

COSMOCENTRIC VIEW:

Gandhi's worldview was cosmocentric, unlike most Western thought which separated humans from animals and placed humans at the top of the hierarchy. Gandhi believed that the universe was a well-coordinated whole with all parts linked in a system of interdependence. He saw humans as an integral part of the cosmos and believed that everything in the universe bore the mark of divinity and needed to be approached with cosmic piety and friendliness. Gandhi thought that the universe was a common inheritance of all living beings and that humans should respect nature's rights and cherish its diversity. While he believed that human life was superior to non-human life, he recognized that non-human beings were also divine in nature and legitimate members of the cosmos. Gandhi believed that violence was built into the human condition and was unavoidable, so the only moral course of action was to minimize it by reducing one's wants and taking tender care of nature.

INTERDEPENDENCE:

According to Gandhi, human beings were interdependent, and their existence was owed to their parents, the stable and peaceful society, sages, saints, savants, and scientists. Since the debts could never be repaid, individuals should contribute to collective well-being and recognize the conditions of their existence. Gandhi believed that every human action was both self- and other-regarding. In his view, the degradation of others also degraded the degraders, as it damaged their potential for good, pride, self-respect, and raised collective moral, psychological, and financial cost. Gandhi's concept of indivisible humanity formed the basis of his critique of systems of oppression and exploitation, as the exploitation and degradation of victims dehumanized and degraded the oppressors as well.

Four-dimensionality:

The article discusses Mahatma Gandhi's view of human beings as four-dimensional in nature. According to him, human beings have a body, a mind, an ātman or spirit, and a sense of universal love and service. The body is the seat of the senses and the source of desires, while the mind is an instrument of knowledge and action. The ātman is the manifestation of the cosmic spirit, and the destiny of the ātman is to recognize its identity with the cosmic spirit and merge into it. Gandhi believed that by shedding the illusion of particularity and becoming a transparent medium of the cosmic spirit, an individual can tap into enormous spiritual energy and exercise great moral and spiritual power over others.

MORAL THEORY:

Gandhi's moral theory is based on his belief in serving and becoming one with all living beings, which involves refraining from causing harm and helping them realize their full potential. He believed that morality and spirituality were inseparable, as spirituality consisted of becoming one with the cosmic spirit and cultivating love for all living beings, which in turn entailed morality. Gandhi argued that since morality required uncalculating service of all living beings, no human being would have the reason, disposition, passion, and energy to do so without an appropriate spiritual orientation. He compared the moral man to an honest mercenary and the spiritual man to an ardent patriot, emphasizing the importance of spiritual orientation in guiding moral actions.