

**Semester-II**  
**Multidisciplinary Course**

**UNDERSTANDING GANDHI AND AMBEDKAR**

**Course objectives:**

The primary objective of this course is to offer a thorough understanding of the lives and philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Students will gain insight into the political and social ideologies of both leaders, allowing for a deeper appreciation of their contributions to Indian society and thought. The course aims to critically analyze Gandhi and Ambedkar's perspectives on crucial issues such as caste and religion, highlighting their differing approaches and solutions. Additionally, it will explore Gandhi's concept of Swadeshi and his critique of modern industrial civilization, providing a comprehensive overview of his vision for a self-sufficient and ethical society. Through this course, students will develop a nuanced understanding of these influential figures and their lasting impact on contemporary social and political discourse.

**Expected Learning Outcomes:**

**Unit I:** The purpose of this unit is to make students understand the basic philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. The philosophical principles of Mahatma Gandhi need to be understood in a proper context. Students will also have a detailed understanding of the lives of Gandhi and Ambedkar, which will aid in comprehending their philosophies.

**Unit II:** Students will be familiarised with the ideas of Ambedkar starting from caste to democracy.

**Unit III:** Students will be able to explain the political and social ideas of Gandhi and Ambedkar.

**Unit IV:** Students will be able to articulate the ideas of Gandhi and Ambedkar and will be able to analyse why Gandhi favoured Swadeshi and his critique of modern industrial civilization

**Unit I: Key points of Gandhian philosophy**

- a) Truth and Non-violence
- b) Satyagraha
- c) Hind Swaraj
- d) Swadeshi
- e) Critique of modern civilization

**Unit II: Ideas of Ambedkar**

- a) Ambedkar's view on democracy
- b) Socialism vs. Social Justice
- c) Views on Caste

**Unit III: Gandhi and Ambedkar's view on caste**

- a) Dalit vs Harijan.
- b) Varna Vs Caste
- c) Possibility of change in Hindu social order
- d) Poona Pact

**Unit IV: Gandhi and Ambedkar's views on Politics and religion**

- a) Gandhi's views on Hindu, Muslim, and Christianity
- b) Ambedkar's views on Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhism
- c) Planning & Development
- d) Land & Labour
- e) Women's Question

### Essential Readings:

1. Ambedkar, B. R. (1945). *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables*. Thacker.
2. Gandhi, M. K. (1938). *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*. Navajivan Publishing House.
3. Jaffrelot, C. (2005). *Dr. Ambedkar and Untouchability: Fighting the Indian Caste System*. Columbia University Press.
4. Kumar, A. (2015). *Radical Equality: Ambedkar, Gandhi, and the Risk of Democracy*. Stanford University Press.
5. Parekh, B. (2001). *Gandhi: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
6. Parel, A. J. (Ed.). (1997). *Gandhi: 'Hind Swaraj' and other writings*. Cambridge University Press.
7. Rodrigues, V. (2011). Reading Texts and Traditions: The Ambedkar-Gandhi Debate. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 56-66.
8. Rodrigues, V. (Ed.). (2002). *The Essential Writings of B. R. Ambedkar*. Oxford University Press.
9. Roy, A. (2017). *The doctor and the saint: Caste, Race, and Annihilation of caste: The Debate between B. R. Ambedkar and MK Gandhi*. Haymarket Books+ ORM.
10. Thakur, R. (2022). *Gandhi and Ambedkar: Understanding Their Relations*. Aakar Books

### Additional Readings:

1. Barua, A. (2019). Revisiting the Gandhi-Ambedkar debates over 'Caste': the multiple resonances of varṇa. *Journal of Human Values*, 25(1), 25-40.
2. Bayly, C. A. (2011). *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Omvedt, G. (2004). *Ambedkar: Towards an Enlightened India*. Penguin Books.
4. Ranjan, R. (2015). Gandhi and Ambedkar on Human Dignity. *Bombay Sarvodaya Mandal & Gandhi Research Foundation, Adapted from 'Gandhi Marg'*, 37(2).
5. Singh, A. (2014). Gandhi and Ambedkar: Irreconcilable Differences?. *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, 18(3), 413-449.

### Internet Resources:

The internet resources include online articles and e-contents published on websites, blogs, e-Newspaper, online magazines, or scholarly journals, digital repositories, Audio- Visual contents.

1. Gandhi Heritage Portal. *Collected Works of Gandhi*. [www.gandhiheritageportal.org](http://www.gandhiheritageportal.org)
2. Columbia University lecture on Ambedkar. [www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/southasia/cuivl/Ambedkar.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/southasia/cuivl/Ambedkar.html)
3. Gandhi Serve Foundation. [www.gandhiserve.org](http://www.gandhiserve.org)
4. Ambedkar Foundation. [www.ambedkarfoundation.nic.in](http://www.ambedkarfoundation.nic.in)

**Activities to do:**

- 1. Lectures and Discussions:** In-depth lectures on Gandhi's and Ambedkar's philosophies, followed by group discussions are to be organised.
- 2. Documentary Screenings:** Watching documentaries and biopics related to Gandhi and Ambedkar could be conducted. For instance: "MAHATMA - Life of Gandhi 1869-1948" - full version available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uibI7s5URiU> ; Gandhi movie: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BEU8A\\_JZPU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BEU8A_JZPU) ; Special documentary on Dr. B.R Ambedkar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrEjcNI60tk> ; Bhimrao Ambedkar's iconic interview from 1955: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wf3VJCpNMqI> .
- 3. Critical Essays:** Writing essays analyzing specific aspects of Gandhis and Ambedkars thoughts.
- 4. Debates:** Organizing debates on topics such as Swadeshi vs. Modern Civilization and Socialism vs. Social Justice.
- 5. Presentations:** Students will give presentations on selected topics such as the Poona Pact, Dalit vs. Harijan, and Gandhi's and Ambedkar's views on religion.
- 6. Field Visits:** Visiting places of historical importance related to Gandhi and Ambedkar, such as Sabarmati Ashram and Ambedkar Memorial.