

Gandhiji and Lohia: An intimate and Fruitful Relationship

Prem Singh

I

The relationship between M. K. Gandhi (1869-1948) and Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-1967) was unique in many ways. One can perceive this as equilibrium of opposites. When Lohia came in direct contact with Gandhiji, he was merely twenty-three years old where as Gandhiji, with his vast wealth of experience and ideas, was already sixty-four. First of all, it was a relationship between a believer (*Ishwarwadi*) and a non-believer {Anishwarwadi}. Lohia did not ever agree with Gandhiji's religious invocation, his prayers, his support of the *Varna* system and his views on celibacy etc. In his entire crusade, Gandhiji maintained cordial feelings towards his opponents, including the British, whereas Lohia usually adopted an aggressive posture towards his opponents, using intolerant and sharp language. Lohia used this kind of language even in his conversations with Gandhiji. Lohia was not in total agreement with all the Gandhian ideas on socio-political subjects. Thus, there was a contrast between them not just in terms of temperament but also in terms of ideas. Despite all this, an intimate relationship developed between them. Lohia's biographer Indumati Kelkar terms Gandhiji as the *Manas Pita* and *Guru* of Lohia. She also mentions that Lohia became an 'orphan' for the second time after Gandhiji's assassination. In fact, in his last few years Gandhiji came very close to the socialists, particularly to Lohia. Among the crowd of Gandhians, Lohia saw himself as a heretic. Scholars have called him an extension of Gandhiji. A little later we shall discuss Lohia's critique of Gandhiji's ideas and methods of intervention.

To delineate the personal relationship between Gandhiji and Lohia, the main source could be an essay by Lohia himself in which he narrates the 'story' of their relationship. The title of the essay is 'Anecdotes of Mahatma Gandhi', based on his speech, delivered at Hyderabad in 1952. (1) Lohia's first personal contact with Gandhiji took place at the time of the non-cooperation Movement when, at the age of nine or ten, he went to see Gandhiji with his father, who himself was a congressman. Lohia writes, "I touched his feet and he touched my back. I am proud of that, and on one occasion when Gandhiji asked me when I had first seen him, I related the incident. He said, "Yes, of course, you would remember but I don't remember it. ... I may here add that I never touched anybody else's feet outside of the family, and that too when very young." (2)

His first "live contact" with Gandhiji as an adult was established when he returned to India in 1933 from his studies in Germany. There was a meeting between Gandhiji and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya. Lohia could reach there with the help of Prabhavati Devi. He did not disclose his identity to Gandhiji on that occasion, using Prabhavati Devi as his shield. During the conversation between these two Congress leaders he was impressed by Gandhiji's reaction to Malviyaji on the question of sending a Congress delegation to England to plead the case of India. Gandhiji made his comment on the subject "in a very calm persuasive and yet very firm tone.": "What are you talking about? Have we not come to that stage when it is no longer possible to think in terms of a deputation of the Congress Party going out to England to plead India's cause?" (3) Lohia was in full agreement with Gandhiji's understanding of the situation. Perhaps Lohia could see the strength of Gandhiji during the phase of "national depression." After a few days Lohia met Gandhiji through Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj who had perhaps already told Gandhiji about Lohia's intention of joining politics as a full time vocation. Gandhiji's direct question to Lohia was "Are you well off?" When Jamnalal Bajaj assured him on that account he felt relieved and said, "Then it is all right, we shall meet again." After that the "whole thing was dismissed." (4) Such a "rude" question in the very first meeting, Lohia recollects, did not strike him as being wrong because it came from a person like Gandhiji. In fact, to Lohia, it showed his caring concern towards political activists.

After the formation of Congress Socialist Party (C.S.P.) in 1934 Lohia was appointed the editor of its weekly journal. He wrote an article in the weekly, criticising Gandhi's 'constructive program' which started after the failure of 1932-33 movement. The 'young' Lohia was very harsh with 'old' Gandhiji's program. A copy of the journal was sent to Gandhiji for his comment. Lohia says that it was the only occasion when Gandhiji was really angry with him. Gandhiji wrote to Lohia, "You must never expect me to write because I find that you have not the slightest patience with your opponent's view point." Irritated by this answer Lohia wrote back to Gandhiji saying probably he was a little careless in the use of his phrases, but then Gandhiji should have tried to get at his meaning. This time Lohia received a sweet answer from Gandhiji. Lohia impressed by that letter and recognised that "if one may not find it easy to accept the view point of an opponent, one should at least listen to it carefully and understand what he has to say and that is a faculty which we are singularly losing in the modern world." (5) Till the end Lohia was accused of being intolerant towards his opponents. Madhu Limye has noted at one point: "Gandhiji's soft spoken ness and his cordial and gentle behaviour with his opponents was a unique and fascinating quality. Lohia was greatly influenced by Gandhiji. But despite possessing a brilliant and impressive personality, Lohia's language was very sharp. While attacking his colleagues, he did not particularly care about their feelings. He made many enemies because of his piercing words. In fact, sharp words seem to be in vogue with us who belong to the left.

The level of the debates even between Tilak and Agarkar could not remain of a very high standard. It would have been good if Lohia had adopted Gandhiji's new mode of debate. Gandhiji had proved that cordial feelings for an opponent was not an indication of one's weakness." (6) Indumati Kelkar also maintains that Lohia "did not possess any signs of the gentle and controlled language of his manas Pita and Guru. This was an unpleasant aspect of a personality which happened to be attractive in other matters." (7) Even with Gandhiji Lohia often used, in his own words, "all the violent, rough, and sharp language."

Passing over "other occasions of an intimate character" Lohia mentions about the AICC session held a little before the second world war broke out. In this session of AICC a resolution drafted by Gandhiji himself about the passive resistance of 'British Indians' in South Africa came up for discussion. Lohia moved his amendments to Gandhiji's resolution on two points and the same was passed. When Gandhiji came to know of the development he got very angry and demanded that "he would have the AICC pass his resolution or none at all." At the insistence of Gandhiji the AICC passed the withdrawal of the amendments suggested by Lohia and "the resolution was passed in its original form except that no body tried to suggest that Indian's should be called British Indians. At least that much was accepted without any debate." Lohia had suggested in one of his amendments "that Indians had better be called Indians, whether they lived in South Africa or India, and not British Indians."(8)

Lohia narrates another episode when he got angry with Gandhiji. It was over gandhiji's 'tearful' statements, some months after the beginning of the second world war, about the threatened destruction of Westminster Abbey. Lohia felt that by making such statements Gandhiji detracted "from his role as a world leader, because he had shown preference for one people over another." Lohia's reaction was based on the edited version of Gandhiji's statement on AIR. When he read it in full in the print media, his anger subsided somewhat. He gave a patient thought to Gandhiji's meaning and came out with 'representative' theory viz that 'while embracing a person we embraced a representative of the whole human race.' Lohia realises that "when he [Gandhiji] talked about the destruction of Westminster Abbey he was trying to embrace the whole mankind ..." To Lohia's joy "Gandhiji immediately wrote out another statement for the Harijan saying it was so ..." (9) When Lohia later met Gandhiji, he gave him perfect freedom to express his views on his statements on national or international issues related to the war. During the war Lohia could press upon Gandhiji his idea of declaring all the Indian cities as open by the British Government. The idea was directed towards the full freedom of India. In this regard Gandhiji wrote a clear letter to Viceroy Linlithgow in which he mentioned Lohia as "a socialist with pronounced leanings towards nonviolence." (10) Some how the letter was not sent to the Viceroy with the fear that the British Police will arrest Lohia after receiving such a letter.

Again, Lohia tried to persuade Gandhiji to approach the various world governments "with a scheme of setting up the foundations on which the new world could be built." Lohia outlined four principles on this issue: "1. Cancellation of all past investments by one country in another, 2. Unobstructed passage and right of settlement to everybody all the world over, 3. Political freedom for all the peoples and nations of the world and constituent assemblies, 4. Some kind of a world citizenship." (11) Perhaps Gandhiji found the idea of writing a letter to the world governments somewhat impractical, but he reproduced Lohia's ideas in full in the Harijan.

It is worth mentioning that by this time, despite ideological differences between these two great personalities, a mutual faith building had taken place. In fact, the most intimate moments of relationship between Gandhiji and Lohia came during the war and when communal riots broke out in the country just before and during the partition. The 'story' of their personal relationship goes on. It was the time when Lord Mountbatten proposed his theory of partition resulting in communal riots all over the country. Lohia was in Goa at that time and "had done something there." Gandhiji, without confirming the facts from Lohia, immediately issued a statement supporting his action. Lohia writes, "He had begun to like me, and he assumed that my acts would be more good than evil. That put me under some kind of an obligation, and so when he insisted upon my staying on in Calcutta, I first resisted, knowing fully well that I was incapable of doing anything whatsoever with regard to the bloody riots between Hindus and Muslims, but on the third or fourth day I succumbed . . ." (12) At the end of the essay, Lohia gives a detailed account of his efforts to check the communal riots. He worked day and night in communally hit areas of the country with Gandhiji and without him, at times putting his life at a great risk. Once he saved the life of Gandhiji from communalists.

Lohia wrote that Gandhiji, at this juncture, tried to explore the strength of the socialists so that he could rely upon them "in order to combat both the British Authority, and his own Working Committee." He further elaborated, "I must say that we must have been an unsatisfactory lot because he seems finally to have concluded that he could do nothing about it. ... on one occasion Sardar Patel asked me to forget all this talk about what will happen to India after the partition. He would talk to Mr. Jinnah in the language of the Danda." (13) According to Lohia Nehru was also equally furious on this issue, saying that "we were obsessed with the view of Mr. Jinnah and were arguing with him [Nehru] all the time. What is the use of calling people brothers who are flying at each other's throat?" Astonished at this 'understanding' of Nehru, Lohia gave the example of America which had a civil war killing "300 thousand or 400 thousand persons or may be more on both sides, but they did not cease to be brothers." (14)

The relationship between Gandhiji and Lohia further matured to the extent that in a meeting held in solitude, Gandhiji, putting his hands on Lohia's shoulders, expressed his concern about his over indulgence in cigarettes and in drinking coffee and tea, cautioning him against the ruinous effects of these on one's health. It came to Lohia as a "surprise." He had not expected that "after 13 years of rather long and intimate conversations" he would listen to Gandhiji's "private talk on cigarettes." Apart from health, Gandhiji further linked the issue with socialism. Lohia writes: "He said that as a socialist I must identify myself with the people, that I must become their spokesman, so it was a process of identification and spokespersonship, the two together. Then he asked me on what grounds I could possibly justify my cigarette smoking in India, which debarred me from completing this process of identification with and spokespersonship of my countrymen, the mass of the hungry and poverty-stricken." (15) In this solitary meeting between Gandhiji and Lohia, only Gandhiji did the speaking, and that too for a long time. He insisted upon Lohia twice to say something on the issue. Lohia kept mum. Then Gandhiji asked him if he wanted him to stop. An embarrassed Lohia asked him to continue. Gandhiji contemplated the issue further and raised the question of public and private life. He asked Lohia if he wanted him to confine himself only to his (Lohia's) public life. Lohia said that he did not draw a watertight distinction between private and public life and would certainly allow Gandhiji to ask questions on the former.

As far as the habit of cigarette smoking was concerned, Lohia did not reply to the queries of Gandhiji that day but promised an answer very soon. After two months or so he informed Gandhiji that he had given up the habit of smoking. He later said that he did not "smoke again until the day Gandhiji was assassinated." However, he did smoke that day. He felt betrayed by Gandhiji. The pain of Gandhiji's assassination was so deep that he contemplated at length the impression Gandhiji left on him even at the time of his death. He simultaneously experienced contradictory feelings: the feeling of imposing and practicing self-discipline in life and the feeling of complete freedom to do whatever he liked. In fact, "the problem of self-discipline, of character and knowledge" in human life struck him now in real depth and meaning. Adding a postscript to the affect Gandhiji's assassination had on him, Lohia gave an account of a conversation twelve years earlier when Gandhiji praised him not only for bravery and intelligence but also his endurance of character-sheel. Lohia however viewed Gandhiji's estimate of him differently: "Gandhiji sometimes made mistakes in his estimate of men. I sometimes fear that his affection for me and lack of full information about me may have vitiated his judgment, but, if what he said is true, I am deeply happy. Not bravery so much, not even intelligence or learning, but continuity in character is the abiding human value." (16) Beside endurance of character, the quality Gandhiji liked most in Lohia was his commitment to non-violence.

Lohia narrated an episode concerned with the question of violence-nonviolence. The Nagpur secret police made a report that Lohia "had recommended an underground campaign against the Indian Government and their assassination in the Aung-san fashion." In Burma, Prime Minister Aung-san was assassinated together with most of his cabinet members. Home Minister Sardar Patel went to Gandhiji and complained about the 'plan' of Lohia. Gandhiji asked Lohia if those were his views. Lohia, saying that during 1942 movement he had not indulged in the killing of even British soldiers, replied in the negative. But at the same time, he descended very harshly on the present Indian Government. He described the government as "incompetent, inefficient, stupid, and without use or reason." (17) In full agreement with Lohia, Gandhiji asked him to write a letter to the Home Minister stating that he would not 'assassinate' his government. Ever ready to go to jail, Lohia refused to do so. Finally, he agreed to write a letter to Gandhiji.

In his last days Gandhiji asked Lohia if he believed in God and if not, he could not be a good satyagrahi. Lohia replied in negative but at the same time he emphasised that he might best achieve his satyagraha without God. Gandhiji dropped the subject and never raised it again. Lohia ends the essay in the hope that he will be able to tell the stories of Gandhiji some other day. He also said that in the process of editing the speech made eight years back "a lot has ... been left out than brought in." It means that the account of personal interaction and relationship between Gandhiji and Lohia presented in this essay is a tip of the iceberg. Lohia could not tell the story of Gandhiji again. But the given account could form enough basis to understand the nature of intimacy of their personal relationship.

One can see the basis on which an intimate and trustful relationship between Gandhiji and Lohia became possible. Lohia was attracted to Gandhiji's immense concern for mankind by his people-oriented philosophy of life and most of all by his socio-political activism completely devoid of any desire for political power. Gandhiji too could see Lohia's genuine and selfless concern for the people. It may be remembered that with the strengthening of his relationship with Gandhiji, Lohia's relationship with Nehru went through a corresponding decline, with the result that eventually he remained wholly and solely with Gandhiji. Lohia was thirty-seven at the time of India's independence. In expressing his concern for Lohia's health; in saying that he should identify himself with his people and become their spokesman; and in praising his power of endurance, Gandhiji apparently voiced his desire to see Lohia as his political-philosophical heir after the Nehru-Patel generation. Lohia too responded, as it were, to Gandhiji's hope and sentiments. Gandhiji had given India the treasure of his unique personality, ideas and method of intervention, which most of the Left thinkers not only left unexplored but also dismissed as reactionary. Lohia, on his part, interpreted the Gandhian ideas in his own way and also sought to revolutionise them.

Lohia's critique of Gandhiji has been a significant contribution to the Gandhian studies in the post Gandhi-era. Lohia as a heretic Gandhian makes perhaps the most revolutionary interpretation of Gandhiji's philosophy and modes of action. After leaving his long essay 'Economics After Marx' (begun in 1943-44, the essay is compiled in Marx, Gandhi and Socialism) incomplete, he took fresh initiatives for the construction of his own kind of socialist philosophy and politics. In his construction, or to use his own word "integration" of the new philosophy he found more useful material in the ideas, life and actions of Gandhiji. According to him the new socialist philosophy, opposed to communism and capitalism both, will be the basis of a new civilization. Lohia accepted the fact that he was influenced by the great personality of Gandhiji but was never blinded, intimidated or sentimental about it. After keeping Marx aside, he embarks upon a serious interpretation of Gandhiji. Lohia's interpretation of Gandhiji is an integral part of his serious philosophical venture. But at the same time, it is not aimed at proposing some sort of a separate creed of Gandhism.

In Indian politics Lohia is known as a socialist thinker and leader. His intellectual and political activism was aimed at socialist revolution in India as well as in the rest of the world. He wrote in this connection, "Capitalism and communism are almost fully elaborated systems, and the whole world is in their grip, the result is poverty and war and fear. The third idea is also making itself felt on the world stage. It is still inadequate, and it has not been fully elaborated, but it is open. In an open system there is still some chance of truth and progress, while a closed system does violence to facts and wishes them away in order to prove their meaninglessness. Open systems live in accordance with the facts, and in any case, we expect such systems to revitalize themselves with obstinate or changing situations. This idea is the socialist idea." (18)

It is obvious that in the twentieth century, the idea of socialist revolution is mainly linked to Karl Marx. Lohia accepted the place of Marx in his tradition but at the same time he said "this talk of being a Marxist or an anti-Marxist is futile and irrelevant. What is relevant is correct thinking and integrated approach. Our mind must be on a quest, a quest for the essence that lies under Gandhiji's or Marx's thoughts. Quest and not entanglement with tradition can help us to do this." (19) There is a prevalent belief that Lohia tries to mix Gandhi and Marx. Lohia himself refuted this : "Socialism need not proclaim itself as Gandhian or Marxist on the one hand and as anti-Gandhian or anti-Marxist on the other, for this would only substitute thought by a charm" (20) It is not possible to present a detailed description of Lohia's doctrine of socialism but here it is important to mention that it is a left doctrine; it is rooted basically in the Indian and Asian situations; it is committed to the "leftism from below" instead of "leftism from top"; and to make it viable Lohia proposed a package of "seven revolutions".

Lohia was not a Gandhian of the Marxist blend, nor a Marxist of the Gandhian variety, but an individual thinker in his own right. Besides Gandhi and Marx, Lohia made it a point to give due consideration to other thinkers and philosophers. He also seriously tried to understand ancient Indian philosophy, concepts, myths and symbols. Only after a serious contemplation of all this did he embark upon his ideas about the "new integrations" required in the making of a new civilisation: "Nevertheless, as between a person who is arrogantly and pompously an adherent of any existing philosophy and another who has gone through the gamut of all philosophies and has come to the stage when he rejects them outright, I would prefer the latter, if it were the singular good luck of anybody to achieve a still newer integration, there could be nothing better." (21)

In this way, Lohia broke the myth of dogmatic commitment to a particular philosophy or ideology and at the same time also broke the myth of the purity and originality of a particular philosophy or ideology. He wrote, "it is not the fault of Marx that people stay put at Marxism." Lohia criticises the Gandhians in a similar manner: "The Gandhi doctrine has proved a little more inadequate. It will be countered that what prevails in the country today is not the Gandhi doctrine but a somewhat inferior brew of Gandhism and Marxism. That is substantially correct, but it confirms the weakness of Gandhism in so far as Marxism forces it to mix and also that the best in it is unable to burst forth." (22) He spoke of two types of Gandhism after Gandhiji's death: governmental Gandhism (sarkari gandhivad) and monastic or priestly Gandhism (mathi gandhivad). In the first category come Gandhiji's political successors and in the second one, the lot engaged in various institutions, established in the name of Gandhiji and funded by the government. Lohia found them both ineffectual: "These governmental and monastic wings together comprise what is authoritatively accepted as Gandhism. ...Authoritative Gandhism has proved after victory to be a mousy doctrine. All its teeth are out, giving rise to the doubt if it ever had any. Monastic Gandhism is wholly dependent for its being on governmental Gandhism. Governmental Gandhism does nothing except to chase the pale shadow of limited public sector planning. Both live a merry, contented, smug life, not devoid of luxury of a hierarchic kind." (23)

It can be argued that despite influences coming from various sources, Lohia was closest to Gandhiji. Lohia did not reject Gandhiji's ideas on truth, time, history, progress and development like the Marxists and capitalists. Gandhiji's vision of life was cyclic. Lohia also talked of the "cyclic view of history." (24) In the modern civilisation the linear view of the driving forces of history has come to be accepted as the gospel truth. Gandhiji and Lohia refused outright to ride the chariot of that 'history' which raced ahead only for a small section of the world's total population. In comparison to Gandhiji though Lohia gave more importance to the driving forces of history, yet he also placed equal significance on the universal values inherent in epics, myths and symbols situated beyond the boundaries of history. Thus, the most important contribution of Lohia to Gandhiana was his critique of the dominant paradigms of development, which used the experience of the lower castes.

All the Dalit and lower caste radicals had endorsed the project of modernity totally; leaders like Ambedkar were at the forefront of this endorsement. His hostility towards Gandhiji may possibly be located in this context. But Lohia developed Gandhian sociology in terms of its analysis of the relationship between the caste system and capitalism. Lohia had understood that in India capitalism and its positive aspects were hijacked by upper castes, and they have made it a project of caste elites. Gandhiji had developed his own critique of the project of modernity in his Hind Swaraj; Lohia's entire political economy can be treated as an imaginative restatement of Hind Swaraj. Lohia combined the radical social philosophy of the lower caste radicals with Gandhian economics.

Gandhiji was most deeply concerned with Dharma. Many scholars accept him as a totally religious individual and a prophet. Gandhiji himself believed that his politics is steeped in Dharma and his life motivated by the desire to see God or attain moksha. Gandhiji, in fact, upturned the entire modernist project itself, which placed man rather than God in its core. In Gandhiji's scheme of things God assumed a stronger hold on life's core centre. Lohia was not religious like Gandhiji but he viewed "politics as a short term religion and religion as a long term politics." Although like the modernists-secularists, he did not see religion as meaningless for the past, present and future civilisations, nevertheless, Lohia was harsher than Gandhiji in his dissection of the Hindu religion. Lohia called himself a religious radical. He did not see politics as a religious matter, instead he approached religion as a political matter. He stated, "After all it is not God who has created man. It is man who has created God." Therefore, while Lohia's concern with religion and God was basically cultural in its content, Gandhiji's concern with it was spiritual in its nature.

Lohia seemed to find Gandhiji's emphasis on the purity of ends and also on the purity of means an attractive proposition, although he interpreted this differently. He relates this to Gandhiji's idea of the change of heart : "And there with hangs the whole story of change of heart, which is a phrase that has very often been abused not only by critics of Mahatma Gandhi but also by his admirers and followers. If some have looked upon it as an instrument to deny the revolution, others have actually used it so that it has checkmated the revolution. In both cases, admirers as well as critics have reduced the phrase "change of heart" to such mimic proportions that it bears no relationship whatsoever to Mahatma Gandhi's own conception of life.... Gandhiji spent just about a year of his life changing the heart of Smuts, Irvin and Birla, while he devoted over forty years to putting courage into and thereby changing the hearts of tens of millions of people all over the world. ...What stands out in all this is Gandhiji's assumption that man can be good, even though he is almost certain to be bad in some situations." (25)

Lohia gave utmost importance to the human factor in the foundation of the new civilisation. Lohia's argument was that the essence and justification of each deed should be embedded in the deed itself. It should not become necessary for man to make prefatory or post-script justifications for his deed whereby misdeeds like lies, deceit and bloodshed might be explained away. In his emphasis on the "principle of immediacy", the best illustration of which he found in the myth of Shiva, one can also see the clear influence of Gandhiji. In fact, an important reading of Gandhiji by Lohia rests on the merger of radical energy and ethics. Lohia was able to see that its monastic followers reduced Gandhism to harmless and pious ethical doctrine of vegetarianism and nonviolence. Lohia sought to integrate the politics of immediacy with the larger ethical conduct in politics. In other words, the oppositional content that Gandhians had lost was restored by Lohia.

It is a well-known fact that before plunging into Indian politics Gandhiji undertook the task of understanding the conditions in the country. Lohia too agreed with Gandhiji on this score : "Conditions must be studied before they can be improved upon. There is often no effort in human mind to investigate the real conditions but a frequent attempt to advise, exhort, and give moral precepts. One should never identify what is with what ought to be." (26)

In addition to this Lohia was also in agreement with the manner in which Gandhiji proceeded from the 'local' to the 'universal'. It will be a repetition to say that Gandhiji, though grounded in India, responded to the whole universe. This is a unique feature of Lohia's thought too that any idea or mode he suggested to revolutionise the "Indian mind" also held good for the rest of the world.

The last and most important point is that Lohia accepted in totality Gandhiji's method of civil disobedience (civil nafsarmani) against injustice, "enabling the individual to resist oppression by himself and without any support" which fact was, to his mind, "the greatest quality of Mahatma Gandhi's action and life." He further elaborated the point: "The greatest revolution of our time is, therefore, a procedural revolution, removal of injustice through a mode of action characterised by justice. The question here is not so much the contents of justice as the mode to achieve it. Constitutional and orderly processes are often not enough. They are then transgressed by the use of weapons. In order that this should not happen, and that man should not ever get thrown around between ballet and bullet, this procedural revolution of civil disobedience has emerged. At the head of all revolutions of our time stands this revolution of satyagraha against weapons although it has in actual effect made only a faltering appearance to date." (27)

Lohia analysed the ideological and institutional basis of modern civilisation in more concrete terms. Consequently, the alternatives suggested by him were also more concrete, in his own word, *sagun*. Lohia theorised in general terms the specifics of Gandhiji's ideas, images and actions in support of the socialist system. For example, analysing the spinning wheel he wrote, "The spinning wheel is ephemeral and so is nature cure sectional, although not entirely of the moment. Gandhiji's concrete image, so vital for immediate action, must be made to deliver its abstraction equally vital for continued action. Man must have tools, which he can command in more senses than one. His immediate habitat must be self-sufficient, and he must govern it in direct democracy. The message of the spinning wheel is controllable technology and village government." (28)

Lohia's interpretations of the various ideas of Gandhiji, which could be elaborated at length, is a matter involving details, whereas the basic theme underlying such interpretations remains the same viz these interpretations are made for the "new integration" of the socialist philosophy. Thus, this is not interpretation for interpretation sake but an extension of Gandhiji's ideas and actions in the direction of socialist system : the extension of spinning wheel into controllable machine (through notion of controllable technology he paved the way for building of a new form of ecological socialism); village government into four pillar state - decentralisation of economic and political power; value of austerity or simple living into decent standard of living and so on.

ENDNOTES:

1. Lohia, Rammanohar, *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, (Hyderabad, Samata Vidyalaya Nyasa, 1963), p. 139.
2. *ibid.*, p. 140
3. *ibid.*, p. 142
4. *ibid.*, p. 142
5. *ibid.*, p. 144
6. Harish Chandra, (ed.), *Lohia ki Kahani : Unake Sathiyon ki Jubani*, (New Delhi, Noida News, 1991), pp. 12-13,
7. Kelkar, Indumati, *Rammanohar Lohia*, (New Delhi, National Book Trust, 1996), p. 9.
8. *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, *op.cit.*, pp. 145-47
9. *ibid.*, pp. 149-50
10. *ibid.*, p. 152
11. *ibid.*, pp. 152-53
12. *ibid.*, pp. 158-59
13. *ibid.*, p. 164
14. *ibid.*, pp. 164-65
15. *ibid.*, pp. 166-67
16. *ibid.*, p. 169
17. *ibid.*, pp. 170-71
18. *ibid.*, pp. 120-21
19. *ibid.*, p. 366
20. *ibid.*, p. 427
21. *ibid.*, p. 186
22. *ibid.*, p. xii
23. 23 *ibid.*, p. xii
24. See, Lohia, Rammanohar, *Wheel of History*, *op.cit.*
25. *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, *op.cit.*, pp. 155-56
26. *ibid.*, 210
27. *ibid.*, pp. xxxi-ii
28. *ibid.*, xiii