Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani

Academic Under-Graduate Studies Division & Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Gandhian Thoughts HSS F345 first semester 2023-24

Mid-Semester Exam Mon 09 Oct 2023 (09:00-10:30 hrs) in Rooms 6161 & 6162 Closed Book; Total Marks = 30; Time = 90 mins

Suggested guidelines

Please answer all questions: 6 questions x 5 marks each = 30 marks. Wherever necessary and possible, the break-up of marks for specific queries is given within parentheses. Please structure your answers for which you might want to use the last page of your booklet.

Question 1 (5 marks)

Read the following passage and demonstrate the influence, if any, of Leo Tolstoy on Gandhi and the *Hind Swaraj* (5 marks).



Excerpts from Leo Tolstoy's letter to Tarakanath Das (May 1908) published as A Letter to a Hindoo

Retrieved https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7176/7176-h/7176-h.htm

"Your letter, as well as the articles in *Free Hindustan* and Indian political literature generally, shows that most of the leaders of public opinion among your people no longer attach any significance to the religious teachings that were and are professed by the people of India, and recognized no possibility of freeing the people from the oppression they endure except by adopting the irreligious and profoundly immoral social arrangements under which the English and other pseudo-Christian nations live today. [...]

With a light heart, and in the twentieth century, you – an adherent of a religious people- deny their law, feeling convinced of your scientific enlightenment and your right to do so, and you repeat (do not take this amiss) the amazing stupidity indoctrinated in you by the advocates of the use of violence – the enemies of truth, the servants first of theology and then of science – your European teachers.

You say that the English have enslaved your people and hold them in subjection because the latter have not resisted resolutely enough and have not met force by force. But the case is just the opposite. If the English enslaved the people of India, it is just because the latter recognized, and still recognize, force is the fundamental principle of the social order. In accord with the principle, they submitted to their little Rajahs, and on their behalf struggled against one another, fought the Europeans, the English, and are now trying to fight with them again.

Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani

Academic Under-Graduate Studies Division & Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Gandhian Thoughts HSS F345 first semester 2023-24

Mid-Semester Exam Mon 09 Oct 2023 (09:00-10:30 hrs) in Rooms 6161 & 6162 Closed Book; Total Marks = 30; Time = 90 mins

A commercial company enslaved a nation comprising two hundred million. Tell this to a man free from superstition and he will fail to grasp what these words mean. What does it mean that thirty thousand men, not athletes but rather weak and ordinary people, have subdued two hundred million vigorous, clever, capable and freedom-loving people? Do not the figures make it clear that is not the English, who have enslaved the Indians, but the Indians who have enslaved themselves? [...]

As soon as men live entirely in accord with the law of love natural to their hearts and now revealed to them, which excludes all resistance by violence, and therefore, hold aloof from all participation in violence – as soon as this happens, not only will hundreds be unable to enslave million, but not even millions will be able to enslave a single individual. Do not resist the evil-doer and take no part in doing so, either in the violent deeds of the administration in the law courts, the collection of taxes, or above all in soldiering, and no one in the world will be able to enslave you."

Question 2 (1+4=5 marks)

Identify the following details of *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* -- language in which it was originally written; publication date; publication form; and name of the journal where it was published (1). Who was Raichandbhai? How did he mentor Gandhi? (4)

Question 3 (5 marks)

People of Indian origin were discriminated against in South Africa between 1893 and 1914. Briefly explain the five most oppressive modes of discrimination that they encountered (5).

Question 4 (5 marks)

Gandhi has been described as a racist for his remarks on Native South Africans. Rationalise your assessment of the allegations of racism against Gandhi (5).

Question 5 (5 marks)

According to the *Hind Swaraj*, the Modern Western Civilization rested on certain foundations (systems or institutions or professions). Name any five of these foundations and briefly explain how each one contributed towards sustaining this civilization (5).

Question 6 (5 marks)

List any two values of Modern Western Civilization that Gandhi disliked. What reasons did he cite for loathing these values? What were the alternative values and paths indicated by Gandhi for achieving swaraj for India? (5)