

Gandhism in Manbhum (1915-1935)

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Abstract: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and his ideology were the main factors of Indian freedom. Gandhism made the Indian unified. These beliefs and practices made them strong unification among the diversification country. Now a days Gandhism became the fundamental structure of Indian society and politics. And also the way of Gandhism connect the people of rural India politically as like Manbhum.

Keywords: Gandhism, Khadi, Charkha, Ideology, Unity, Programme, Constructive, Mass etc.

In this study Gandhi is an event in this geographical region. Gandhian era (1915-1948) of the Indian national movement is understandably seen as the period in which the nationalist movement became multiclass and mass based, gained political and moral legitimacy, achieved enormous power due to its indigenous tone and style. Thus there was a process of synthesis in this process Gandhism merged with 'regionalism' and this phenomenon is very much prominent in the work and life of Rishi Nibaran Chandra Dasgupta, popularly known as 'Gandhi of Manbhum'. Both of them 'Mahatma' in their own ways and there was a affinity between them.

Now this study also briefly present Gandhian movement in India. Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1915, toured around the country, involved himself with the tenants and their problems in Champaran and Kheda. The industrial workers in Ahmedabad organized all India movement which was only partially successful against the Rowlatt Act (1919). He was instrumental setting up the central committee on Khilafat and became virtually a dictator for life of the INC. Since 1920 along with the Pan Islamic he launched the first historic Non-Cooperation movement but withdraw it unfortunately in 1922 the wake of ChauriChoura incident, he subsequently engaged himself with constructive programmes with an emphasis on Khadi, allowing the congress build partial power in legislature. The Bardoli Satyagraha in 1928 brought him back to national attention from where he went on to his second great movement of civil disobedience. He represented congress in the Round Table conference of 1931 and the come out was not satisfactory. After that he engaged himself in harijan uplift along with Indian national movement.

1915-1935 is very crucial time in Manbhum for Nibaran Chandra Dasgupta. Actually he came purulia in 1911 but when he was appointed as Head Master of Purulia Zilla School, he became a popular man in the district. In 1921 he resigned the teaching service and joined congress and actively participated in Gandhi's Non-Cooperation movement in Manbhum. After he became the president of Manbhum district congress, he practically practiced Gandhi's political ideology and philosophy. He popularizes khadi, charkha and established the Shilpashram (as Sabarmoti ashram in Gujrat). His social and political work included education for all campaign untouchability and women's participation in various movement. He published 'Mukti' as the voice of Manbhum.

The view of the Gandhi- Event is not ‘an single authorized voice’ but it is more complex and larger. Though centred around the charismatic leader, ‘Gandhi event’ is a product of several socio political factors, private army of ashram members, volunteers owing personal allegiance to Gandhi and performing the specific function of providing a spiritual aura to whatever Gandhi did or said.

In this case Nibaran and his Socio political works like establishing shilpashram, publishing ‘mukti’ (the first political and cultural journal of Purulia) and preaching Gandhism voice were very ‘New’ for Manbhum. In this way nationalist thought was spread over this region and also the Gandhi and his ideology. The congress party found its base in Manbhum. Manbhum was always a ‘place of protest’ but this protest was local and its impact was also not propagated in Manbhum. Dasgupta was active follower of Gandhi’s ideology and he found became not only a nationalist movement but also a socio- cultural movement with the help of khadi and women education all over the Manbhum. Here presenting an wonderful example from ‘SwarajPathe’ written by socialist Hitesh Ranjan Sanyal. The writer interviewed Shri Shrish Chandra Banerjee, an Indian freedom fighter and a close friend of Nibaran Dasgupta who said that one day he went to Nibaran Chandra’s house in Manbhum. At that time a poor farmer was present there. After some conversation Nibaran went out and walked along with Shrish Chandra and the poor farmer. Here, Shrish mentioned that he felt uneasy because Nibaran was walking with his hand around their shoulder. Shris Chandra was well educated and wearing a gentleman dresses but the farmer was wearing a very small piece of dirty cloth. After returning, Shrish Chandra asked him why did so. Nibaran Chandra replied that he took this kind of opportunities to connect people. Actually the writer mentioned this kind of action of Nibaran helped to spread the Gandhian ideology. So in this way we can find how the voice of Gandhi and the action of Gandhi was regionalized and by this process Gandhi became ‘many’.

This is the actual reality of India- there is so much diversity. Some are rich, some are poor, some brahmins, some sudras, some men, some women, some educated, some illiterate. It is a method of pride that we can bridge this gaps to create unity. We have forget our differences and be unified one nation and all of them ‘Indian’. In this way we can find how the local followers of Gandhiji were the key factors in popularizing Gandhian philosophy in the periphery by their actions. Nibaran Chandra successfully followed Gandhi’s ideology by his constructive actions in Manbhum and he used the constructive programme for Gandhian political mobilization.

Charkha, spinning and khaddar were the other great items in the constructive programme of Gandhian ideology. Khaddar was the symbolic representation of ‘swadeshi’ and ‘swaraj’. Khaddar and charkha were successful in mobilizing the peasants and diffusing the antagonism between communities. He use charkha as a tool of Gandhi’s socio- political thought among the masses and also used this tool very often for spreading the message of Gandhi.

Miraculously, Nibaran Chandra’s image was like Gandhiji also. His saintiness, simple life style and his apparent identity with the Manbhum rural masses helped to popularize Gandhian thought in Manbhum.

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