



THE TECHNO-GANDHIAN NEWS

News Journal from the **TECHNO GANDHIAN CENTER – JULY 2019**

News and information pertaining to the life and principles of Mahatma Gandhi, Gandhian Philosophy of nonviolence and peace, technological impact on culture, society, and current affairs of the world

Norway Minister's tribute to Gandhi

Minister of International Development Nikolai Astrup's introductory speech at the celebration of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. (Oslo, 2 October, 2018)

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

In June this year I had the pleasure of visiting India for the first time as minister. Mahatma Gandhi is recognized as the Father of this great nation, and I am honoured to address this seminar on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary.

Mahatma Gandhi was an exceptional leader and human being.

He has influenced and inspired both individuals and world leaders in the fight against inequality and oppression, and has provided an invaluable contribution to peaceful freedom struggles across the world.

Mahatma Gandhi's struggle was first and foremost for the freedom and independence of the people of India. But his message was also one of universal relevance. His voice for humanity, equality, justice and non-violence gained global recognition.

In 2007, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, the 2nd of October, was declared by the United Nations as the International Day of Non-Violence, and is today celebrated all over the globe.

Despite grand thoughts, his was a life of austerity, tolerance, courage and struggle. A person who stood up for what he believed in and who lived as he preached.

He spent a total of approximately five years in prison and was imprisoned six times in South Africa and seven times in India. All for freedom, human rights and justice.

He was known for his devout Hindu faith, but he advocated respect and appreciation for all faiths. He believed in, and argued for, the essential unity of all peoples and all religions. He made powerful efforts to unite people across ethnic and religious lines.

His philosophy and devotion strongly inspired the human rights movement of the 20th century. Today, this movement is under renewed pressure in all corners of the world. In many cases, conflict still persists along religious and ethnic lines, often within the borders of nation states.

Mahatma Gandhi's vision of an independent India based on religious pluralism was initially challenged by separatist forces based on religion, eventually leading to the partition of India, at a great human cost.

Today, Gandhi's vision of an inclusive, secular India continues to be challenged, despite India's fundamentally multi-religious fabric.

In this time of uncertainty and disruption, the celebration of Gandhi's birthday is a reminder of the continued relevance of his teachings and of their utmost importance all over the world.

We live in a time not only of uncertainty and disruption, but also a time where a more aggressive and polarizing political rhetoric seem to be gaining ground. Let us therefore remind ourselves of what Gandhi not only said, but also did. I quote; "In a gentle way, you can shake the world".

Gandhi's teachings also remind us that change often begins at the individual level, and that we all, as human beings, have the capability to change the world through peaceful activism.

Today, we are celebrating a remarkable man, whose achievements should continue to inspire us, both as leaders and individuals.

Allow me to congratulate you warmly on the 150th birth anniversary of the Mahatma Gandhi.

Many thanks and all the best wishes for a successful seminar.



The Techno-Gandhian Philosophy

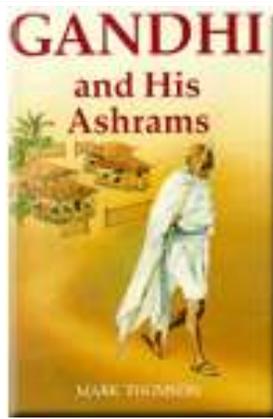
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Mahatma Gandhi Animation
Graphics
Video





Gandhi and Theosophy

During 1880s, in America the impact of Hindu beliefs on Western philosophy found its clearest expression, in the Transcendentalist movement. The Transcendentalists valued intuition above empirical experience. Gandhi no doubt was aware of Transcendentalist thought through his acquaintance with the writings of Salt and Carpenter, but he did not read the works of two luminaries of the movement, Emerson and Thoreau, until later in South Africa.

It was not Transcendentalism but Theosophy that introduced Gandhi to the fountain of wisdom at the heart of the Hindu tradition. Founded by the Russian émigré **Madame Blavatsky** to propagate her system of theosophy, emphasising the occult, the esoteric and the mystical, the **Theosophical Society** represented itself as an eternal religion expressing the fundamental truths of all religions.

Its three declared objectives were:

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

The society's motto was, "**There is no religion higher than Truth**", but it was from Hinduism essentially that it derived its mystical and esoteric orientation.

Gandhi's first contact with Theosophy came in 1889 when two Theosophist friends sought his assistance in reading the Sanskrit original of the Bhagavad Gita. They had read Sir Edwin Arnold's verse translation of the Gita, The Song Celestial and wished to read the original. Gandhi felt ashamed that he had read the Gita in neither Sanskrit nor Gujarati, but he offered to assist them to the best of his ability. The following verses profoundly impressed him:

*If one
Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds Recklessness;
then the memory-all betrayed
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone.*

The theme of self-mastery as the basis for moral action struck a deep chord. He later described the Gita "as the book par excellence for the knowledge of Truth".

Gandhi's friends encouraged him to read Theosophical literature and become an active member of the Society. He read works by Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant, and was introduced to both at the Blavatsky Lodge, but the doctrines of Theosophy per se, particularly those concerned with the occult, had little appeal for him. He shared the society's faith that truth was the highest embodiment of religion and that all religions represent the same truth, but it was their praise of his own religion that impressed him most, just as he had discovered a theoretical basis for his observance of vegetarianism among the radicals of the Vegetarian Society, so too his interest in Hinduism was stimulated by approaching its doctrines from the Western viewpoint. "One of the most significant facts about the life and vocation of Gandhi," observed Thomas Merton, "**was his discovery of the East through the West.**"

Source: From "Gandhi and his Ashrams" by Mark Thomson

Nature and Natural Resources Photo Series – XXVI

Lakes and rivers have been dried up due to the failure of South-West monsoon rains. Only timely monsoon rains bring water to the water bodies. Wells and Borewells are also slowly drying up leaving water scarcity the biggest problem in the state. This picture shows the vastly dried up lake in Porur, Chennai which was supplying million litres of water to the city until the end of last year.



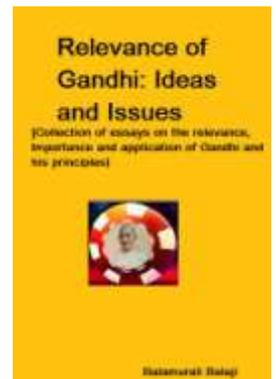
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Airless tyres to avoid puncture by 2024

Jointly developed by Michelin and General Motors, the new prototype tyres, called the UPTIS or "Unique Puncture-proof Tyre System", is expected to be introduced on passenger models as early as 2024. Michelin Airless Wheel completely eliminates the risk of flat tyres and blowouts.

Michelin and General Motors presented a new generation of airless wheel technology for passenger vehicles. It's called the Uptis Prototype at the Movin'On Summit for sustainable mobility. The joint research agreement will see both the companies validate the Uptis Prototype with the goal of introducing the Uptis on passenger models as early as 2024. Michelin and GM are testing the Uptis Prototype, beginning with vehicles like the Chevrolet Bolt EV. Later this year, the companies will initiate real-world testing of Uptis on a test fleet of Bolt EV vehicles in Michigan.



Michelin has been working at making airless tyres for the past five years now. The company showcased the Tweel concept in 2014 and an investment of \$50 million has gone into the new plant for making it ready for commercial usage. The Uptis is a version of this and is airless. It completely eliminates the risk of flat tyres and blowouts.

Florent Menegaux, chief executive officer for Michelin Group said, "Uptis demonstrates that Michelin's vision for a future of sustainable mobility is clearly an achievable dream. Through work with strategic partners like GM, who share our ambitions for transforming mobility, we can seize the future today."

The Uptis Prototype is re-engineered for today's passenger vehicles, and it is also well suited to emerging forms of mobility. The vehicles and fleets of tomorrow - whether autonomous, all electric, shared service or other applications - will demand near-zero maintenance from the tire to maximize their operating capabilities.

The Uptis features a different architecture and composite materials, which enables the tyre to bear the car's weight at road-going speeds. Approximately 200 million tyres worldwide are scrapped prematurely every year as a result of punctures, damage from road hazards or improper air pressure that causes uneven wear.

Source: www.ndtv.com



Do Cinemas and TV shows spoil the cultural mindset of the people?

Written by Balamurali Balaji

There has been a talk around the state of Tamilnadu, India amid scholars, social activists and well-wishers that too much of exposure to emotional and sensational stuffs screened through movies and television shows and serials has done enough damage to the long traditions and cultural mindset of the viewers. Today's movies are reflecting the downside of the people's character, their emotions and actions that have been

precisely dubbed as anti-social violent. The obscenity and violent themes and content shown in the movies are coming back to the people who view them on a regular basis. It also influences the way people think and behave and set their lifestyles.*

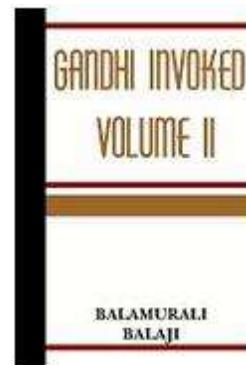
Movies have been known for many decades for just creating fashion and imaginative ideas. However, movies have the potential to alter the entire attitude towards life, which is more than what the movies of the past have made. Yesteryear's movies are characterized a dramatic plot and fictitious dialogue played by actors who took it as a serious profession. Even in those days, movies have made people laugh while some others made cry. Movies have also made people die.

But, today's movies radically influence the people during their life that runs until death. Television serials and shows are no less a malicious than movies. Whereas the movies are hunted for destiny, watching TV is an uninvited syndrome whilst both causes trauma and addiction. Studies show that addiction causes insomnia, eye-sore and stress during work. Prolonged hours of watching TV and frequent movie-goers feel hyper-tension during the normal hours of day and some experience dull, sloppy tendencies preventing them to engage in their regular work of the day. Scientists discover that sleeping hours of a regular person drastically reduces to 4 to 5 hours from 7 to 8 hours a day.

Content and visual scenes in the movies and serials are highly dramatized and exaggerated hoping to create more attraction and interest for the viewers. It is also justified by many directors and producers substantiate the need for such hyperbole as they are intended to give a message. It has been in the culture of Indian cinema that dialogues and sentimental scenes dominate the entire movie in order to give a strong message to the public viewers about some societal issue or a communal event. Even today, movies and television are used to convey message to the public as per the rationale set by the Censor board. However, the board has to go with the changing times and work on the rationale seen in the public life, social needs and political influences. Therefore, today's movies and serials are the outcome of the people's reaction and overstated imagination by the creators. It is like a cyclic process that movies spoil the state of mind of the viewers and they take the inspiration from that spoiled society. In fact, it is the overwhelming reaction and influence created in the minds of people that drives the creators to come up with the next part of the movies. More the influence and inspiration, a movie could come about with part 2, part 3 and so on.

The spirit of Gandhi invokes you again!

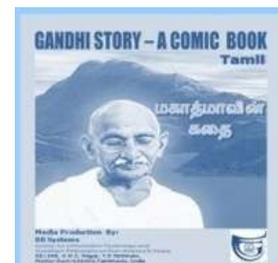
Gandhi Invoked – Volume II is available on print and as eBook.



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Today's youth are trying to imitate and characterize themselves based on the movies and shows they watch which leads to the ruining of their education and career. The Tik-Tok kind of apps aid none other than such damage and disrespect to the childhood days.

Tamilnadu government has recently announced that all shops including cinema halls could open 24 hours a day. This allow businesses to run more than usual but invites all kinds of problems including social in-balance and the way people interact, socialize. It also creates a new kind of night-life that could obviously alter the current, balanced, regular lifestyle in the society. Youngsters and students need to be observed and practically be examined for hanging loosely in the shopping malls and marketplaces during late hours of the day. Needless to mention the crimes happening during the night times.

In the interest of the public, and to maintain order, discipline and social harmony, Tamilnadu government must revoke this order.

*- Title of the movies and shows are intentionally not mentioned in this article.

Spitting - A tradition?

Written by Balamurali Balaji



When you walk along the roadsides, if someone spit across your pathway, the immediate reaction you show to him is a resenting stare at his face without a word. You may be busy in reaching your office on time or just not caring much about what's happening along the roadside giving little attention to people as your thoughts running wildly over the thing you ought to do at that moment. Perhaps, you may not have time even to scold him in harsh words or utter about the un-cultured act of spitting.

In cities like Chennai and Mumbai, spitting is a common act you can see in many roads alongside market places and shopping areas. It is probably because of the crowd that annoy us leaving no space to move out of the spit, but to land at the spit, sometimes.

Surely, spitting is an act of disgust and insult. It is disgusting as we have to see someone spitting in front of us with us dressed neatly. It is repulsive as we are disturbed by the spit and we never know what we do as a retort. Some of us feel insulted when someone spit in front of us and this we feel especially when a known person spit and his eyes looking at us. In many parts of India and according to our culture, if someone spits in front of you, it means that he expresses 'hatred, offence and insult'.

Spitting is also considered as an habitual conduct by those who chew tobacco, pawn masala, betal nuts, kutka etc. In villages most of the people are used to chew tobacco and betal nuts and leaves and spray the 'spit' across wherever they go and while doing whatever. Pathways, walls, trees, and any standing surface, people simply spit on them just like that. When it comes to culture, spitting becomes part of it just as chewing tobacco. Our ancestors did both.

Today's youth follow the same 'culture' and set in to chewing 'kutka' and pawn masala. They spit even while riding on their bikes. People travelling by buses and other vehicles are also not an exception. It is just a matter of luck that the 'spit' doesn't fall on others. Nobody take it serious until it lands at them. At times, an indifferent scuffle also happens among the people for the cause of it. Thus, spitting has become a tradition in our country and it undermines the very definition of culture.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "Mutual courtesy and respect was the foundation of culture.." And, it requires little sense and knowledge to follow his statement on culture. It would be much worse if it has to be curtailed by passing a legislation or rule.

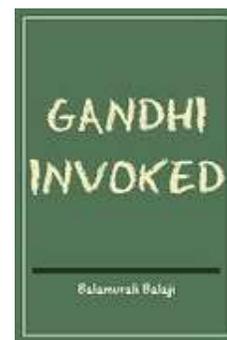
Mutual courtesy must be learned and practiced. It demands cleanliness and affection. Mutual respect must be understood in terms of humanity and human values. If you are told that spitting on the road is insulting the by-passers, don't you stop doing that? If you are told that the passer-by is felt insulted and might react ruthlessly as a reply, don't you stop that? These things cannot be taught or learnt at the school. It needs to be cultivated by extending your self-respect to others and practiced mutually.

The first step towards stopping the habit of spitting is to question yourself what if some one spits in front of you at your footstep.

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