars had all the powers over the land. This led to the exploitation of farmers. Zamindars who practically had no part in cultivation could collect a significant proportion of farm income as rent. They enjoyed the patronage of the British colonial regime. After independence this system was abolished and direct relationship between state and cultivators were established.

2) **Tenancy Reforms**: These are measures for the following purposes:

   a) Regulation of rent to prevent the exploitation of tenant with exorbitant rents;

   b) Security of rent to guarantee permanent rights to tenants subject to a landlord’s right to resume minimum holding for his personal cultivation within a limited time; and

   c) To permit tenants to acquire ownership of their lands, on payment of moderate compensation to the landowners spread over a period of years,

3) **Reorganisation of agriculture**: This measure aims at improving agricultural production and productivity of farming. This may include

   a) Redistribution of land on grounds of equity and efficiency;

   b) Consolidation of holdings, for convenience and efficiency; and

   c) Cooperative farming, to get the benefit of economies of scale.

The above are some of the measures adopted in some countries of South Asia, Africa, South America and other parts of the world in post-colonial and post-conflict situations to strengthen conflict management systems by reducing widespread disparities in land holdings and providing a sense of partnership among the peasants and tillers. Yet many major challenges remain.

**13.4.3 Challenges and Limitations**

As you have already read above, the issues of land ownership and management are complex. In formulating and implementing policies, economics and politics are mixed together with social structures. Inspite of good intentions and laws, weak governance and institutional capacity particularly in enforcement agencies, property registration and judiciary may not produce desired results. Lack of appropriate information and coordination among government departments can lend to different agencies going different ways. Tensions frequently arise between approaches to development strategies particularly between production vs. redistribution priorities.

In recent years issues of food acquisition of land for urbanization, industrialisation and developmental purposes concerns of indigenous populations, their rehabilitation, compensation etc. have also become important land related issues. Further centralized, top-class decision making about land and natural resources, also, at times, create social conflicts.

The strategy and system of land reforms and tenure, thus, are inherently political. These are subject to significant power imbalances in social economic and political power within communities, between local people and national interests, between country and international agreements, foreign investment interests and forces of globalization. All have the ability to block decisions, moral claims on public sympathy and unequal access to legal protection.
Inspite of above mentioned challenges and difficulties, policies and strategies for land tenures and ownership are important, particularly in developing and least developed countries where larger sections of population still remain dependent on land and agriculture. There is need for changes in organisational cultures and working methods, skill building for local and national institutions and improved access to knowledge and information for all actors involved. In spite of challenges and difficulties states are trying to do their bit. The civil society has become active and peasants and tillers quite aware.

13.5 OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL MEASURES

In the beginning of this Unit, you have read that peace-building has a strongly preventive character as well. If the foundations are properly laid by efforts, to create fair systems of rules, fair ways of distributing scare resources, and to meet human needs for survival and dignity, then many potential conflicts situations, both national and international, can be managed well. Therefore, apart from measures like land reforms there also are required other development measures that reduce gap between rich and poor, promote sustainable development, fulfill basic material and social needs and eliminate discrimination based on caste, creed, race or gender. States and international community need to address these issues. Important of these can be described as follow:

13.5.1 Food Security

Food security refers to access for people, especially poor who are below poverty line to adequate food necessary for a normal life. It also means that people, especially poor, have the ability to pay in terms of purchasing power needed for purchasing the required quantity and quality of food. This assures that the human resources in the society get what is needed for a normal life and can be expected to contribute towards promoting economic growth and development of the society. The absence of food security can have disastrous consequences for the deprived people and the society even at international level.

In view of the rising demand for food and its scarcity particularly in developing countries there is need for expanding world food production and for equitable consumption. Some international efforts in this direction have emerged. At national level States are making efforts. In India measures like the Public Distribution System (PDS), Mid-day Meals Scheme for children, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), etc. have been formulated to address the problem. The government has also enacted National Food Security Act to guarantee availability of food to the poor. Needless to say as a necessary measure to prevent and reduce conflicts food security challenges need to be effectively addressed at all levels and be made most important aspect of development strategies.

13.5.2 Economic Security

Food security, fulfillment of basic material needs and a dignified living needs reasonable income. An assured such income is known as economic security. This is possible only with productive and remunerative work. In other words gainful employment is among the most essential elements of development. We can very well see that unemployment problems are among important causes of social, ethnic, communal and political conflicts. It is, therefore, important that development strategies need to be oriented towards generation of employment and provision of basic necessities of all in the society.
13.5.3 Gender Security

One aspect of structural violence in many societies is marginalisation of women in many societies. They are marginalised by the social attitudes, developmental process and apathy of the state. Lack of access for facilities and opportunities can also lead to marginalisation. Women therefore, are denied opportunities for self development and accomplishment. They are also worst victims of violence and conflicts, victims of cruel and degrading practices such as rape. Any development strategy to be meaningful needs to be sensitive to the empowerment of women, as also other marginalised sections of society. Policies and schemes for their education, participation and access, poor conditions of women especially rural women, in employment, earnings, and living needs to be addressed. Gender equality is a necessary precondition for peace in its positive sense, security and prosperity in comprehensive way.

13.5.4 Inclusive Security

As already discussed widespread inequalities, in any society between individuals, groups, communities, regions, gender etc. are among the root causes of social conflicts and violence. Realisation of this has given rise to the necessity of inclusive growth and socio-economic system with human face. Inclusive growth means a growth process which yields broad-based benefits and ensures equality of opportunity for all. The United National Development Programme (UNDP) has defined inclusive growth as “the process and the outcome where all groups of people have participated in the organisation of growth and have benefitted equitably from it. In other words, inclusive growth includes all sections as beneficiaries as well as partners in growth. Inclusion of the excluded is embedded in the growth process. For instance in Indian context it will mean that growth would imply wherein the distribution of income moves in favour of the poor and in social context growth is accompanied by socio-political processes that simultaneously systematically break the social barriers of discrimination, based on caste, gender, religion and ethnicity.

All the above mentioned measures in one way or the other are various aspects of the vision of human security which is essential for a meaningful and sustained peace at all levels, international, national, local and even house-hold. Human security should focus on the achievable goals of decreasing individual vulnerability to violent conflict, rather than broadly defined goals of economic and social development.

This means preference for prevention rather than management of conflicts. It also means to understand the root causes of conflicts when these occur and prevent them from recurrence after management.

13.6 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have read about the importance of removal and reducing the root causes of conflicts. Both at international level and more so at domestic level, these causes include sharing of material resources as land, non-fulfillment of basic human needs for the continuation and propagation of life. Peace in positive sense is characterised by the conditions of harmonious coexistence, human beings – individually and collectively – living a satisfied life without fears of violence both direct and structural.

For sustainable positive peace and prevention and management of conflicts, it is necessary that efforts are made for reducing the gap between rich and poor, to extend basic human rights to all, to promote sustainable development and to advance a just and fair society.
which provides equal opportunities to all. The importance of providing reasonable standard of living and for recognition of identity and worth of human beings has come to be known as human security. It includes: economic security; food security; health security; environmental security; personal security; community security and political security.

Governments need to initiate and in many cases have initiated measures to achieve the ideals of human security. Among various societies, one important is land reforms as issues related to access to land are among the basic causes of conflict. By land reforms is generally meant measures to help poor, marginalised, landless farmers. The measures include: abolition of intermediaries, tenancy reforms and reorganisation of agriculture.

In addition to land reforms development measures in other aspects of human security are also important. These areas may include food security, economic security, gender security, inclusive growth and other. These are essential for a meaningful and sustained peace at all levels. Prevention rather than management of conflicts needs to be preferred. Human security measures and inclusive growth are directed towards that.

### 13.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by structural violence?
2. Describe the linkage between human security and conflict management.
3. Describe the main objectives and methods of land reforms.
4. Why are food and economic security important for peace?
5. What is meant by inclusive growth?

### SUGGESTED READINGS


14.1 Introduction

Aims and Objectives

14.2 A Brief History

14.3 Necessity of Interreligious Dialogue

14.4 Forms/Kinds of Interreligious Dialogue
   14.4.1 The Dialogue of Life
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14.6 Interreligious/Interfaith Organisations
   14.6.1 United Nations Support

14.7 Importance of Interreligious Dialogue

14.8 Criticism of Interreligious/Interfaith Dialogue

14.9 Summary

14.10 Terminal Questions

Suggested Readings

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Interreligious dialogue, also referred to as interfaith dialogue, is about people of different faiths coming to a mutual understanding and respect that allows them to live and cooperate with each other in spite of their differences. In other words it refers to cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions (i.e., “faiths”) and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both the individual and institutional levels. It is distinct from syncretism or alternative religion, in that dialogue often involves promoting understanding between different religions or beliefs to increase acceptance of others, rather than to synthesize new beliefs. Through such dialogues interfaith differences, that many a time cause conflicts, can reasonably be reduced.

Some interfaith dialogues have more recently adopted the name inter-belief dialogue, (Mehta: 2014) while other proponents have proposed the term inter-path dialogue, to avoid implicitly excluding atheists, agnostics, humanists, and others with no religious faith but with ethical or philosophical beliefs, as well as to be more accurate concerning many world religions that do not place the same emphasis on “faith” as do some Western religions. Similarly, pluralistic rationalistic groups have hosted public reasoning dialogues to
transcend all worldviews (whether religious, cultural or political), termed Trans belief dialogue (Harvard: 2012). In this unit we will discuss various aspects of this.

**Aims and Objectives**

After studying this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- The meaning and Concept of Inter-religious Dialogue;
- importance of Inter-religious Dialogue;
- the policies of religions to Inter-faith Dialogue; and
- interreligious/interfaith organisations.

### 14.2 A BRIEF HISTORY

The history of interfaith dialogue is as ancient as religion itself. When not at war with their neighbours, human beings have made an effort to understand them (not least because understanding is a strategy for defense, but also because for as long as there is dialogue wars are delayed). History records many examples of interfaith initiatives and dialogue throughout the ages. The Emperor Akbar the Great, for example, encouraged tolerance in Mughal India, a diverse nation with people of various faith backgrounds, including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Christianity. Religious pluralism can also be seen in other historical contexts.

There have been several meetings referred to as a Parliament of the World’s Religions, most notably the World Parliament of Religions of 1893, the first attempt to create a global dialogue between religions. The event was celebrated by another conference on its centenary in 1993. This led to a new series of conferences under the official title “Parliament of the World’s Religions”. (http://www.parliamentofreligions) Early 20th Century – dialogue started to take place between the Abrahamic faiths - Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Bahá’í. In 1965 - The Roman Catholic Church issued the Vatican II document *Nostra aetate*, instituting major policy changes in the Catholic Church’s policy towards non-Christian religions. On October 13, 2007 Muslims expanded their message. In *A Common Word between Us and You*, 138 Muslim scholars, clerics and intellectuals unanimously came together for the first time since the days of the Prophet[s] to declare the common ground between Christianity and Islam. In July 2008 - A historic interfaith dialogue conference was initiated by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to solve world problems through concord instead of conflict. In January 2009, at Gujarat’s Mahuva, the Dalai Lama inaugurated an interfaith “World Religions-Dialogue and Symphony” conference. All those are efforts to avoid conflicts by better understanding each other.

### 14.3 NECESSITY OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Interreligious dialogue is necessary for peace. Plato says: “He seems to me to have thought the world foolish in not understanding that all are always at war with one another; and if in war there ought to be common men and certain persons regularly appointed under others to protect an army, they should be continued in peace”. (Chroust: 1947, 47) This means that it is peace we need, not war. Commonly people say that if you want peace, you must prepare for war and if you want peace, you must prepare for peace. When we say that Interreligious dialogue is necessary we mean that without it we cannot
reach to the end or with it, we can reach to the end with fewer difficulties. The end can be understood as peace or justice or harmony or coexistence or cooperation. Interreligious dialogue, according to Lobo (2002), is not man’s made activity but God’s. The human person is dialogical individual whose whole life is marked by dialogue with God, with his fellow humans and with the world/creation. The very life of God is dialogical. So it becomes necessary that we live the life of God because that is the vocation of men and women. Both the inner nature of God and the outer relationships of God with humans are profoundly dialogical. (Lobo: 2002) It goes well with the pedagogy of God; so it must be man’s pedagogy.

14.4 FORMS/KINDS OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Dialogue is a means of building the openness, understanding and trust needed to live and cooperate with each other despite their differences. It can take place in different ways and on different levels. These are briefly described here:

14.4.1 The Dialogue of Life

It can be called “unarticulated dialogue” because it could take place in all the ordinary interactions and interrelations between people of different religions, without a premeditated plan or structure. This is where people strive to live in an open and neighbourly spirit, the ordinary everyday business of getting on with each other, of being good neighbours and living in peace and harmony. This can be hard enough for a people of a common background but, where religious and cultural differences exist, more effort is needed. It takes place in our homes, families, villages, schools, towns and cities. Many ordinary but important things happen when we live, work, visit and study with people of different faiths. There will be a need to make an effort to reach out, to understand, to break down our own prejudices and to overcome the barriers, stereotypes and suspicions that are in us all. This will not be easy and it will require perseverance. We will have to be patient, be willing to listen and to accept that people are different, or have a world-view different from our own. To live in peace as our faith requires demands this effort.

14.4.2 The Dialogue of Common Action/Social Dialogue

Cardinal Arinze calls it “dialogue of action”. This happens when people of different religions cooperate and involve themselves in joint projects for a common good or common concern, such as building a road, bridge, a hospital or a center for learning. For instance, there are some joint organisations of Christians and Muslims working for the promotion of human rights and eradication of deceases (Arinze: 1990).

14.4.3 Theological Dialogue or Discourse

This takes place on academic or official levels between experts, theologians and religious leaders. This kind of dialogue helps to clarify issues, to create greater understanding and remove prejudices. By establishing links and relationships between leaders, such dialogue can facilitate and enable practical cooperation and action on the other levels. The aim of this exchange is not to reach a common belief, but rather to clarify what each partner believes, to appreciate each other’s spiritual values and to have a better understanding of differences. Here, specialists or theologians in various religions listen to one another, present the doctrines, beliefs and practices of their respective religions – not in a self-protective way but in a well-articulated manner, discover and rediscover their common
points and differences. With the use of science and technology, they find a consensus where they can meet in order to face the challenges of the modern world.

14.4.4 The Dialogue of Religious Experience

Prayer and meditation, as fundamental expressions of religious faith, could be Interreligious meeting point because there are a lot of experiences to share in different traditions. These two experiences allow someone to start a journey towards the other; it takes place, particularly among believers who adore the same God (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). This involves interfaith prayers and also occasions when spirituality and religious texts are studied by members of both faiths. This kind of dialogue also requires a level of expertise.

Dialogue, in all its forms, involves a certain amount of patience and humility. Differences exist between us, but we share a common humanity and a wish to serve the God who made us. Dialogue is living our faith in the presence of people of other faiths. It is a means of loving neighbours who are not of my faith by reaching out to them in a spirit of openness and tolerance. In doing this, we do not have to engage in deep theological debate or depart from what we hold true. We do however, have to respect, cooperate, and live in peace with each other. It will take time to build up relationships, to gain understanding, and to come to trust one another. Dialogue should begin by focusing on things we have in common and on practical things we can do together. There are obstacles that prevent or make dialogue difficult. These need to be acknowledged and challenged.

14.5 OBSTACLES TO DIALOGUE

Interreligious dialogue is possible but also difficult because of some hindrances. May be that is why Jean-Mary Gaudel said that the highest form of dialogue will always be the cross, not as a dogma, but as a mystery which we cannot avoid. Dialogue with other Religions goes with some obstacles. Many scholars have listed such as: paucity of deep knowledge of one’s religion, deficiency of the knowledge of other religions, fear of the unknown, suspicion, lack of self-critical assessment, superiority and inferiority complexes, disparity between those taking part in dialogue, inequality in theological development. Neglect of natural law, confusion between faith and reason, lack of theological and metaphysical language that can be used to explain certain truths. Nowadays, the presence of independent preachers constitutes an obstacle. Again, when someone does not elevate the status of other religions to the level of world religions it could be an obstacle (Capalla: 2003). We are not saying that all religions are the same.

If we cannot avoid these obstacles in order to meet, we can at least understand them and create avenues whereby we can focus on what unites and suspend what divides. Perhaps we need also a background, which can help us to meet though we are different. Just knowing who we are, that we are all human beings, that we are all citizens of this world, that we are Capax Dei could be a solid background for dialogue.

14.5.1 Risks of Interreligious Dialogue

The involvement of the Church into Interreligious dialogue also involves some risks, (1) because of the confusion that may arise as someone articulates his faith very well. This comes up in theological dialogue where the partner seems to be stronger and more convincing. There is, therefore, a risk of losing faith. Thus, someone must be well-prepared and well-educated before he or she engages into this form of dialogue (2)
sometimes, because of the similarities and convergences found in different religions, someone may fall into a relativism and consider all religions as the same. Different religions have different tenets. (3) There is also the risk of falling into syncretism when different tenets of different religions are put together or mixed to form a new religion. This occurs in dialogue of experience where, for instance, someone prays or dresses in a way that is not his. Rites and building styles are very much vulnerable. (4) It is the nature of man to look for more satisfying things. People involved in dialogue with other religions, particularly those who are deeply grounded in their faith, may find new pasture, cling to it and remain there. So there is a risk of losing some of members of a given religion. (5) The last risk could be likened to indifferentism whereby too much contact with different beliefs may lead someone to loose belief in any one religion. He may doubt on all religions and consider all as nonsense.

14.5.2 Preconditions for Meaningful Interfaith Dialogue

A Boston College theologian, Catherine Cornille, identifies five preconditions for any meaningful interfaith dialogue: humility (causes a disturbance of one’s view of other religions), commitment (causes a commitment to faith that simultaneously rejects intolerance to other faiths), interconnection (causes the recognition of shared common challenges such as the breakdown of families), empathy (causes one to view another religion from its own perspective), and most importantly hospitality (like the tent of Abraham, that was open on all four sides as a sign of hospitality to any new comer). Breaking down the walls that divide faiths while respecting the uniqueness of each tradition requires the courageous embrace of all these preconditions (Balcomb: 2012, 40-49).

14.6 INTERRELIGIOUS/INTERFAITH ORGANISATIONS

There have come up some organisations which have been engaged encouraging and organising inter-faith dialogues at various levels. Following are the better knows:

**Interfaith Encounter Association (IEA)** was established in 2001 and works to build genuine coexistence and sustainable peace, through joint community building on the grassroots level, using interactive interfaith dialogue as its vehicle. The apolitical and all-inclusive approach of the organisation and its activities continuously form the human infrastructure for peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East.

**Messiah Foundation International** is an interfaith organisation which aims to promote mutual love, peace and understanding between members of all religions and faiths through the spiritual sciences taught by Ra Gohar Shahi. MFI has centres across the globe, including in the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Japan.

**Project Interfaith** is a non-profit organisation that aims to grow understanding, respect and relationships among people of all faiths, beliefs and cultures. The goals of the organisation are approached through online media resources (particularly Ravel Unravel) as well as community-building programs that educate and engage a variety of audiences on issues of faith, religion, identity, interfaith relations, and religious and cultural diversity.

**Insight Film Festival** is a biannual interfaith Community Interest Company that exists to encourage filmmakers throughout the world to make films about ‘faith’. It creates events and spaces where such films can be displayed, discussed and celebrated. It welcomes participants from all faith backgrounds and none, and focuses particularly on young
filmmakers. In doing so, it wants to make positive contributions to understanding, respect and community cohesion. (Public Research Institute: 2012)

**United Religions Initiative (URI)** was founded in 2000 to promote daily, lasting interfaith cooperation, end religiously motivated violence, and create cultures of peace, justice, and healing for the Earth and all living beings. With hundreds of thousands of members in 80+ countries representing over 200 religions and indigenous traditions, URI uses “cooperation circles” to promote dialogue and action.

**The Jordan Interfaith Co-existence Research Centre** is a Jordanian non-governmental organisation for promoting peaceful religious coexistence. It fosters grassroots interfaith dialogue and works on creating interreligious harmony.

**Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL)** is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation registered under the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs that transcends differences in culture, belief and region to engage leaders and youth in sustainable and comprehensive solutions for peace. To that end, HWPL is committed to community development through volunteer outreach, women advocacy, and cultural and religious exchange through International Women’s Peace Group (IWPG) and youth engagement through International Peace Youth Group (IPYG).

**WARP Summit and a Religious Dialogue for Peace.** While it may, in most cases be too simplistic to say that ideological differences based on religion or culture is the cause of war in our world today, it is not too much to say that these differences are exploited to heighten the community’s propensity for violent behaviour.

Through the World Alliance of Religions Peace Summit, HWPL seeks to create a forum for dialogue centering on the creation of a commonly acceptable value-system between secular and religious communities in all socio-political sectors of our diverse societies. Such a value system will form the basis for the creation of peace agreements and a universally applicable constitution of interfaith relations, as well as education materials which can be used across the spectrum of humanity’s diversity to begin revolutionising the basic precepts of our cultures and ideologies which provide the central tenants promoting conflict and violent behaviour.

The above are some of the well known organisations engaged in and encouraging interfaith dialogue. There are many others at country specific levels, regional levels and international levels that are continuously working for peace and conflict resolutions through mutual understanding.

### 14.6.1 United Nations Support

In 2010, HM King Abdullah II addressed the 65th UN General Assembly and proposed the idea for a ‘World Interfaith Harmony Week’ to further broaden his goals of faith-driven world harmony by extending his call beyond the Muslim and Christian community to include people of all beliefs, those with no set religious beliefs as well. A few weeks later, HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad presented the proposal to the UN General Assembly, where it was adopted unanimously as a UN Observance Event.

The first week of February, every year, has been declared a UN World Interfaith Harmony Week. The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre released a document which summarises the key events leading up to the UN resolution as well as documenting some Letters of Support and Events held in honour of the week.
14.7 IMPORTANCE OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Interreligious dialogue increases the understanding of the beliefs and practices of other religions. This enhanced understanding can lead to a more peaceable coexistence in the pluralistic culture of the 21st century. Through sustainable and respectful relationships based on dialogue and engagement, conflicts resulting from or exacerbated by fear, disrespect and misunderstanding between communities are less likely to occur, and, when they do, are less likely to devolve into violence. As people of different religious communities encounter each other in neighborhoods where they live, in mutual service, in schools, in government, and in civic activities, the foundations established through dialogue enables and empowers these people to know the areas in which mutual activity can ease their living and working together in society, as well as to know in advance the areas in which religious differences can make Mutual undertakings difficult. Because interreligious dialogue will inevitably bring to the surface the differences between religions, the discussants are forced to examine their own beliefs in order to support their stated positions. This examination will ultimately increase self-understanding.

14.8 CRITICISM OF INTERRELIGIOUS/INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

The group Hizb ut-Tahrir rejects the concept of interfaith dialogue, stating that it is a western tool to enforce non-Islamic policies in the Islamic world. Many Traditionalist Catholics, not merely Sedevacantists or the Society of St. Pius X, are critical of interfaith dialogue as a harmful novelty arising after the Second Vatican Council, which is said to have altered the previous notion of the Catholic Church's supremacy over other religious groups or bodies, as well as demoted traditional practices associated with traditional Roman Catholicism. In addition, these Catholics contend that, for the sake of collegial peace, tolerance and mutual understanding, interreligious dialogue devalues the divinity of Jesus Christ and the revelation of the Triune God by placing Christianity on the same footing as other religions that worship other deities.

According to some Hindu critics, it has been argued that the so-called interfaith “dialogue ... has [in fact] become the harbinger of violence. This is not because ‘outsiders’ have studied Hinduism or because the Hindu participants are religious ‘fundamentalists’ but because of the logical requirements of such a dialogue.” With a detailed analysis of “two examples from Hinduism studies”, S. N. Balagangadhara and Sarah Claerhout argue that, “in certain dialogical situations, the requirements of reason conflict with the requirements of morality”. (Balagangadhara: 2008)

14.9 SUMMARY

Inter-religious/inter-faith dialogues have emerged as important means to reduce religious, ethnic and communal conflicts. Interfaith dialogue is not just words or talk. It includes human interaction and relationships. It can take place between individuals and communities and on many levels. For example, between neighbours, in schools and in our places of work – it can take place in both formal and informal settings. Normal life means that we come into daily contact with each other. Dialogue therefore, is not just something that takes place on an official or academic level only – it is part of daily life during which different cultural and religious groups interact with each other directly, and where tensions between them are the most tangible.
Throughout the world there are local, regional, national and international interfaith initiatives; many are formally or informally linked and constitute larger networks or federations. The often quoted “There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions” was formulated by Dr. Hans Kung, a Professor of Ecumenical Theology and President of the Global Ethic Foundation.

At present, many people are simply unaware of the need for interreligious dialogue. Some are not interested while others actively oppose interfaith cooperation. Multi-religious and multicultural nature of society is still a relatively new experience. Therefore, for many, the need to make an effort in order to ensure that we live together in peace and justice has not yet been fully realised. As people of faith and as people who wish to build social harmony and justice, we have a role to both raise awareness of this need and to actively respond to it.

14.10 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1) What is the necessity of interreligious dialogue?

2) Examine the obstacles to interreligious dialogue and risks involved in it.

3) What are preconditions for interreligious dialogue?

SUGGESTED READINGS


Prior to the industrial revolution, conflict and issues of contention were addressed in the form of town meetings, or under the auspices of councils before the public. Here all members of a community or society had the opportunity to voice their views or positions on the various issues affecting them. Our societies are no longer structured in this way and many of our social and political ideas, beliefs and hopes have no arenas in which to be expressed. This becomes particularly difficult, when those views are not in line with the conventional, applied doctrines that are prevalent in the culture. These views often become polarised against the mainstream, and become marginalised partly due to the lack of a forum in which they can be addressed.

Dialogues can be viewed as one means – if not the classical one – of dealing constructively with conflicts. As one popular formula puts it: “As long as you’re talking, you cannot be shooting”. “What better method is there of resolving a contentious issue”, so runs another down-to-earth, commonsense observation, “than through an honest exchange of views?” “And”, says discourse ethics, “what other way is there of finding lasting solutions to the numerous political-cum-moral conflicts in an interdependent and pluralistic world, than through “practical discourse between the affected parties” (Apel, 1990).

David Matthews in his introduction to the study Citizens and Politics (1991) argues that citizens long to restore the integrity and vitality of public discussion and realise that in
order to participate in the governance of society, they must take part in open discussion, both among themselves and with public officials. He asserts that public dialogue is the natural home for democratic politics. He maintains that citizens want forums which encourage free and open discussion in which their concerns can be listened to. Let us, in this unit, have a look on the process and utility of dialogue.

**Aims and Objectives**

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- know the meaning and concept of dialogue;
- understand characteristics and classifications of dialogue;
- distinguish between debate and dialogue; and
- appreciate the importance of dialogue among parties in conflict.

### 15.2 WHAT IS DIALOGUE?

Dialogue is an open-ended communication between conflict parties that is facilitated or moderated by a third party, in order to foster mutual recognition, understanding, empathy and trust. It is differently organised and includes images or “encodings” (symbols) and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations (traditions), contemporaries, and formed by the individuals themselves (modern). It is constructive engagement between two or more parties to forge a mutually acceptable solution to a problem. It involves informed conversation and communication on a specific issue with the aims of developing mutual trust, forging cooperation, and devising concerted action to address an issue of contention or conflict.

The word dialogue is a combination of the two Greek words: *dia*, meaning “through,” and *logos*, interpreted as “word or meaning.” To engage in dialogue is therefore to engage in making meaning through the spoken/written word (Maranhao 1990, 276).

Hence dialogue, as Anderson, Cissna and Arnett, point out, is a speech across, between, or through. Within contemporary literature there appear to be four conceptions of dialogue:

- Dialogue as a form of human meeting or relationship
- Dialogue as the study of the intricacies of human conversation
- Dialogue as a cultural form of human knowing
- Dialogue as a means of understanding and interpreting text.

Dialogue is a specific type of conflict intervention strategy. It is grounded in conflict resolution through controlled communication by the conflict parties. Dialogue is an open-ended communication between conflict parties that is facilitated or moderated by a third party, in order to foster mutual recognition, understanding, empathy and trust. The goal of dialogue is usually simply improving interpersonal understanding and trust (Conflict Research Consortium – CRH).

Becker, Chasin, Chasin, Herzig and Roth (1991) talk of dialogue as an exchange of perspectives, experiences and beliefs in which people speak and listen openly and
respectfully. Participants speak as unique individuals about their own beliefs and experiences, reveal their uncertainties as well as certainties, and try to understand one another. As people in dialogue listen to each other, relationship shifts often occur and differences between people become less frightening. Old patterns of retaliation lose their appeal as the experience of dialogue leaves people feeling listened to and respected, rather than beaten and embittered, or victorious and braced for backlash.

15.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF DIALOGUE

According to Anderson (1994) the characteristics of dialogue, are seen as multifold. They include:

a) immediacy of presence;

b) emergent unanticipated consequences;

c) recognition of unknown otherness;

d) a collaborative orientation;

e) genuineness and

f) authenticity.

15.4 CLASSIFICATION OF DIALOGUE

The recent literature gives particular attention to two ways of classifying dialogues: First, the identification of ideal types of dialogue and, second, the differentiation of phases according to the typical steps of interaction and communication which constitute a constructive process of dialogue. Jay Rothman (1998) has proposed classifying approaches to dialogue in inter-group conflicts into three or four ideal types:

Whether the commonest form of interchange actually merits the name dialogue is doubtful: in a positional dialogue the parties articulate their respective views – which may range from differing to diametrically oppose – as positions and attitudes that merely require acknowledgement. As in a parliamentary debate, communication serves primarily to score points, as one argument is set against the other.

In the case of human-relations dialogue the differences of opinion on the substantive issues are relegated to a secondary place and work is instead done at the relational level, focusing on the causes of misunderstandings and the stereotypes which typically arise between the parties. These kinds of dialogues are often preceded by preparatory training sessions on basic mechanisms of perception and interaction in groups. The objectives are mutual acknowledgement of the person and increased respect by each party for the other. What impact this might have in terms of the substance of the conflict is an open question.

Activist dialogue goes one step further. The subjects at issue are sorted and analysed in order to identify common ground, and/or to explore how the parties might contain their dispute through joint action.

The most ambitious approach is the problem-solving dialogue, in which the disputants organise their communication in such a way that they are able to systematically work through the substance of their differences. Where conflicts are highly escalated, this kind
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of dialogue will generally require the presence of a third party as a co-actor – or indeed as an initiator.

15.4.1 The Phases

These approaches are more than just a useful way of classifying dialogues according to their prevailing forms of interaction. Taken together, they also emphasize different yet complementary elements of dealing constructively with conflicts through dialogue. In a modified form, one can also conceptualize the different types of dialogues as steps in a process of enhancing the quality of communication and interaction between the dialogue partners as shown in Figure 15.1. Adherents of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Movement have put forward a template of four phases for responding to conflicts through communication:

- The first phase is concerned with formulating the differing points of view of the various parties as clearly as possible, securing mutual acknowledgement of these, as well as identifying the substance of the conflict.
- The focus in the second phase is on reflection on the underlying needs and fears of the participating actors, their values, their experiences of conflict and their hopes. Ideally, it should also be possible, in this phase, to develop approaches for securing personal acknowledgement of and insight into the conflicting biographies of the other side.
- The third phase is devoted to the identification of shared interests and similar needs and fears. It can also be aimed at the initiation of practical cooperation on less controversial issues.
- In most cases the fourth phase requires a lengthy period of preparation, and also personal confidence-building. It involves discussing approaches and ideas for addressing the substantive issues in dispute, reflecting on how these approaches and ideas might be implemented and then initiating practical measures for their resolution.

![Figure 15.1: Levels of Cooperation in Dialogue Processes](source: McCartney 1986)
In the case of protracted conflicts, dialogues between disputing groups will often be structured as a series of dialogue events, sometimes extending over a period of many months or even years. Several models help to conceptualise constructive developments for such a series of events. One of these focuses especially on the character of the relationship between the parties and the success of the joint efforts as the key characteristics, thus interpreting progress as a process of relationship building, problem solving and collaborative action. This according to McCartney includes:

- Contact and confidence building;
- Empathy for the other side;
- Joint analysis of conflict issues;
- Explorative problem solving;
- Joint activities in the possibility that the dialogue might feed into official negotiations or pre-negotiations.

15.4.2 Organised Group Encounters

Most dialogues take the form of organised group encounters of a size that allows face-to-face communication. They are usually conducted with persons below top leadership-level. They are therefore not so much official negotiations as a form of political preliminaries. As a rule, responsibility for the initiation, organisation, and direction of the meetings is assumed by a third party. This third party need not come from outside the country; it can also consist of moderate individuals from inside the conflict region.

In the case of highly escalated disputes, or in divided societies, organising a peaceful coming together will be difficult, with interveners often finding themselves unable to successfully get through even the first phase. In the case of protracted conflicts, several meetings will likely be necessary, and interveners must always allow for the possibility of slipping back to an earlier phase. The need for time, as well as the general fragility of the process, demand from the organisers of dialogue projects a great deal of persistence, as well as a compelling long-term vision and the necessary resources.

The basic idea behind dialogue-based meetings is not new. It was given its initiation in post-1945 Europe, in the context of the paradigm of international intercultural understanding. Then, the prime target group was young people. What drove the endeavour was the conviction that increased contact and interaction between individuals from different backgrounds could help eliminate prejudices and enemy images and create trans-frontier loyalties. Since then, this fairly naïve contact hypothesis 'has been supplanted by more sophisticated concepts of intercultural learning'(Otten/Treuheit, 1994).

Dialogue-based meetings intended expressly to deal with ethno-political conflicts are a more recent phenomenon, but they draw on similar beliefs. Probably the most influential school of instruction in these methods is the ‘interactive conflict-resolution’ or ‘interactive problem-solving’ movement (Mitchell and Banks 1996). The roots of this approach go back to the 1960s, when various scholar/practitioners began to invite influential representatives of conflicting parties to workshops, in order either to then guide them through the above-mentioned four phases of constructive dialogue in a quasi-academic exercise, or to facilitate this process. Experience with the use of this approach has now been gathered in a number of different crisis regions.
15.5 INTRODUCTION OF DIALOGUE

After understanding the meaning, characteristics, classification and different phases of dialogue, it is very important to understand the importance of dialogue. It is an inclusive process. Dialogue brings together a diverse set of voices to create a microcosm of the larger society. To bring about sustainable change, people have to develop a sense of joint ownership of the process and become stakeholders in identifying new approaches to address common challenges.

- **It entails learning, not just talking.** The process is not just about sitting around a table, but changing the way people talk, think and communicate with one another. Unlike other forms of discussion, dialogue requires self-reflection, spirit of inquiry and personal change to be present. Parties’ willingness to address the root causes of a crisis, not just the symptoms on the surface. For instance, the 1979 Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel may have ended the armed conflict, but arguably created no qualitative “below-the-waterline” difference in the relationship between their people. That is, there was peace (understood as the absence of violence) but no personal change (which would lead to genuine and sustainable peace).

- **Recognizes one another’s humanity.** Parties must be willing to show empathy toward one another, recognize differences as well as areas of common ground, and demonstrate a capacity for change. To foster this kind of human interaction, a respectful and neutral setting – or “safe space” – is preferred.

- **Dialogue stresses a long-term perspective.** Other forms of conversation tend to focus on the symptoms rather than the root causes of problems. To find sustainable solutions requires time and patience. The process can be painstakingly slow and incremental, lasting anywhere from ten minutes to ten years—one-off interventions very often do not work to address deeply-rooted causes of conflict or to fully deal with complex issues.

Internal division makes external accommodation between conflict parties more difficult. So this is the starting point. The strategic engagement of discourses begins, not with external dialogue between conflict parties, but with inclusive dialogue within them.

Inclusive internal dialogue is not hermeneutic (mutual understanding with the other), but strategic (how to win). Full account is taken of the systemic complexity of the conflict environment, but the aim is to determine whether there can be a coherent national plan, how the internal unity required to formulate and execute it is to be attained, and what the most effective resulting strategy will be. This is another reason why such dialogue can survive when other forms of communication break-down.

15.6 DEBATE VS DIALOGUE

The difference between debate and dialogue is the process by which a person(s) communicates. Debate is about proving your opponent wrong, while dialogue is more about expressing a viewpoint and trying to get your opponent to agree. In both cases you are trying to get someone to agree with you, but the method is different. Dialogue may not produce as much heat as debate, but it generates a great deal more light.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dialogue</strong></th>
<th><strong>Debate</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue is collaborative: two or more sides work together toward a common understanding.</td>
<td>Debate is oppositional: two sides oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, finding common ground is the goal.</td>
<td>In debate, winning is the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one listens to the other side(s) in order to understand, find meaning and find agreement.</td>
<td>In debate, one listens to the other side in order to find flaws and to counter its arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant’s point of view.</td>
<td>Debate affirms a participant's own point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue reveals assumptions for re-evaluation.</td>
<td>Debate defends assumptions as truth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dialogue causes introspection on one’s own position.</td>
<td>Debate causes critique of the other position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue opens the possibility of reaching a better solution than any of the original solutions.</td>
<td>Debate defends one's own positions as the best solution and excludes other solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude: openness to being wrong and an openness to change.</td>
<td>Debate creates a close-minded attitude, a determination to be right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one submits one’s best thinking, knowing that other people's reflections will help improve it rather than destroy it.</td>
<td>In debate, one submits one's best thinking and defends it against challenge to show that it is right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one's beliefs in order to be receptive to other points of view.</td>
<td>Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one's beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one searches for basic agreements.</td>
<td>In debate, one searches for glaring differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one searches for strengths in the other positions.</td>
<td>In debate one searches for flaws and weaknesses in the other position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue involves a real concern for the other person and seeks to not alienate or offend.</td>
<td>Debate involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relation-ships and often belittles or deprecates the other person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.</td>
<td>Debate assumes that there is a right answer and that someone has it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue remains open-ended.</td>
<td>Debate implies a conclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The parties to a dialogue aim not to defeat one another, but to enlighten one another. It is not a conflict, but a shared inquiry. In contrast to the debater’s zero-sum game, in which every victory must be accompanied by a loss, dialogue permits both parties to emerge from their discussion enriched. Both can benefit from a shared pursuit of enlightenment.

15.7 METHODS OTHER THAN DIALOGUE

Blake and Mouton presented five general techniques for resolving conflict: withdrawing, smoothing, forcing, compromising, and collaborating/confronting/problem solving (to as negotiating).

**Withdrawing** involves avoiding, denying, giving up, pulling out, or retreating and as such constitutes a refusal to deal with the conflict by ignoring it as much as possible. This style is appropriate when a cooling-off period is needed to gain better understanding of the conflict situation and also when the other party is both unassertive and uncooperative. Withdrawal, a passive, stopgap way of handling conflict, generally fails to solve the problem. Smoothing, or accommodating, is an appeasing approach of emphasizing areas of agreement while avoiding points of disagreement. It is appropriate to keep harmony and avoid outwardly conflictive situations. It works when the issues are more important than the personal positions and aspirations of the parties involved. Since smoothing tends to keep peace only in the short term, it fails to provide a permanent long-term solution to the undying conflict. Generally conflict reappears again in another form.

Both smoothing and withdrawing incline toward ignoring or delaying tactics, which do not resolve conflict but will temporarily slow down the situation.

**Forcing** implies the use of position power and dominance to resolve the conflict. It involves imposing one viewpoint at the expense of another and is characterised by a win-lose outcome in which one party overwhelms the other. Forcing is used when there is no common ground on which to bargain or negotiate and when both parties are uncooperative and strong-willed.

Forcing usually takes less time than compromise and negotiation, but it leaves hard feelings because people dislike having others’ views imposed on them. Conflict resolved by force may develop again and haunt the enforcer at a later date. Although forcing definitely resolves the conflict quickly, it should be used only as a last resort.

**Compromising** is primarily bargaining: receiving something in exchange for something else. It involves considering various issues, bargaining, using trade-off negotiations, and searching for solutions that bring some degree of satisfaction to both parties. Neither party wins, but both get some satisfaction out of the situation. Both may temporarily feel hurt because they had to give up something that was important to them, but compromising usually provides acceptable solutions. A definitive resolution to the conflict is achieved when a compromise is reached and accepted as a just solution by both parties.

**Collaborating** is an effective technique to manage conflicts when a situation is too important to be compromised. It involves incorporating multiple ideas and viewpoints from people with different perspectives. It offers a good opportunity to learn from others. Active collaboration by both parties in contributing to the resolution makes it easier to get their consensus and commitment. Collaboration is not very effective when more than a few players are involved and their viewpoints are mutually exclusive.
Look for Win-Win Alternatives. Of the interpersonal conflict resolution styles, confronting (negotiating and problem solving) is the most effective approach because it starts with an understanding by both parties that they must search for solutions that satisfy everyone. Creation of a cooperative and assertive environment is must to achieve win-win solutions. These guidelines may be useful:

- **Do the doable.** Must be able to evaluate the situation and spend their efforts and energy in doing only whatever is really possible. “It’s no use in trying to teach ducks to sing; it will only frustrate you and confuse the ducks!”
- **Build on earlier market analyses.** Using the strategy of only doing the doable, an earlier analysis of situations to give some insight into the conditions that would meet the other party’s criteria for a win-win solution.
- **Use the assertive model** Build on the strengths of all parties while minimizing their weaknesses. Building mutual understanding and trust will help in reaching a win-win solution.
- **Look at things right side up.** It is a mistake to assume that the person is the problem and therefore start attacking the person instead of the problem.
- **Avoid catastrophizing.** It leads to lower team morale and confidence, increased frustration, and possibly failure. Some of the common catastrophizing remarks that describe inconvenience, difficulty, or frustration are: “This is going to be a disaster.” “We will never get this done on time.”
- **Picture things going well.** Visualize and imagine positive results. It is difficult to move onto something better without knowing what “better” is. (using a problem-solving approach). (House, 1988)
- **Identify priorities and verbalize them.** Priorities rank highly as a source of conflict. Sometimes people compromise so much in a conflict that no one wins, and everyone is dissatisfied. Evaluate the priorities up front and identify the “must haves” and “nice to haves.” While resolving conflicts, he or she may compromise on “nice to haves” in order of importance. (Sieved, 1986)

### 15.8 INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE FOR TRANSFORMATION/ PREVENTION

In this process, the parties change the patterns of conflict. They change the structure and the system that were conducive to the emergence of disagreement. The goal is integration of all concerns and interests into a new paradigm. This integrative approach goes beyond a mere win in. The end result is greater than the sum of the component parts. Europe’s post World War II era is a good example of preventing war between Germany and France through the integration of the ingredients of military industry, in the framework of the Steel and Coal European Community. Intercultural dialogue shifts the focus of the process from achieving a cessation of hostilities or negative peace to addressing the causes of structural and cultural violence or positive peace.

Actually, culture can read the situation through the prism of the actor of a conflict. This actor is primarily concerned with the data helping him deal with the day to day issues on the ground. He tries to identify all relevant details and the subtleties of language that are
the key to understanding the precise scope of words used, and to encoding the behaviour and attitudes of the others. This is case study approach. Culture can also seek to build categories that could be used in different situations across different cases. The idea is to determine the most salient parameters of culture in order to integrate them into a quantitative analysis. In using both approaches, the actor perspective and the categorization tool, one should avoid falling into the trap of reducing diversity, forcing homogeneity, assuming stability of dimensions of culture, and potentially, dictate some determinism of the behaviour of individuals and groups. In order to avoid such oversimplification, a balanced combination of the case study approach and the category approach tries to organise the issue into categories before addressing the specifics of the case studied. Henceforth, the risk taking by the Youth is peculiar of dynamic societies, but then to determine the price this category is going to pay depends on the precise socio economic and political context framing the specific perceptions of the actors.

15.9 SUMMARY

Civilians too often grow frustrated by endless rounds of talks without concrete actions. That being said, the trend in international affairs points toward more dialogue, not less. “The challenge therefore is obvious,” wrote Jonas Gahr Store, Norway’s foreign affairs minister, “to capitalize on the respect for dialogue by working to ensure that mediators and others involved are as well equipped as possible to deliver effective and long-lasting results.”

The number of violent conflicts has declined in recent years as the willingness of governments, international organisations, and other actors to engage in dialogue has reached higher levels. That is no accident. To transform societies and find real solutions to the world’s most complex challenges—from violent conflict to poor governance, human rights abuses to uneven development, environmental degradation to eradicating HIV/AIDS—requires new approaches. If hearts and minds in South Africa and Northern Ireland can come unhardened, then the possibilities are endless. Take it from Albert Einstein, who correctly noted that “problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them.”

Deep dialogue between parties in conflict can go a long way to helping bridge the gap between intentions, words and deeds. In the “Sayings of the Fathers” it is written that a hero is one who transforms an enemy in to a friend. This is the art of peacemaking. Such transformation can occur in deep dialogue when conflicting sides’ are able to clearly state what is important to them and why and further, after careful listening, articulate the other side’s core values, hopes and fears as they have heard them. A rhetorically simple but potentially profoundly powerful question at the core of deep dialogue, ideally asked of participants to one another, is “Why do you care so much? Why does this matter to you so deeply?”

The dialogical approach to conflict can provide disputants with the opportunity to both clarify their own deeply held needs and values and to the other as at least partially similar to themselves. It can help to “unfreeze” opponents’ assumptions that the other is an eternal enemy to be destroyed at best, or at least forever constrained and contained. It enables parties to see that adversaries, like the self, are deeply motivated by shared
human needs and values and that unless these are fulfilled, antagonism and even violence will be perpetuated.

Thus, as disputants more clearly articulate what they mean and explore together how to act consistently, new possibilities for viewing their conflict in inclusive terms emerges as a rigid “us/them” split recedes. Parties may begin to see that “we” are in this conflict dynamic together and only together can we get out of it. Thus enemies may truly become allies and eventually friends.

15.10 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1) What is the importance of dialogue among parties in conflict?

2) Discuss in brief the classification of dialogue.

3) Describe the importance of dialogue in conflict settlement.

4) Elaborate methods other than dialogue.

5) What do you understand by Intercultural dialogue?

SUGGESTED READINGS


UNIT 16 INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

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16.1 INTRODUCTION

In this Unit we will study the work done by three important persons – Vinoba Bhave, Jayaprakash Narayan and Martin Luther King Jr. – to build and keep peace in their respective societies. All the three were influenced by the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi in varying degrees. All three initiated movements based on non-violence to achieve peace and justice. The nonviolent movements initiated by them were in societies where vertical conflict prevailed where the oppressed groups were trying to free themselves from the domination and where the parties involved were not equal. The movements initiated by them were peace keeping movements in that they tried to prevent conflict by attacking the root cause of the conflict. Through these they tried to bring about social change through socio-economic development and reconstruction.

All three – Vinoba Bhave, Jayaprakash Narayan and Martin Luther King Jr. – were of the view that social structural forces which were giving rise to oppression needed to be tackled for the peace to be lasting. The peace movements led by these leaders fought for, far more than absence of war. For many people all over the world, “peace means a decent livelihood, freedom from oppression, access to resources for survival, cultural autonomy and freedom from violence by the State as well as the powerful”. For “many security does not mean so much as national security but people’s security”. Thus it is important to understand that peace movements do not only try to resolve the conflicts
between nation states but also try to give justice, equality and livelihood to oppressed groups in a society. The struggles of non-violent resistance undertaken by Vinoba Bhave, Jayprakash Narayan and Martin Luther King were efforts to achieve ‘Peace through Justice’. They aimed to attain peace by eliminating social oppression and economic exploitation and address the suffering and misery of the people. By doing this, the movements aimed to eliminate violence and conflict from the society. Let us read about these.

**Aims and Objectives**

After going through this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- the philosophy and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi;
- innovations in Gandhiji’s philosophy and how the leaders adopted it to changing needs and circumstances;
- how these leaders resolved the conflicts and transformed the society in which they lived; and
- How they used the technique of non-violent resistance to tackle the different problems of society.

### 16.2 VINOBA BHAVE (1895-1982)

Vinoba Bhave was born on 11th September 1895 in a village named Gagode which is presently located in the Raigad District of Maharashtra state. He spent his childhood in the princely state of Baroda. The spirituality and devotion of his mother, Rukmini Devi, exerted tremendous influence on the young Vinoba and shaped his thinking when he was young. He took the vow of lifelong celibacy when he was just ten years old. The reading of Indian religious texts like *Bhagavad Gita*, *Mahabharat*, and *Ramayan* inspired spiritual quest in him. In his later life he became a freedom fighter and a social reformer. Spirituality remained at the heart of his actions and thought. He once said, “All revolutions are spiritual at the source. All my activities have the sole purpose of achieving a union of hearts.”

In his youth Vinoba came in contact with Mahatma Gandhi in June 1916. When he was growing up in Baroda he had read about Mahatma Gandhi and wrote some letters to him. Later he went to Gandhi’s Kochrab Ashram in Ahmedabad and was influenced by him. In the ashram Mahatma Gandhi was impressed by Vinoba’s efforts to help the sweeper who cleaned the latrines. It has been reported that it was due to this that Gandhi insisted that all such work had to be done as part of the daily routine at the ashram. In the pre-independence period Acharya Vinoba had participated in the Satyagraha movement. In April 1923, Vinoba was arrested because he had participated in a Satyagraha procession with the National flag in Nagpur.

In 1940, Vinoba was chosen by Mahatma Gandhi as the first individual Satyagrahi to protest against the British policy during the World War II. Since he was little known to the people of India and was not even a member of the Indian National Congress, Mahatma Gandhi introduced him to the Indian people in an article in *Harijan* on 20th October 1940. He was also arrested during the Quit India Movement in 1942. In fact, many consider Vinoba to be the “moral and spiritual heir” of Mahatma Gandhi. In March 1948, Vinoba took the initiative in the founding of ‘Sarvodaya Samaj’ which was a
loosely structured organisation of Lok Sevaks during a conference held at Sevagram. The 
Sarvodaya Samaj consisted of Lok Sevaks who had pledged to follow Gandhian 
principles. The loksevaks had to register their pledges with the Convenor of the Samaj. 

16.2.1 Improvement of Gandhian Philosophy

Vinoba improved upon Gandhian philosophy of non-violent resistance and moulded it to 
be effective in the new context. He consistently introduced innovation in the thoughts of 
Mahatma Gandhi and popularized them among the masses. He considered the thoughts of 
Gandhiji to be of revolutionary nature. He often quoted Gandhiji as saying that if “there 
is a contradiction between my earlier thoughts and present thoughts then the present 
thoughts should be considered relevant”. In this statement of Gandhiji, Vinoba saw an 
indication of Gandhiji’s desire of not searching for consensus in his thoughts but accepting 
the new thoughts put forward by him. Vinoba wrote profusely and introduced innovations 
and modifications in almost every aspect of Gandhian thought. Some of the more 
important changes introduced by him are as follows:

1) Vinoba made a deep study of the concept of ‘Anasakti Yog’ put forward by 
Gandhiji after the study of the Bhagwad Gita. He then put forward the concept of 
Samyayog. According to him Samyayog is the main teaching of Bhagwad Gita. 

2) Gandhiji had used the concept of Antodaya in his thinking. Vinoba developed it 
further by elucidating the concept of Sarvodaya. Sarovodaya seeks the welfare of 
all.

3) He made innovation in concept of ‘trusteeship’ of Gandhiji by putting forward the 
concept of ‘Bhoodan’.

4) He also developed some ideas of Gandhiji’s Hind Swaraj in his book Swarajshastra. 
According to Vinoba establishment of a ‘Government free’ society was the ultimate 
goal.

5) Acharya Vinoba Bhave tried to further develop the concept of Satyagraha. His 
movements of Satyagraha did not oppose the state in a severe manner. The Bhoodan 
movement was not even opposed to the state. Vinoba discussed failings which had 
crept into Gandhiji’s concept of Satyagraha. According to Vinoba the nature of 
Satyagraha movement initiated by Gandhi insisted on “Truth”. However it did not 
insist on acceptance of ‘Truth’. Gandhiji included the masses in his Satyagraha 
movements. However most of the people were unaware of the intricacies of the 
philosophy of Satyagraha. This destroyed the purity of the movement and it acquired 
the nature of ‘pressure politics’. The word Satyagraha had therefore acquired a 
negative connotation in the pre-independence period. Even Mahatma Gandhiji had 
realised these failings of his Satyagraha movement. Vinoba was of the opinion that 
the Satyagrahi is the person who claims that ‘truth’ is with him and never forsakes 
it. However, he does not think that other person does not have ‘truth’ with him. In 
fact he thinks that the other person can also have ‘truth’ with him. The Satyagrahi 
realises that though one part of ‘truth’ is with him, a smaller or bigger second part 
of ‘truth’ may also be with the other person. Therefore discussions can be held in 
a neutral manner. The Satyagrahi will accept the other person’s part of the ‘truth’ and 
the other person will accept the Satyagrahi’s part of the ‘truth”. According to Vinoba, 
in order to create a Satyagrahi he should be taught to accept ‘truth’. A person 
cannot be a Satyagrahi unless he learns to accept ‘truth’. 

Individual Initiatives
16.2.2 Resistance against Injustice
Vinoba put forward five types of political resistance against injustice. They are as follows:

1) Resist evil with greater violence
2) Resist evil with equal violence
3) Resist evil with non-violence
4) Resist not evil
5) Non-violent assistance in right thinking.

In the opinion of Vinoba, the first approach is of the people involved in politics. The second approach is adopted by Moses etc. The third approach is of Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi. The fourth approach was to accept the unfortunate to happen and continue the programme of friendship and love with the opponent. This approach was taken by Jesus Christ resulting in eradication of injustice. Non-violent assistance in right thinking was the fifth approach of Satyagraha described by Vinoba. Do not resist the unfortunate. Assist the opposite man in right thinking. Assist him in thinking so that he will not inflict injustice and choose the right approach. Vinoba takes the position that even if resistance to the opponent becomes necessary it should be an aspect of the assistance offered. The innovation made by Vinoba was that he put forward the view that the approach taken by Jesus Christ ‘resist not evil’ and the approach taken by Mahatma Gandhi ‘Resist evil with non-violence’ were not adequate in a democratic country. Vinoba advocated the use of the approach of ‘Non-violent assistance in right thinking’ to fight injustice in contemporary societies.

In recent times, when a Satyagraha is undertaken immediate results are expected by the Satyagrahi. If the effect of Satyagraha is not perceived immediately, its degree intensity and aggressiveness is sought to be increased. In the opinion of Vinoba instead of increasing the intensity and aggressiveness of the Satyagraha it should be diminished by degrees. This will increase the force of the Satyagraha. According to Vinoba when violence is used for a purpose and is ineffective its intensity is increased incrementally to achieve success. But when non-violence is used and is ineffective its intensity is to be decreased.

16.3 BHOODAN AND GRAMDAN MOVEMENT

One of the reasons for social conflicts in our society is economic inequalities and deprivation. Land for landless is a way to achieve social harmony. Vinoba Bhave introduced the idea of Bhoodan for this. Bhoodan Movement was an advanced form of Gandhiji’s concept of trusteeship. Vinoba was of the view that the land problem in India could be solved through the use of Bhoodanyajna which was a compassionate (Karuna) approach to the problem. For him the Boodanyajna undertaken by him was a Satyagraha.

Vinoba was appalled by the deteriorating condition of the country’s agriculture and the poverty of millions of landless labourers. He also observed that the land reform legislation which was passed by the government had proven to be ineffective in solving the problems of landless. He was also aware of the existence of large scale existence of social and economic inequalities in the villages of India. The Bhoodan Movement was the application of the principles of Love, Truth and Non-violence to solve the problem of rural inequality.
and the problems of the landless millions. It was an effort to reverse the glaring hierarchy in the economic structure of Indian society.

The idea of starting a Bhoodan movement came to Vinoba when he interacted with some landless labourers of Pochampalli village in the Telangana region on 18th April 1951. The region was rocked by violence inflicted by Communist cadres. The labourers told Vinoba that if they could get little land they would be able to make a living. Vinoba put the condition that if they were given land, they will have to work it together. They will not get any individual land holding. A landlord named Ramachandra Reddy who was present at the meeting immediately donated hundred acres of land. Such was the origin of ‘Bhoodan’. Vinoba interpreted this incident as a sign from God and immediately undertook a campaign to collect land from the landlords as Dan to be distributed among the landless.

Vinoba adopted the method of padayatra, or pilgrimage on foot, marching from village to village to spread the message of Bhoodan. His efforts were rewarded with success in the Telangana region and even greater success in Uttar Pradesh. The Bhoodan movement achieved phenomenal success in the initial years and was given wide publicity in India and abroad. During his campaign to collect Bhoodan, the people of Man-groth in Uttar Pradesh offered their entire land in their village to him. It is from this incident that the idea of ‘Gramdan’ came to Vinoba and gave new direction to the Bhoodan movement.

**Gramdan**

In 1963 Vinoba spelled out his idea of Gramdan as a programme of village self-rule. Gramdan had the following features:

1) Land was to be owned by the village community
2) Landholders were to donate 1/20th of their holding for the landless
3) Everyone would give 1/40th part of what he has earned on his land to the village community each year
4) Those who do not cultivate land would give one day’s earning every month to the village community
5) Labourers will donate one day labour every month.

Gramdan encompassed three stages of development in a village. The first stage was called ‘Prapti’ during which the people made decision to accept Gramdan and transferred their ownership to village council. During the second stage of ‘Pusti’ the people implemented the features of Gramdan i.e. redistribution of 1/20th of landholding. The third stage was that of ‘Nirman’ during which the village council mobilizes resources to start village reconstruction programmes. The Gramdan movement aimed at replacing the centralised state with decentralised village republics.

Vinoba believed that without Gramdan the ideal of Gramswaraj could not be attained. To make it more inclusive, Vinoba enlarged the concept of ‘Dan’ or gift by including Shramdan (gift of one’s labour to a Sarvodaya project), Sampattidan (gift of wealth to the movement), Buddhidan (dedication of knowledge for Sarvodaya ideals) and Jeevan Dan (dedication of life for the Sarvodaya movement).
16.3.1 Shanti Sena

Along with Bhoodan and Gramdan, Vinoba laid emphasis on the Shanti Sena programme. The concept Shanti Sena or Peace army was based on the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi who had conceptualised Shanti Sena as an army of non-violent volunteers dedicated to minimizing communal violence. Vinoba took the lead in establishing the Shanti Sena. Violent disturbances had taken place all over India after the reorganisation of states in the late 1950s. In 1957 when Vinoba was in Kerala a number of riots took place near Gramdan villages. Vinoba was afraid that the whole work of Gramdan would be lost if the riots spread to the Gramdan village. He therefore decided to build a non-violent army to prevent violence spreading to the villages. The Shanti Sena was to protect Gramdan and Gramrajya and the Shanti Sainik was to protect the people as a mother protects her child. Vinoba visualised the Shanti Sena as a Seva Sena (service army) and the Shanti Sainik as a Seva-Sainik. The Shanti Sena could thus be called the offshoot of the Gramdan movement.

In a meeting in Kerala in July 1957, Vinoba elaborated his vision of the Shanti Sena. The Sena was to be formed to protect the freedom which had been won. Vinoba calculated that one ‘Shanti Sainik could be needed for every five thousand Indian people. Therefore, India will need about 70 thousand sainiks for 35 crore people. The task of the Shanti Sena was to prevent violence by being alert for the signs of tension. However, in normal times, the shanti sainiks were to work as servants of society and make efforts to get gramdans and do other constructive work. However in emergency conditions they should be ready to give their lives to establish peace. In the meeting, Sri Kelappan, an eminent person from Kerala volunteered to work as Commander of the Shanti Sena and about 50 young men volunteered to be Shanti Sainiks. Thus the first batch of Shanti Sena volunteers were organised in Kerala.

The Shanti Sainik was expected to follow the principles of Nispaksh (non-partisanship), Nirvair (non-enmity) and Nirbhay (fearlessness). Service without discrimination was the characteristic of the Shanti Sainik. Love was his weapon. He should not be afraid of others and should not make others afraid of him. He should not consider others as enemies. Only a brave person could be a Shanti Sainik. He should win the hearts of the people through his service. He should listen and console the people with problems, solve fights between brothers and prevent them from approaching courts. The Shanti Sainik can be said to be successful if no riot or disturbance occurs in his area.

For Vinoba the peacekeeping role of the Shanti Sena was secondary in nature. He believed that non-violence could grow only with constructive work. It was the daily day to day duty of the Shanti Sainik to promote constructive work. However, in emergency situation when disorder or disturbances occur, Vinoba expected the Shanti Sainik to tackle the situation with self-sacrifice and love in their hearts, and even lay down their lives to stop violence. It is only in emergencies that his peacekeeping role assumed importance. Thus the Shanti Sena was concerned primarily with the task of building the non-violent strength of the society through: 1) creating social awareness, 2) promoting the value of non-violence among the people and 3) giving the people training in techniques of nonviolence. Vinoba was not in favour of using the Shanti Sena to protect the country’s borders. He gave more importance to peace building through Gramdan and constructive work and spiritual awakening. He first wanted to achieve such transformation in Indian society that the use of police or army becomes unnecessary for maintaining internal peace. It is only after this is achieved that the next step of non-violent external defense would
be attainable. Vinoba took the stand that the Shanti Sainiks should not practice satyagraha in the international arena and interfere with the work of the army as long as the people supported and sanctioned the existence of the army. It is only when people revoke their support and sanction to the army after its existence becomes unnecessary that we can think of non-violent defense of the borders of our country. In 1962, Vinoba disapproved the efforts of Jayprakash Narayan to lead a group of Shanti Sainiks to the Indo-China border to protest against the war between the two countries.

16.4 JAYPRAKASH NARAYAN (1902-1979)

Jayprakash Narayan was born on 11th October 1902 in the village of Sitabdiara in Saran district of Bihar. He was popularly known as JP or Lok Nayak (The People’s Hero). He went to America for higher education. In America, he came under the influence of Marxist thought. However, he did not join the Communist Party of India when he returned to India. He became leader of the Socialist group within the Indian National Congress. He was arrested for undertaking revolutionary activities during the Quit India Movement. JP worked as the Secretary of the Socialist Party after its separation from the Congress in 1948. In 1950 JP visited Wardha and met Vinoba at Pawnar. He was influenced by Vinoba’s philosophy and programme of social reconstruction.

JP’s fascination for non-violence evolved gradually. He was greatly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi’s thought of relationship between ends and means. He became convinced that purity of means was necessary and essential for the achievement of a good aim including resolution of social conflicts. JP was especially attracted by the simplicity and egalitarianism of the Sarvodaya philosophy. He also realised that the Sarvodaya plan included large number of socialist ideals. In 1951 he wrote an article in the Janata entitled “Socialism and Sarvodaya”, in which he appealed to the socialists to study Sarvodaya Plan, which he described as a “concrete programme of social revolution”. Here it should be noted that JP’s belief evolved from Socialism to Gandhism. As he was a socialist in his earlier days, he interpreted Sarvodaya from a different perspective.

In his thought and philosophy JP gave highest importance to Lokniti (Peoples Polity). He was of the opinion that politics should give way to Lokniti. If this happened the influence of the State will slowly diminish and ultimately result in the withering away of the State. JP visualized the existence of an ideal society where one individual did not have to exert dominance over another. It was due to this conviction that JP despised power politics and never contested any elections. He was much impressed by the ‘Kanchan Mukti Prayog’ of Vinoba which was aimed at achieving complete self-dependence in the village by manufacturing everything that is needed in the village. This reinforced JP’s view that Lokshakti (people’s power) needed to be strengthened to achieve real welfare of the society. In an article entitled “Lok shakti ka Sampratyay”, he described the first meaning of Lokshakti as to do work in small groups and communities in such a manner that they are encouraged to put in collective effort. The other meaning of Lokshakti was to stimulate peoples’ power and to give strength to forces working towards social justice. Another important dimension of Lokshakti was giving impetus to movements for social transformation. JP was also aware that for social justice to exist in Indian society it was necessary not only to be equitable but also moral and he believed that the State could not achieve this. It could be achieved only by the cooperation of the common people.
16.4.1 Contribution to Bhoodan and Gramdan Movement

For JP, the village was the natural habitat of man and therefore development of villages was a necessary condition for the development and peace of society. Moreover, JP was aware of the problem of land reforms since his young days. He visualized the solution of the land problem in Vinoba’s Bhoodan movement. On 18th April 1954 at a Sarvodaya Conference held at Bodh Gaya, JP took a pledge of dedicating his life (Jeevandan) to bring about social transformation through work in the Sarvodaya and Bhoodan movement.

JP participated whole heartedly in the constructive programme of Sarvodaya Movement and the Bhoodan movement started by Vinoba. He was in favour of solving the problem of land through peaceful means. During the period from 1954 to 1974, JP was involved in following movements:

1) Sarvodaya and Bhoodan Movement;
2) Gramdan Movement; and
3) Reconstruction programmes.

In 1966, the state of Bihar was hit by a severe famine. JP involved himself in famine relief work. He was awarded the Magsaysay Award for his work during the famine. JP was also involved in promoting communal harmony, especially during Hindu-Muslim riots. He was instrumental in utilizing the Shanti Sena of the Sarvodaya workers to establish and promote communal harmony in riot affected areas.

In 1954, JP founded the Sokhodeora Ashram in Kowakol village of Bihar to put his ideas and beliefs regarding village reconstruction in practice. He chose the village because it was one of the least developed villages in Bihar. The Sokhodeora Ashram was established for two purposes:

1) to create a peace loving society based on the foundation of truth and non-violence which is free from exploitation and governance and which values a happily, healthy, cultured, independent, self-ruled and self-dependent rural life.
2) to bring about change in the value system of the people so that their personal interest is guided by public interest and mundane ambition by spiritual inspiration.

In this experiment at village reconstruction JP laid emphasis on collective farming and graminikaran (villagisation). JP used the term graminikaran to mean that the donated land belonged to the whole village, and not to any individual. It meant that the whole village, including the person who had donated the land, had a right to land.

In 1970, JP started the work of village reconstruction at Mushahari block in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar. There was threat of violence in the area due to activities of the Naxalites. JP felt that the Naxal threat in the area underlined the need to undertake non-violent social change and reconstruction. Village councils were formed, Gramdan land was redistributed, and a Village Peace Force (Shanti Sena) was organised.

However, gradually JP became disappointed with the impact of the Bhoodan and Gramdan Movements and Sarvodaya. There had been little change in the conditions even after the Bhoodan movement and the enactment of a number of land ceiling acts by the government. He realised that there had been little progress towards the social order envisaged by Sarvodaya and the Bhoodan movement. JP’s thoughts began to differ from
Vinoba. In 1974 their paths diverged completely, when JP began the movement for ‘Total Revolution’. JP had realised that persuasion or conciliation alone could not solve land problem and peaceful struggle and satyagraha were necessary to achieve the objective.

16.4.2 Efforts for Internal and External Peace

JP made efforts to establish communal peace in India and consistently advocated amiable Hindu-Muslim relations. He also made efforts to promote cordial relations between India and Pakistan. After the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948, he had formed the Indo-Pak Reconciliation Committee to foster friendly relations between the countries. JP believed that both the countries could make progress only when they had cordial relations with each other. In 1964, while addressing the annual conference of the West Bengal Gandhi Memorial Trust he expressed the view that the partition of India had not solved a single problem. He advised the leaders of both the countries to negotiate and find a solution to all the problems, including Kashmir. He undertook a tour to Pakistan to support the concept of ‘Basic Democracy’ propounded by Ayub Khan, the leader of Pakistan. However, after the Indo-Pak war of 1965, JP’s views regarding Kashmir changed. Earlier, he had favoured the inclusion of Pakistan in any talks regarding Kashmir but after the 1965 war he declared the question of Kashmir to be closed for Pakistan. After the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, JP hoped that a new era of relations would begin between India and Pakistan.

JP was a champion of freedom and democracy and openly criticized countries when they violated human rights. He put forth specific views with regard to conflicts between countries of the world. He was very disturbed when China invaded Tibet in 1950. JP was of the view that the people of Tibet had the right of self-determination. He criticized China for using torture and committing atrocities on the Tibetan people. JP also spoke against the Russian invasion of Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1956. JP made efforts to establish peace during the Indo-China War of 1962. JP was of the view that peace and non-violence could never be achieved by attacking any independent country. He wanted Indians to oppose China peacefully on the basis of their moral strength. He wanted to lead the Shanti Sainiks and workers of the Sarvodaya movement to the border to protest against the war in a non-violent way. However, in a Sarvodaya Conference held at Berchi in November 1962, Vinoba disapproved the move and made it clear that Sarvodaya workers should concentrate only on the work of Bhoodan and Gramdan.

However, JP continued to articulate his thoughts about the use of unarmed peacekeeping in the international field. He advocated the formation of World Peace Brigade, a type of international Shanti Sena which would operate to establish peace in the world in a non-violent manner. JP played a pivotal role in making peace in Nagaland. In 1946, Phizo, the leader of the Nagas had formed the Naga National Council and demanded independence of Nagaland. After India gained independence the Naga militants reiterated their demand for an independent Nagaland. Gradually the movement of the Nagas became violent. In 1955, there was a fierce battle between the Indian army and the rebels. A peace mission was initiated to stop the increasing violence and establish peace in Nagaland. JP, Shankarrao Deo, and the Chief Minister of Assam, Bimla Prasad Chaliha and Rev. Michael Scott were members of the peace mission. JP wanted Nagaland to remain part of India, but wanted to give special provisions in the Indian Constitution for the people of Nagaland. In 1964, the members of the peace mission met the leaders of the Naga rebels and a proposal for ceasefire was signed between the Indian Government and Naga rebels. JP took initiative in establishing a Peace Group in April 1965, to support the work
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done by the Peace Mission. It is widely believed that it was JP who won over the Nagas with love.

In April 1972, some dreaded dacoits of the Chambal valley put down their arms before JP. They also promised to live a different life. This incident shows how the power of non-violence and love could control the most hardened criminals. JP was aware that the mental attitude of the dacoits was different from other criminals and most of them had been victims of some sort of injustice in their earlier life. In fact many of them had taken up arms as they did not have alternative methods to fight the injustice inflicted on them. JP formed the ‘Chambal Valley Peace Committee Mission’ to promote the surrender and integration of the dacoits in the society. On 14th and 15th April 1972, the infamous dacoit Madho Singh and others surrendered in an open function.

16.4.3 Total Revolution

The ‘Total Revolution’ movement is an appropriate example of non-violent resistance in post-independent India. This movement took place under the leadership of JP against the Congress Government led by Indira Gandhi. Students were mobilized to offer non-violent resistance to corrupt politicians, black marketers, capitalists who indulged in profiteering and hoarding which led to rise of prices, people who had practiced evasion of land reform laws etc. JP led the movement in Bihar and maintained its momentum by organising strikes, demonstrations and marches. Attempts were made to establish a polity based on Gandhian principles known as Janata Sarkar (People’s Government). Gram Sabhas which had all the adults of the village as members were established. The Gram Sabhas refused to pay taxes to the state and made their own arrangements for policing. There were also attempts to promote social reforms like stopping dowry payments and limiting expenditure on marriages and death ceremonies and discouraging liquor consumption. JP had even suggested formation of Sangharsh Samities to keep check on the elected representative of the people. JP wanted the elected representatives to be responsible to the Sangharsh Samitis and not only to their political parties.

On 5th June 1974, JP put forward the concept of ‘Total Revolution’ in a rally at Patna. JP’s concept of Total Revolution was a synthesis of Gandhian thought, teachings of Karl Marx and the principles of Western Democracy. Through this concept, JP introduced innovation in Gandhian thought and tried to harness it to achieve the total transformation of Indian society. It was based on the Gandhian principle of changing society with non-violent techniques. In fact ‘Total Revolution’ aspired to achieve fundamental change not only in the society but also in the individual. ‘Total Revolution’ gave emphasis on three important aspects: 1) moral values 2) decentralization of economic and political power and 3) non-violent means. In January 1975, JP announced the formation of Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini. It was a disciplined youth organisation dedicated to the work of Total Revolution.

Recent studies have given emphasis on the fact that JP’s movement for ‘Total Revolution’ was not much of a break from his earlier efforts to achieve social transformation through Bhoodan and Gramdan. JP understood Mahatma Gandhiji’s non-violence as not just an effort to maintain law and order but as a revolutionary philosophy. His concept of ‘Total Revolution’ encompassed transformation of economy and polity but also the social and moral ethics of the individual and society. JP had used the term ‘Total Revolution’ in an article written in 1969 to describe the objective of the Sarvodaya movement. Once JP remarked that “[t]here is hardly any difference between Sarvodaya and Total Revolution.
If there is any, then Sarvodaya is the goal and Total Revolution the means. Total Revolution is basic change in all aspects of life. There cannot be Sarvodaya without this”.

16.5 MARTIN LUTHER KING (1929-1968)

Martin Luther King Jr. was a prominent leader of the Civil Rights Movement in America. He used the technique of non-violent resistance for the advancement of civil rights of the American black people. He was a clergyman and became a civil rights activist early in his career. In 1955 he led the famous Montgomery bus boycott and in 1957 founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his work against racial segregation and racial discrimination by using nonviolent means. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

Dr. King was born into a well-educated and relatively well to do family. His grandfather and father were pastors of a Baptist church and were members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). This organisation had been set up in 1909 for the purpose of promoting black equality. In 1954 Dr. King became the pastor of a church in Montgomery, Alabama.

Martin Luther King was inspired by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. One day Dr. King travelled to Philadelphia to hear a talk by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University, who had just returned from India. Johnson spoke on the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. King found the message of Mahatma Gandhi electrifying. He immediately left the meeting and bought half a dozen books on the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi.

In his book ‘Stride toward Freedom’, Dr. King has described how reading about Mahatma Gandhi affected his thinking. Earlier he had come to the conclusion that the ethics of Jesus were only effective in individual relationships. He had thought the ‘turn the other cheek’ philosophy and love thy enemies’ philosophy propounded by Jesus was only applicable in case of conflict between individuals. Dr. King could not understand how the ethics of Jesus could be applied to resolve conflict between nations and racial groups. Reading about the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi made him understand that he was mistaken. Mahatma Gandhi showed him the way to raise the love ethic of Jesus from a mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale.

In 1959, he visited the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi in India. King’s trip to India influenced his understanding of non-violent resistance and strengthened his commitment to the civil rights movement. The statement made by King in a radio address on his final day in India clearly brings out the influence of the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi on him. King said:

“Since being in India, I am more convinced than ever before that the method of non-violent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for justice and human dignity. In a real sense, Mahatma Gandhi embodied in his life certain universal principles that are inherent in the moral structure of the universe, and these principles are as inescapable as the law of gravitation.”

Though, Dr. King was indebted to Mahatma Gandhi for the concept of non-violence, he reinterpreted it to suit the struggle of the black Americans. He articulated ‘non-violence’ as a part of the ethics given by Jesus Christ. In fact, he drew upon a number of Christian
traditions to justify the use of non-violence in the fight against racism. In his speeches and writings he made frequent mention of Jesus Christ’s ‘Sermon on the Mount’ to convince the black people of the importance of non-violence. The non-violent struggle of Dr. King against racism is significant because it resulted in minimal dehumanization of the racist white people. The struggle appealed to the empathy and reasonableness of the racist white people. Dr. King was of the view that non-violent direct action was the only cure available to the blacks for fighting the injustice against them. It was only due to the non-violent protest that the white racist people were forced to recognize that no inferior people could choose such a struggle involving sacrifice, bravery and skill. The black people were thus able to garner respect from even the staunchest white racist person.

Dr. King saw non-violence as a moral principle. In his book Dr. King describes the five notions that show his commitment to non-violence as a method of resistance:

1) Non-violence is not to be practiced by cowards because it takes great courage to stand defenseless in front of an adversary with weapons who is prepared to use them.

2) The goal of non-violent resistance is with respect and understanding of the adversary and not to harm, defeat or humiliate him.

3) Non-violent resistance is against the evil deeds and not against the evil doer.

4) Though non-violent resistance is physically non-aggressive it is spiritually aggressive and has the power to influence the soul of the adversary.

5) Non-violent resistance is based on self-suffering.

16.5.1 Montgomery Bus Boycott (1956)

The Montgomery Bus Boycott was an important episode in the fight against racial segregation in America. The local government of Montgomery implemented a system of racial segregation on its buses. Under the system, the front row seats were reserved for the white people, while the black people had to sit on seats on the back rows. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a black woman was returning home by bus after a hard day’s work. The bus soon filled up. A white man was left standing. The bus driver ordered her and three other blacks to move because the city ordinance said that no black could sit parallel with a white passenger. The others moved but Mrs. Parks refused. She was arrested and convicted for violating the law. However, she appealed against the ruling in a higher court of law.

The Rosa Parks incident was the immediate cause of a movement against racial segregation on the buses. Martin Luther King led the black people in organising a boycott (not use) of the buses for a day. The message given to the black people was “Don’t ride the buses to work, to town, to school, or anywhere on Monday. If you work, take a cab, or share a ride, or walk”. The boycott was very successful on the first day and therefore it was continued. It continued to receive strong support from the black people. Since it was the black people of Montgomery that used the buses in large numbers there was a noticeable decline in the earning of the local government. The participants in the boycott were fined, arrested and even subjected to physical abuse. However, they refused to relent. The entire boycott lasted for 381 days. It ended on December 20, 1956 when the Supreme Court of USA gave a decision that racial segregation on buses was unconstitutional.
Though the supreme court of USA had ruled in favour of the blacks, Dr. King was aware of the challenges it posed for reconciliation between the whites and blacks. He wanted the black people to respond with understanding of the white people who had oppressed them. He wanted the movement to move from protest to reconciliation with the white people. Therefore after the victory at Montgomery, Dr. King advised the blacks not to gloat over their victory and must not take this as a victory over the white man, but as a victory for justice and democracy. The Montgomery bus boycott was the first significant victories of the movement against racism and made Martin Luther King one of the important leaders of the civil rights movement. This movement was the psychological turning point in the struggle of the blacks against racist segregation. Moreover, the boycott demonstrated the power of the black community using direct non-violent action. The movement showed the black people that non-violent resistance could be used elsewhere to counter racist prejudices.

During the Montgomery bus boycott Miss Juliette Morgan, a librarian and sympathiser with the cause of the American blacks, wrote a letter to the local newspaper ‘Montgomery Advertiser’. In this letter she compared the Montgomery bus boycott with the Dandi March undertaken by Mahatma Gandhi in India. This letter made the name of Mahatma Gandhi famous among the black people of Montgomery.

16.5.2 Birmingham Campaign (1963)

Eight years later, in March 1963, King took initiative in launching a campaign to end segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, where they hoped to replicate the results of Montgomery. Instead of focusing on a specific issue like public transportation, King wanted to put an end to economic policies in Birmingham that promoted segregation and discriminatory practices against African Americans. Knowing that this would require more intense civic action, King organised the Birmingham campaign to be more aggressive than previous ones.

Dr. King and black civic activists launched economic boycotts against businesses who refused to hire people of all races and desegregate their facilities, and began a series of marches through the city and peaceful sit-ins at libraries and restaurants that he knew would provoke the arrest of civil rights activists. Explaining his strategy, King said, “The purpose of…direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation.”

During the Birmingham movement, the black leaders used ‘freedom songs’ to encourage the participants. Dr. King called these songs the “soul of the movement”. These freedom songs united the black participants on an emotional level and gave them courage and conviction to oppose racism in a non-violent way.

Dr. King was arrested during the Birmingham movement. His arrest was a turning point in the civil rights movement of the African Americans. Dr. King was placed in solitary confinement. The work of Dr. King and his colleagues got wide publicity throughout the USA and the world. In jail Dr. King, wrote his famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” in which he argued that true civil rights could not be achieved without non-violent direct actions of civil disobedience. King wrote that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” and made the case that “one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.” The letter, which was later published in many magazines and books, still serves as one of the best example of civic activist writing in American history.
The injustices perpetuated against the black people in Birmingham were apparent. The black leaders tried to negotiate in good faith with the leaders of Birmingham city; however they refused to do so. It is only after the stage of negotiation failed that Dr. King took the path of Direct Action in the form of organising sit-ins, marches and so forth. The purpose of non-violent direct action was to create crises and tension in a community which has constantly refused to negotiate. Direct action dramatizes the issue so that it can no longer be ignored. Dr. King had opposed violent tension but he was of the view that a constructive type of non-violent tension is necessary for growth.

The letter, along with the non-violent direct action, led to significant gains in Birmingham by the end of Spring 1963. Many of the discriminatory practices in Birmingham were abolished, and the city became notably less segregated. Non-violence referred to by Dr. King as “the sword that heals”, gave the Black Americans the dignity of moral conviction and self-sacrifice. It healed the oppressor as well as the oppressed. It did not only express hurt and anger at the white people but also made the black people experience the healing necessary for the existence of a just society in the United States.

16.5.3 March on Washington (1963)

In the months after the end of the Birmingham campaign, King became intimately involved in the organisation of the historic August 28, 1963 March on Washington. The March on Washington aimed to encourage passage of civil rights bill and government action to increase the employment of black people.

The organisers intended to highlight the status of black people in the Southern states of USA. However, in order to give the march a more widely accepted audience, civil rights, labor, and religious organisations were involved in organising the march. In expanding its message beyond the scope of African American civil rights to universal labor issues, the march attracted crowds to a tune of a quarter of a million people in front of the Lincoln Memorial for Dr. King’s keynote address. Dr. King’s address drew inspiration from both the Bible and the United States Declaration of Independence. In his address he outlined his hopes for racial harmony and the prospect of equality in the United States.

King’s speech was applauded by the participants of the March as well as Americans throughout the country. In fact the March impressed television audiences throughout the world and Dr. King’s address acquired world-wide fame. The success of this speech and the march as a whole led to the passage of significant civil rights legislation; the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the National Voting Rights Act of 1965 legally ended segregation throughout the country. While the passage of civil rights legislation brought King’s dream much closer to reality, there was still much work to be done at the community level in terms of implementation, and King spent the next three years working tirelessly towards that goal.

16.5.4 Conflict Resolution Strategy of Dr. King

Dr. King utilized four strategies to unite the black Americans in the non-violent fight against racism in the United States. The first strategy was his effective use of the Bible. Dr. King frequently used passages from the Bible to appeal to the Christian spirit of the black people. This gave moral authority to his speeches. In fact his well-known speech ‘I have a Dream’ was full of biblical references.

Dr. King’s second strategy was to appeal to the values of the Western Civilization. He made it a point to use thoughts from the Western theological and philosophical traditions
such as the writings of Hegel, Niebuhr, Tolstoy, and Franz Fanon. He used the popularity of the traditions to communicate his thought to the common people.

The third strategy of Dr. King was his brilliant use of American constitutional and legal documents to give credence to his philosophy and movement against racism. He used the ‘American Declaration of Independence, the American Constitution and decisions of Supreme court to show that he was willing to work in the legal context in countering racism. However, he also made it clear that unjust laws needed to be challenged.

The fourth strategy of Dr. King was that he consistently included both the black and white people in the society which he aimed to achieve, which he called ‘the Beloved Community’. Thus he did not advocate the supremacy of the blacks over the white people. His concept of ‘Beloved Community’ encompassed both the blacks and the whites. He did not favour a different separate identity for the black people.

The use of violence in any conflict results in bitterness between the conflicting parties. But the use of non-violence leads to reconciliation and existence of the “Beloved Community”. Dr. King distinguished between three kinds of love: eros, “a sort of aesthetic or romantic love”; philia, “affection between friends” and agape, which he described as “understanding, redeeming goodwill for all,” an “overflowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative”...“the love of God operating in the human heart.” Dr. King said that “Agape does not begin by discriminating between worthy and unworthy people...It begins by loving others for their sakes” and “makes no distinction between a friend and enemy; it is directed toward both”. It is through Agape love that the beloved community is created and preserved. It is due to the Agape love in Dr. King’s beloved community that justice is ensured not for any one oppressed group but for all the people in the community.

16.6 SUMMARY

Vinoba Bhave, Jayprakash Narayan and Martin Luther King were three leaders who used the method of non-violent resistance to fight injustice and achieve peace in their respective societies. They were aware that there could be no lasting peace unless the downtrodden masses got freedom from poverty, injustice and discrimination. All three were influenced by the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. Vinoba Bhave was one of the favourite disciples of Mahatma Gandhi. Many consider him to be the “moral and spiritual heir” of Gandhi. Though Jayprakash Narayan was initially under the influence of ideology of socialism, he was later inspired by Gandhian philosophy. He dedicated his life to furthering of the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements started by Vinoba Bhave. Martin Luther King was also convinced that Gandhiji’s philosophy of nonviolent resistance was the most important weapon available for the Black American people in their fight against racial segregation and injustice. However, all three leaders introduced innovation in Gandhiji’s philosophy of nonviolent resistance. They modified and adopted the Gandhiji’s idea of nonviolent resistance to suit the changed circumstances. Vinoba evolved the approach of ‘Non-violent assistance in right thinking’. Vinoba was of the opinion that in a democratic society this was the only effective approach of nonviolent resistance. The Bhoodan movement sought to bring about social transformation through individual acts of charity while the Gramdan movement sought to bring social revolution through collective decisions on the community. The ideal of Vinoba was to establish a ‘Stateless society’ through the use of Bhoodan, Gramdan and the Shanti Sena.
Jayprakash Narayan was also involved in the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements started by Vinoba Bhave. However, he later became disappointed with the impact of the movements. Jayprakash Narayan realised that the mere use of persuasion and conciliation could not bring about social transformation of Indian society. He was of the opinion that peaceful struggle and Satyagraha were needed to achieve the objective. Jayprakash Narayan made efforts to promote internal and external peace. Jayprakash Narayan achieved world fame due to his leadership of the movement for ‘Total Revolution’. The movement for Total Revolution used Gandhian techniques to achieve total transformation of not only the material conditions of the people but also the moral character of the individual.

Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the most charismatic leaders of the civil rights movement in America. It was under his leadership and guidance that the Black Americans initiated movements of non-violent resistance against racial inequality. Martin Luther King reinterpreted the Gandhian concept of non-violence in the context of Christian ethics. He successfully led the black Americans during the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1956) and the Birmingham Campaign (1963). Both these movements were turning points in the struggle of the blacks to gain civil rights in America. It was the March on Washington (1963) organised under the leadership of Martin Luther King that led to enactment of the civil rights bill. He promoted reconciliation between the black and white people of America by putting forward the concept of ‘Beloved Community’ where both black and white people live in peace and harmony.

16.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1) Explain the innovations introduced by Vinoba Bhave, Jayprakash Narayan and Martin Luther King in the Mahatma Gandhi’s philosophy of non-violent resistance.

2) Write a note on Vinoba Bhave’s Bhoodan Movement.

3) Explain the features of Vinoba Bhave’s Gramdan Movement


5) Write a note on Montgomery bus boycott and the Birmingham Campaign.

6) Explain the conflict resolution strategy of Martin Luther King.

SUGGESTED READINGS


Chakrabarty, Bidyut, and Clayborne Carson. (2013) Confluence of Thought: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. OUP USA.

Martin Luther King, Jr., (2010) *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community*. Beacon Press.


