

Relationship between satyagraha and swaraj for gandhi



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The word ' Satya' means ' Truth' and ' Graha' means ' Force', Satyagraha therefore means ' Truth force' or the force obtained by the practice of truth. The term Satyagraha is largely associated with non-violence. Gandhi advocated Satyagraha as a means to attain ' Swaraj' or ' self-governance'. Satyagraha is a political philosophy propagated and practiced by Gandhi and his followers. The practitioners of this philosophy are called ' satyagrahis'.

The satyagrahis are guided by the principles advocated by Gandhi based on Yoga Sutra; non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity, non-possession and fearlessness.

The essential elements of Satyagraha are civil-disobedience and non-cooperation as a means to attain freedom. Civil-disobedience entailed breaking a law which is found as unjust and courting arrest. Non-cooperation meant " refusing to co-operate with the opponent, refusing to submit to the injustice being fought" (What is Satyagraha?

). " Gandhiji felt that laws which were totally against the welfare of the people could be fought peacefully by organizing mass-protests in a civil way' (Jyotsna Kamat) The basic principles of Satyagraha are essentially based on non-violence.

It is observed as a basic fact that violence brings more violence. Violence causes destruction, damage to people and property and any violent protest, even for a right cause, invariably leaves a negative mark on the society.

Non-violence on the contrary is free from the negative aspects of violence, yet non-violent protests send a very strong message and are successful.

Gandhi believed that by demonstrating protests in a non-violent manner it is <https://assignbuster.com/relationship-between-satyagraha-and-swaraj-for-gandhi/>

possible to completely transform the antagonist and effect a positive change. He believed that transformation in the antagonist mindset can only be brought about by non-violent means. He worked to 'convert' the antagonist, to truly transform him from within which forms the core values of Satyagraha.

Thus the political philosophy of Satyagraha with non-violence as its essence is an ideology that came to be widely accepted and practiced. It is a concept that has been instrumental to the independence of India. The concept of 'civilized' protests with no damage to public property and protesting without resorting to violence of any sort is commendable. Gandhi's idea of civil disobedience and civil non-cooperation emphasizes a respect for the general rule of the law and is focused on protesting only against any law that is felt as unjust.

"Swaraj lays stress on governance not by a hierarchical government, but self governance through individuals and community building. The focus is on political decentralization" (Wikipedia). The basic idea of Swaraj was to evolve a political system where the power ultimately lies in the hands of the people, building a government 'for the people and by the people'.

"The real goal of the freedom struggle was not only to secure political azadi (independence) from Britain, but rather to gain true swaraj (liberation and self-rule)" (What is Swaraj?) as Gandhi explains "It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves". Swaraj is Gandhi's endeavor to build a political system where the common man is empowered and he had a spiritual outlook towards his political philosophy which is reflected in the principles of Swaraj.

According to Gandhi, "at the individual level Swaraj is vitally connected with <https://assignbuster.com/relationship-between-satyagraha-and-swaraj-for-gandhi/>

the capacity for dispassionate self-assessment, ceaseless self-purification and growing self-reliance". He believed that it is important for people to rule themselves properly and never be a disturbance to the society.

Swaraj is when everyone is his own ruler and the government facilitates this individual and community development. Works Cited Jyotsna Kamat. 14 April 2005. Mahatma Gandhi: Story of Satyagraha. © 1996-2009 Kamat's Potpourri. <http://www.kamat.com/mmgandhi/satyagraha.htm>. 18 July 2009 Satyagraha. Wikipedia Foundation Inc. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satyagraha>. 18 July 2009 What is Satyagraha?. Gandhi Research Foundation. www.gandhifoundation.net. 18 July 2009 What is Swaraj?. The Swaraj Foundation. www.swaraj.org . 18 July 2009