

75 People who Changed the World

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Abstract: *I have come across a book as mentioned above edited by IRA RIFKIN forwarded by Dr. ROBERT COLES winner of the Pulitzer Prize, published by Jaico publishing House A2 - Jash Chambers, 7A Phirozshah Mehta Road Fort Mumbai - 400 001 and PRINTED by Repro India Limited, Mumbai. This book includes profiles of spiritual Leaders such as - Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Dalai Lama, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Param Hansa Yoganand, Ramana Maharishi, Thich Nhat Hanh, Mother Teresa, Deepak Chopra and Many more.*

Keywords: spiritual leaders, inspirational books, Ira Rifkin, Mahatma Gandhi, Dalai Lama

Research Methods

No Research Methods are added because these authors are of great eminence and beyond any one's capacity to go beyond them.

Abstract / Criticism

I have nothing to say about the aforesaid authors as they were all genius in their own field of writing but I was wondered to see that several great personalities like Swami Vivekanand who rocked the Parliament of Religion's by addressing the Americans at his Chicago speech as "Dear Brothers and Sisters" is not way greater. Jesus Christ's sermon on the mount is no less inferior and his rising from the dead is no less unexpected. P. B. Oah's Scholar Extra ordinary and Prof max Muller who learnt Sanskrit at Varanasi is not untalkative and there are many more.

I begin my article with Mother Teresa (1910 – 1997)

A Roman catholic nun whose dedication to helping the poor in India earned her the name of Saint of the Gutters, Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity an order of nuns devoted to serving the poor in Calcutta, India. Today the order has grown from twelve sisters in Calcutta over 3000 worldwide. For her work she was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1979.

Mother Teresa was an Albanian, born Agness Gonxha Bojaxhlu in Skojoje, in what is now Macedonia. At 18, she joined the order of Sisters of our Lady of Loreto in Ireland where she took the name of sister Teresa. She was sent to Calcutta to teach at St. Mary's High School, where she was loved by the children who gave her the nick name 'Ma'. She later became the Principal of Saint Mary's. During this time she learned Hindi, Bengali and helped the care of the sick. In 1946 while travelling by train to be treated for tuberculosis, she received the inner "call within a call" and left Saint Mary's to minister to the sick and the poor in the slums at Calcutta. Two years later she left the Loreto Community receiving training and went to live with the poor.

In 1950 Mother Teresa founded her own order, the Missionaries of Charity, in addition to the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, she embraced a fourth vow of service to the poor. Soon after she opened, he Nirmal Hriday Home for dying destitutes in Calcutta, In her later years she was forced to scale back her activities because of ill health but remained head of her order in 1996, a year before her death. The Roman Catholic Church has begun to declare Mother Teresa a saint.

Her Words

It is not enough for us to say, "I love God, but I do not love my neighbour". St. John says that you are a liar that it you say you love God and do not love your neighbour. How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love they neighbour whom you see, whom you touch with whom you live? And so it is very important for us to realize that you love, to be true has to hurt - (Nobel peace acceptance speech 1979)

Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965)

One of the world's most famous humanitarians, Albert Schweitzer, was a physician, philosopher, theologian, and a musicologist. Although Schweitzer was a true citizen of the world whose philanthropy knew no national racial, or ideological boundaries, It was his missionary work in Africa that won him the 1952 Nobel Peace prize. His religious philosophy is summed up in his famous phrase "reverence for life" which implies love and compassion toward all living beings. He made a significant contribution to biblical scholarship by demonstrating that any search for the "historical Jesus" is inherently subjective and scientifically because of the lack of non - biblical sources, while affirming the mystical spirit of Jesus and emphasizing the eschatological aspects of teaching. Schweitzer gained renown as an organist and wrote a major study of Johnson Sebastian Bach, which stressed the religious nature of his music.

The son of a Lutheran pastor, Albert Schweitzer was born in Kysberg, Upper Alsace, which was then in Germany and now in France. In 1899 he received a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Strasbourg; in 1900 he earned a doctorate in theology as well and was ordained as the curate of the church of Saint Nicholas in Strasbourg. Out of compassion for human suffering, he began to study medicine in 1905 and earned his MD from the University of Strasbourg in 1913.

Moved by the sight of the Bartholdi statue of a dejected slave in an Alsatian town square, he chose to work in Africa. In 1913 he established a missionary hospital in Lamberene, Gabon (then in French Equatorial Africa), whose he treated thousands of Africans, especially for sleeping sickness and leprosy. Along with his wife, Helena Breslau, who worked with him as a nurse, he spent most of the rest of his life there, travelling occasionally to Europe for fund raising and visiting the United States once, in 1949, to address the Goethe Festival in Colorado. He used his Nobel Prize money to expand his hospital and build a leper colony. Queen Elizabeth II awarded Schweitzer Britain's order of Merit in 1955.

His Words

Only when we are able to attribute ourselves to such actions by giving ourselves as will produce results of real value. As long as we look on our existence in the world as meaning, there is no point in desiring to affect anything in the world.

- The philosophy of civilization, P/XIII
Nothing of value in the world is ever accomplished without enthusiasm and self-sacrifice.
- The Philosophy of Civilization P/XIII
The earth no longer has in reserve, at had once gifted to the people as yet unused, who can relieve us and take our place in some place of civilization.
- The Philosophy of Civilization P/39.

Bertrand Russell (1872 – 1970)

Logic, Philosophy, mathematics, education, and religion were all fields that grew and changed because of the contributions of Bertrand Arthur William Russell. He committed atheism made him a spokesman for a secular age whose goal was to wrest ethics and morality from the religious world.

Born in Wales and Educated in Cambridge, England, Russell received his bachelor degree of arts in mathematics and to garner prestigious prizes in literature. Although he wrestled with religious questions in his philosophical studies. Russell was an atheist and wrote extensively on his belief that faith in God is unjustifiable in the face of the depth and perpetuity of evil in the world. Deeply committed to the scientific method and logical mathematic formulations Russell straggled with the question of whether, and to what extent, it is possible to what extent, it is possible to know anything.

His scientific pursuit of a theory of knowledge led him to abandon the idealistic philosophy of his student days and develop a “new realism” and a “new philosophy of logic”.

In addition to being a mathematician, logician and philosophy, he was a long-standing social activist for progressive causes, and during the 1950 and 1960s he became a public opponent of the proliferatian of nuclear weapons and the war in vietnam. His commitment to social justice had extended to his youth, though when he experienced two convictions and six months of jail time for antiwar protests during world War I.

In 1955 Russell released, with Albert Einstein, the Einstein Russell manifesto which called for an end to the development of nuclear weapons. A year earlier he delivered a famous broad cast on the BBC fettle “Man’s Peril”, in which he warned of the dangers of the so-called Bikini. H - Bomb tests in 1961 he was imprisoned dfor one week for his protests of nuclear weapon development. Russell died at the age of ninety-eight in Penrhynedraeth Wales.

His Word’s

Religion is based, I think primarily and mainly upon fear. It is partly the terror of the unknown and partly as I have said, the wish to feel that you have a kind of elder brother who will stand by you in all your troubles and disputes. For the basis of the whole thing fear of the mysterious fear of defeat, fear

of death. Fear is the parent of quality and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand and hand.

“Why I am not a Christian” in Why I am not a Christian P/22

On some points my conclusions have been to confirm my creed, where others I have been irresistibly led to such conclusion as would not only shook my people but have given me such pain. I have arrived at certainty in few things, but my opinion, even where not convictions, are on some things nearly such I have not the courage to tell my people that I scarcely believe in immortality.

— “First Efforts” in my Philosophical development P/21.

Shirdi Sai Baba (1835 – 1988)

Shirdi Sai Baba’s life demonstrated that great spiritual personalities transcend traditional concepts of how saints and Gurus accomplish their work. Known for his eccentric behaviour, Sri Sai Baba appeared mad to some but wise widely recognized a master of the highest caller. His emphasis on the unity of all religions was an early model for today’s ideal of religious tolerance and universalism.

His personal history is known but it is thought that Sai baba was born a Hindu of the Brahmin caste in a village of Hyderabad State, India. He appeared one day in the quiet farming village Shirdi, teen years old. After living for some months under a tree, he took up residence in a local mosque. People began to call him Sai Baba. Sai meaning “Lord” and Baba meaning “Father”. This might be translated as “Holy Father”.

His magnetic presence and luminous eyes attracted devotees from both Hindus and Muslim communities. Combining traits of the two faiths, he dressed in Muslim fashion while wearing Hindu caste marks on his foresaid and burned a continuous sacred fire (dhuni) in the mosque, a practice associated more with Hinduism (and Zoroastrianism) than with Islam.

Instead of giving conventional teachings, Sai Baba bestowed his grace an help symbolically through cryptic actions, stories, and parables. He employed shock tactics, such as displaying a fiery temper or ordering a strict vegetation to eat meat. He would demand money from visitors and then give it away or use it in mysterious away in rituals to aid the spiritual advancement of devotees. He gained renown as wonder worker and for his spiritual power. One occasion, he used his arm to stir a boiling pot without injury, on another, he deliberately burned his hand in the dhuni fire, explaining that he did this to save a baby who had fallen into flames in a distant village. But thought his healings and miracles (such as granting progeny to childless couples) were flamboyant, he discouraged devotees from seeking powers and visions. He trained his followers to attract the grace of God through devotion and obedience to Guru, and encouraged normal family life rather than renunciation and asceticism. His other characteristics included delight in music and dance, habitual smoking a clay pipe, and a love for dogs.

Shirdi Sai Baba named no successor but among his well - known disciples and Meher Baba and Upasana maharaj, who became masters in their own right. Many accept the contemporary sathya sai baba as his reincarnation while

others believe that Shirdi Sai Baba himself continues to bless his devotees who are estimated at up to 10 million people worldwide. His tomb - shrine at Shirdi is a major pilgrimage site.

His Words

He often spoke symbolically Once Deshpande, a devotee was bitten by snake and in his terror, rushed straight to the mosque. When he reached the steps, however Baba shouted "Don't come up, Brahmin! Go back! Get down!" Even in the fear of death, he did not dare disobey Sai Baba and stood there in mute supplication. A moment later Baba again spoke this time in a gentle voice come up now – "The Fakir" is gracious to you. You will recover.

"The Fakir" was Sri Sai Baba's way of referring to God. Deshpande now found that in the command not to come up Baba been speaking not to him but to the poison which was entering his blood stream. He would sometimes speak in parables, leaving his devotees to work out the answer.

"Some robbers came and took away my money. I said nothing but quietly followed them and killed them and so recovered my money". The money is the faculties natural to man in his pure state, killing them and recovering the wealth is destroying desires and realizing the self.

— Os borne, The Incredible Sai Baba PP/80 - 81

Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952)

One of the first major Yoga teachers in the West, Paramahansa Yogananda wrote Auto biography of a Yogi, which is considered a twentieth century classic of spiritual writing. The self-realization Fellowship, which he founded, continues to disseminate his teachings in a variety of forms. Packaging Hindu – derivative messages for a multifeth audience, Paramahansa Yogananda helped spur Americans interest in Eastern Religions and predated today's wide attraction to spirituality free from traditional denomination boundaries.

Born Mukund Lal Ghosh to a well to do Bengali family he met and became a disciple of Swami Yuktesh Giri when he was seventeen in 1915 War he graduated from the University of Calcutta and soon took formal vows as a monk of India's monastic Swami Order, received the new name of Yogananda (signifying bliss, ananda thorough Divine Union Yoga) Two years later he founded a school for boys that combined modern educational yoga training.

In 1920, Yogananda served as India's delegate to the international congress of Religious Liberals in Boston where he addressed a talk titled "The Science of Religion" He remained in the United States to found the self-realization fellowship (SRF), which aimed to spread Yoga and Indian teachings in the West. He spent the next several years lecturing around the country and in 1925 established the SRF Head Quarters in Los Angles. Yogananda's teachings focused on the unity of all religions and the ability all to attain a direct connection to the divine. His meditation and Yoga were scientific, reviving the ancient practice of Kriya Yoga.

In 1935, Yogananda returned to India on a speaking tour and met several times with Mahatma Gandhi, while he was there,

Yogananda's Guru bestowed on him the spiritual title of paramhansa, which means "Supreme swan" and signifies that his bearer has attained an unbroken communion with God, in his later years, focused on his writing, including his autobiography and his still popular translation and explanation of the Bhagwat Gita. He also supervised publication of a series of self - realization fellowship lessons for home study.

His Words

To be constantly at the mercies of nature there is surely not freedom. Our enthusiastic minds are rudely seized by a sense of helplessness, when we were victimized by floods, tornadoes or earth quakes, or apparently without any rhyme or reason, illness or accident snatches our dear ones from our bosom. It is then we know that we have not conquered much. In spite of our efforts to make the life we want to be, there will always remain certain conditions introduced on this planet infinite and guided by an unknown. Intelligence, operating without an initiative which preclude our control.

— Inner peace P/104

Realizing that a man's body is like an electric battery, I reasoned that he could be recharged with energy through the direct agency of the human will, As no action of any kind is possible without willing, man may avail himself of the prime mover, will, to renew his strength without burdensome apparatus or mechanics exercises. By the simple Yoga techniques, one may constantly and instantly recharge his life force (centered in the medulla oblongata from the unlimited supply of cosmic energy.

— (Autobiography of a Yogi) P/289

J. Krishnamurti (1875 – 1986)

Proclaimed a great world teacher by the leader of the theosophical society, Jiddu Krishnamurti went on to renounce the role thrust upon him to advocate pursuit of the spiritual life outside organized religion and free from "isms" of any kind.

Krishnamurti was born in a small village in South India and moved with his family to the city of Madras when he was a young boy. It was there he met Amre Besent an English woman who was head of the esoteric theosophical society, she became convinced that he was destined to be the great spiritual teacher of the modern age. She adopted him and took him with her to England, where he was educated and prepared for his anticipated role.

But in 1929, after years of questioning himself and his destiny, Krishnamurti broke with the theosophical society, proclaiming famously that "truth is a pathless land".

His fame as a spiritual teacher became even greater after his departure from the society. He preached a spiritually free from dogma, ritual and authority figures a message which there was and remains a large and enthusiastic and audience. Krishnamurti evolved his unique teaching from his own being and living, for he had no philosophical literature. His aim to teach psychologically free so that they might be in harmony with themselves, with nature, and with others. He taught the human mankind has created the environment in which we live

and that nothing can ever but a stop to violence and suffering except a transformation in human psyche.

Krishnamurti preached a spirituality free from dogma, ritual, and authority figures a message for which there was and remains, a large and enthusiastic audience. From 1929 until his death in 1986, Krishnamurti continued to travel and teach his talks were recorded and compiled into a large number of books.

His Words

Truth is a pathless land. Man cannot come to it through any organization through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual nor through any philosophy technique. He has to find it through the mirror of relationship, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, through observation and not through intellectual analysis or introspective digestion. Man has built his images himself as a fence of security religious, political, and personal. These manifest as symbols, ideas and beliefs. The burden of these images dominates man's thinking his relationships, and his daily life. These images are the cause of our problems for they divide man from man.

— Speech on leaving the theosophical society, 1929

Vivekananda (1863 – 1902)

Swami Vivekananda became the first teacher from the Hindu tradition to bring to a large western audience the teachings of Vedanta, a philosophy of the divine nature of all things, based on the Vedas, the Bhagwat Gita, and other Indian scriptures.

As a child named Narendra Nath Datta, Vivekananda was fascinated by monks who were a regular feature of the Indian country side and he would sometimes try to imitate their meditation. He was a bright student in school and university, especially in western Philosophy and logic and he came to be very skeptical about the Hindu belief in which he had been raised, placing his faith solely in reason and logic. Then he met God intoxicated sage, Ramkrishna and everything changed for him. Ramkrishna was no intellectual, yet he radiated an atmosphere Vivekananda had never experienced before, and the young skeptics' faith was restored. Vivekananda was convinced beyond any doubt that God realization is the most important thing in life, and became one of Ramakrishna's disciples.

After Ramakrishna death in 1886, Vivekananda decided it was necessary to take Vedanta to the West a revolutionary idea at the time. In 1893 he travelled to the United States to be present at the first parliament of the World religions in Chicago, where his teaching generated great interest and some commotion among conservative Christians. The New York Herald called him "undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel foolish to send missionaries to this learned nation." Following the Parliament, Vivekananda travelled throughout the United States and England for four years, lecturing and touring and teaching. A number of his talks were recorded and collected into books.

Vivekananda spent the rest of his relatively brief life in India, where he founded the Ramakrishna order and began a series of educational, philanthropic, and health care concerns aimed at improving material and spiritual conditions among his

countrymen. He was able to make further teaching trip to United States in 1099 and died at the age of thirty-nine. His Ramakrishna order continues to flourish both inside and outside India, and his teaching formed the foundation for the much larger western interest in Hindu Philosophy and arose in the second half of the twentieth century.

His Words

This is the gist of all worship - to be pure and too good to others. He who sees Siva in poor in the weak, and in the diseased relay worships Siva and if he sees Siva only in the image his worship is but preliminary. Here he who has served and helped only one poor man seeing Siva in him, without thinking of his caste creed or race, or anything with him, Siva is more pleased with the man who sees him only in temples.

— The complete works of Swami Vivekananda (Vol.3 P/141)

It is impossible to find God outside of ourselves our own souls contribute all the divinity that outside us. We are the greatest temple. The objectification is only a faint imitation of what we see within ourselves.

— The complete works of Swami Vivekananda (Vol.7 P/59)

Rabindranath Tagore (1861 – 1941)

The great Hindu poet and philosopher Rabindra Nath Tagore was the first Asian writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize in the literature. Through the popular medium of verse, Tagore conveyed to the world the beauty of India's mystical ideal of divine love with the poignant echoes in the realm of human love. He became the voice of India's sacred and artistic heritage and through him the fundamental values of Indian culture became more widely known outside of his homeland despite the fact that only a fraction of his vast output has been translated from his native Bengali into another languages. The spread of these values' peace, tolerance and unity contributed to the century's movement toward a new world culture founded on diversity and universality.

Tagore was born in Calcutta to a celebrated Brahmin family, his father Debendra Nath Tagore, was a mystic and a leader of the Brahmo Samy, a religious reform movement. Although Rabindra Nath was also a playwright, novelist and author of short stories and essays, he is chiefly known for his lyrical poetry, influenced by the love poems of the Bengali Vaishnavals (worshippers of Lord Vishnu), the mystical songs of the tantric Baul sect of Bengal, and the medieval North Indian poet Saint Kabir. Tagore's Gitanjali (song offerings) published in 1912 in England and the United States was his first English translation of his own work. Championed by the famous poets of the day, including WB Yeats and Egra Pound, it won him the 1913 Nobel Prize. Yeats to his introduction to the published work that Gitanjali "stirred my blood has nothing has for years". Tagore was knighted in 1915 and gave up the title in 1919 in protest against the infamous Amritsen massacre of four hundred Indian demonstrators by British troops. His poetry in English enjoyed great popularity in the West, and in 1930 he went on a world tour that included meetings with Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, George Bernard Shaw, Robert Frost and other eminent people of the day.

Tagore's verse reflects his belief in the oneness of God, nature, and humanity a concept he wrote about directly in

books such as Sadhana, Creative unity and the religion of Mam. Among his best-known works are the Gardener, the crescent Moon, his translation songs of Kabir, Cycle of Spring, Fireflies, Sheaves, and the plays post office and Chitra. Shantiniketan (Abode of Peace) a school founded by him in Bolpur in 1901, was inspired by traditional Hindu ideals of education, in 1921 he became the intern atonally attended Viswa Bharat University. In the 1960's sonae of Tagore haunting by beautiful fiction was brought to the screen by the internationally known Bengali film maker Satyajit Ray. The author while writing this article remembers one poem of his entitled "Paper Boat". He wrote "Day by day I sail my paper boats one by one dawn to the running stream. In Black letters I write my name on them and the name of the village where I live in so that sometime he may know who I am and the name of the village where I live." This is still afresh in my memory. He was a genius.

His Words

That I want thee, only thee lit my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night, are false and empty to the core.

As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light even thus in the depth of my unconsciousness rings the cry I want thee, only thee.

As the storm still seeks its end in peace when it strikes against peace with all its might, even thus my rebellion strikes against my love and still its cry is I want thee, only thee.

— Gitanjali Vol – 38

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1918 – 2008)

Best known for making meditation a household but also a daily practice for millions, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi spread Transcendental meditation programme popularly known as TM, around the world.

Born Mahesh Prasad Verma, he graduated from the University of Allahabad and immediately joined his Guru Swami Bhahmananda Saraswati, known to devotees as Guru Deb. He became a devoted disciple and personal secretary, and at the end of Guru Dev's life the Swami reportedly directed Mahesh to spread the ancient Vedic System. As a consequence, he established the Spiritual Regeneration Movement in 1958, to bring a universal meditation to people living in the world. He held that a practice suitable for house holders must be simple, natural and effortless, requiring no belief or change in life style other than setting comfortably in meditation for about twenty minutes twice a day.

His teaching of meditation and its principles was immediately recognized as simple yet profound, and he was acknowledged as a modern-day maharishi (great seer). First travelling the world to teach TM himself, he later established a programme to train meditation teachers. Thereafter he came to known as Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Correlating ancient wisdom and modern wisdom science he elaborated his theoretical system which he called the science of creative Intelligence in 1972 and instituted the TM Siddhis programme, which added advanced practices such as levitation, or "Yogic flying" in 1976. He encouraged

scientific research into the effects of meditation, and findings showed that in addition to individual benefits, regular TM practice by one percent of a population resulted in positive changes for society. The unprecedented scientific discovery of the influence of collective consciousness was called the Maharishi effect. He died on 5th February, 2008.

His Words

The (TM) technique may be defined as turning the attention in words towards the subtler levels of a thought [The TM Mantra] until the mind transcends the subtlest state of the thought and arrives at the source of the thought.

— Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on the Bhagwat Gita – P/330

Ramana Maharishi (1879 – 1950)

An Indian Sage and exemplar of the Hindu non - dualist school of Advaita Vedanta, Ramana Maharishi spoke like other than periodically to answer questions about the spiritual life posted to him by his disciples. But those answers, gathered into published form, have made him one of the twentieth century's most influential teachers of Hindu philosophy in both East and the West.

Ramana Maharishi was born in a village of southern India and lived a very ordinary life until the age of seventeen, when he suddenly without any formal training, teacher or practice underwent a profound experience of the nature of the self and of the Absolute an experience that overwhelmed him and never left him.

Following this experience, he left his home and found his way to a temple at the foot of the holy mountain Arunachal, where he remained secluded for several years. Words spread that a particularly holy sanyasin (renunciate) was living in the temple, and people began to gatta around him, simply to be his luminous and consoling presence since for several years he hardly spoke. He did at last broke his silence, however, and began to the questions put to him by the growing number of spiritual seekers.

A group of disciples grew up around him, and this group became an ashram, or community, called Ramanashram, which continues to exist. For the rest of his life people journeyed to Ramanashram to ask Ramana Maharishi questions about his spiritual life and to take darshan that is, to benefit from simple being in the presence of the spiritual master.

His teaching, his principal instruction to all his devotees, was always to meditate on the question "who am"

In 1911 Ramana Maharishi gained his first Western disciple, an English man, and soon after he became an international phenomenon through his published talks. The Ramanashram community came to include people of many nationalities, and Raman Maharishi answers to questions were written down and published in many languages.

His Words

As all livings desire to be always happy, without misery, as in the case of everyone there is observed supreme love, and his happiness alone is the cause of love, in order to gain happiness which is one's nature and which is experiences in the state of

deep sleep where there is no mind, one should know one's self. For that the path of knowledge, the enquiry of the form "who am I" is the principal means.

— The spiritual teaching of Ramana Maharishi

You cannot love God without knowing him nor knowing him without loving him. Love manifests itself in everything you do and that is Karma. The development of mental perception is the necessary preliminary you can know or love God in the proper way.

— Quoted in Swarnagiri, Crumbs from his table P/31.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869 – 1948)

Architect of the non violent protest movement that ousted the British from India, Mahatma Gandhi is one of the most beloved personalities of the twentieth century. Political and social change movements around the world have looked to him as an example while seeking to adopt high philosophy and tactics to their own situations. He was instrumental in three major twentieth century struggles against racism, violence and colonialism.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Mahatma is an honorific meaning great soul) was raised steeped in Hinduism and Jainism, giving him an appreciation for ahimsa (non injury for all living beings), vegetarianism and fasting. He was married at thirteen, and his family decided he should study law in England, for which he set sail in 1888. There he met many social reformers and rebellious souls who would greatly influence his later work. Ironically, it was in England that Gandhi was introduced to the Hindu classic the Bhagwat Gita, the most influential book in his life.

After a brief return stay in India, Gandhi accepted a one year contract from a South African firm, he would stay in South Africa for twenty years. There he experienced the discrimination all Indians faced, and he dedicated himself to winning justice for South Africa's Indians. He organized the Indian community, exposed the injustices to the outside world, and won press attention in and out of the country.

Gandhi delved into a spiritual quest, studying Leo Tolstoy's Hindu philosophy and Quaker beliefs. He developed a fascination for Jesus, whose message and example loom large in the development of Gandhiji's non - violence, and he was attracted to simple living and manual labour. Gandhi called on Indians to defy discriminatory laws and suffer the consequences. This call marked the birth of Satyagraha (devotion to truth) a method of resistance without violence. The Government under British pressure, eventually accepted a compromise, and Gandhiji then returned to India.

After initially keeping a low profile, he returned to the public eye in India to push for Satyagraha against British rule. In 1920 Gandhi was the dominant figure in the struggle as head of the Indian National congress. He taught that it was Indian's own imperfections that maintained their servitude, and his strategy of non - violent non cooperation with the British led to boycotts, fasts and imprisonment for many followers, Gandhi himself was imprisoned for two years, and upon his 1924 release he found the Hindu Muslim relations of Congress badly fractured.

In 1930, Gandhi led a massive march against the salt tax, among the most successful actions of the struggle. Four years later he quit the congress and devoted himself to building the nation "from the bottom up" educating the poor and removing the caste stigma of the untouchables.

When India and Pakistan gained independence, Gandhiji bitterly opposed the sectarian division of the two nations. He threw himself into healings the sounds between the Hindus and the Muslims. Although his facts and entreaties won some major victories in 1948, a Hindu nationalist Nathu Ram Godse assassinated him while Gandhi was on his way to evening prayers. His last words on his lips were what Nehru called the act a very intolerable event and said "A mad man has put an end to his life".

His Words

Man, and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the deed of the deed whether good or wicked always deserves respect or pity or the case may be "Hate the sin and not the sinner" is a precept which though easy enough to understand, is rarely practiced and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

— An autography P/274

The first step in non - violence is that we cultivate in our daily life, as between ourselves, truthfulness, humility, tolerance, and loving kindness.

— Quoted in "Mahatma" P/267

If my non - violence is to be contagious and infectious, I must acquire greater control over my thoughts.

— Quoted in "The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi" P/277

Summary

In all the articles mentioned above I find that all the saints such as those mentioned had the elements of love and compassion towards all living beings and hatred to none. They all established missionaries. Teresa established Missionaries of charity at Calcutta.

Albert Schweitzer a missionary hospital at Lamabrain Gabon (then in French Equatorial Africa) where he treated thousands for sleeping sickness and leprosy.

Shirdi Sai Baba, a saint who had the healing touch through his miracles had His tomb in a major pilgrimage site.

Yogananda, a Yogic Guru was a monk of Isshan monastic order and founded a school for combined modern educational training.

J. Krishnamurthy leader of the theosophical society proclaimed truth is pathless found. He preached a spiritual free from dogma. Authority figures a message till date.

Similarly, all great men such as Swami Vivekananda based his teachings in the West which had no missionary there, Rabindra Nath Tagore, through his popular Gitanjali (collection of songs) conveyed the mystical ideal of divine love and beauty and was the first Asian to win the Nobel prize in Literature.

Similarly, Ramana Maharishi, an Indian sage and a non-dualist of the School of Advaita Vedanta. He desires always to be happy without misery.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi preached his struggle though peace and non-violence and remained in South Africa and was the epitome of quit India movement.

In all those men referred to above were great in their own respects. However, what has been said alone I have my own observations about some of them.

Conclusion

An such there is nothing more left for conclusion. They were themselves to be quoted and I feel that whatever they said should be kept in mind and must be implemented in life in true spirit. They were all greats in their field and it is difficult for anyone to reach that height.

My Opinion

In my opinion some notable great men who were instrumental in changing the world have been omitted from the great book of 75 people who changed the world.

- 1) Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who led the quit India movement and led India to freedom besides Mahatma Gandhi.
- 2) Jesus Christ who give his sermon on the mount and disappeared from the earth on the appointed time and appeared to many of his disciples at the same time and was with the disciples in his last supper.
- 3) Pope Benedict XVI who lived long (16th April, 27 to 31st Dec 22) who has a catholic pope and sovereign of the Vatican City and his last words were "Lord, I Love You".
- 4) Tata Steel man known as Jamshedji Irani who lived for 86 years and known as the Steel Man of India.
- 5) Lata Mangeshkar who lived from 28th Sept.1929 to 6th February, 2022 and Mohammad Rafi who lived from 24th Dec.1924 to 31st July, 1980 were the arch singers besides Amitabh Bachchan the man of the century cured many children from their diseases but their songs and speeches. Mr. Kishore Kumar who lived from 4th August, 1929 to 13th October, 1987. At last, I have one reservation that though Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest for making India free because of his liking for Nehru & Jinnah he divided the nation into two for which the Nohakhaly episode has yet not left the mind of people where children specially were butchered to death.

All other references are given at the end of each paragraph.

List of those personalities whom I have recorded in the Bibliography

- 1) Mother Teresa 1910 – 1997 87 Years
- 2) Albert Schweitzer 1875 – 1965 90 Years
- 3) Bertand Russell 1872 – 1970 98 Years
- 4) Shirdi Sai Baba 1835 – 1918 83 Years
- 5) Paramhansa Yogananda 1893 – 1952 59 Years
- 6) J. Krishna Murti 1875 – 1986 111 Years
- 7) Swami Vivekananda 1863 – 1902 59 Years
- 8) Rabindra Nath Tagore 1861 – 1941 80 Years
- 9) Maharishi Mahesh Yogi 1918 – 2008 90 Years

10) Raman Maharishi 1879 – 1950 71 Years

11) Mahatma Gandhi 1869 – 1948 79 Years

One more notable omission was as mentioned by P. N. Oak about German Scientist Sri Maxmuller who read Sanskrit at Varanasi in a tea stall and became an exponent of Indian Philosophy in Sanskrit.

Also one great Mahapurusha Lord Ramkrishna who was the guiding principle who used to table to goddess Kali do not figure in the list who may be illiterate, what today Swami could not have conquered the west without his blessing do not figure in also figure in list 75 people who changed the world.