



Register Number:

DATE:

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE
Third Semester General English (GE-314)
End-Semester Examination– October 2019

PSA Special Course- PCM/PEM/PMC/MEC/EMS

Time: 2 ½ hours

Max. Marks: 70

INSTRUCTIONS

This paper has four printed pages.

This paper is meant only for PSA Special course. Please mention PSSA SPL on the front page of your answer scripts.

Please stick to the suggested wrd limits.

You are allowed to use a dictionary during your examination.

I Read this excerpt from the website hosted by the Gandhi Research Foundation:

Gandhi's Early Critique of Science

Modern civilization, far from having done the greatest good to humanity, has forgotten that its greatest achievements are weapons of mass destruction, the awful growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes between capital and labour and the wanton and diabolical cruelty inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of science, falsely so called (CW1: 189-91). The boast about the wonderful discoveries and the marvellous inventions of science, good as they undoubtedly are in themselves, is, after all, an empty boast (CW3: 414).

The above quotes indicate Gandhi's strong views on science very early in his public life. There was a need for the scientific enterprise to undergo a course correction. This qualified criticism becomes clearer in his response to members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science who visited South Africa in 1904. Gandhi commended the association's effort in popularizing science and in bringing Britain and the colonies closer to each other. In pursuance of the latter, he suggested that the association should meet in India and be renamed as the 'British Empire Association for the Advancement of Science'. Such a visit, according to Gandhi, would be greatly to the advantage not only to India, but the association as well (CW 5: 46).

This seemingly innocuous move for a change of name is actually an early indication of his differences with the liberal view of the British and members of the Indian elite like Ram Mohan Roy who saw in the introduction of western science in India the key to India's emancipation. On the contrary, Gandhi placed science in the larger context of decolonization. The scientist, he believed, was to benefit equally from interaction with the colonies and its subjects. Popularization of science, Gandhi suggested was not a linear transfer of knowledge from the expert to the lay person but had to be a collaborative effort. It was only thus that science too could benefit from the process. The inclusion of the colonial subject was to Gandhi a starting point for the re-articulation of the content and not just

the context of an alternate and non-violent science that had to include the claims of dumb, subhuman creatures as well.

Gandhi's critique of science emanates from his dissatisfaction with the divorce of science and progress from morality. He often quoted the scientist Alfred Russel Wallace to argue that people's moral sense had in no way improved as a result of scientific discoveries. The advance of science had added "not an inch to the moral stature of Europe". It had not reduced hatred and injustice (CW 12: 146; 16: 1106-08 and 18: 235-36).

Gandhi's early critique of civilization and the modern professions found expression in some of his works, notably *Hind Swaraj*. During the Non-Cooperation movement of 1919-20 and the popularization of khadi, in that period Gandhi was often questioned on his stand on machinery. Leaders like Tagore accused Gandhi of rejecting western science. Gandhi had to repeatedly clarify his stand on machinery and these have been extensively collated and quoted (Bhattacharya 1997, Parel 1997: 164-710). This attitude is perhaps best revealed in his letter to Daniel Hamilton on the newly begun khadi movements. Gandhi requested Hamilton not to be prejudiced by "anything you might have heard about my strange views on machinery". He added, "India does not need to be industrialized in the modern sense of the term" (CW 22: 401, emphasis added). The modern way, Gandhi suggests, is not the only way to industrialize a nation. This different path of progress holds the key to Gandhi's science through which the khadi movement was seeking to re-define machinery. As argued, he was not a romantic or a mystic out to "spiritualize machinery, but to introduce a human or the humane spirit among the men behind the machinery". The message of the Charkha, he reminded his American friends, was universal and would show for Lancashire as well so that they would have to cease to use machinery for exploitation (CW 28: 188).

Note: CW in the passage refers to volume/page number citations for Complete Works of Gandhi

I A Answer the following questions in about 200 words: [2x15=30]

1. The article remarks that Gandhi placed science in the larger context of decolonisation. Do you agree with Gandhi's assumption that western science promoted colonialism? How do you understand the idea of decolonising science?
2. "The advance of science had added not an inch to the moral stature of man, it had not reduced hatred and injustice". Is it possible that advancements in science would reduce social injustice or add to a culture's sense of morality?

II Read these excerpts from *Albert Einstein, Radical: A Political Profile*

In 1895, Einstein, aged sixteen, renounced his German citizenship and moved to Switzerland. His main reason was to avoid military service and also to complete his education at Zurich's Polytechnic Institute. There he eventually earned his Ph.D. in a climate relatively free of the anti-Semitism that pervaded German and Austrian universities. But Zurich had other rewards. Einstein spent much time at the Odeon Café, a hangout for Russian radicals, including Alexandra Kollontai, Leon Trotsky, and, a few years later, Lenin. Einstein admitted to spending much time at the Odeon, even missing classes to participate in the coffee shop's intoxicating political debates.

In the turbulent aftermath of the second world war, Einstein continued to speak out. Famously, on the day Kaiser Wilhelm abdicated—it was during a fortnight that saw not only the armistice, but the

fall of seven other European monarchies, all replaced, for the moment, by liberal and socialist regimes—Einstein posted a sign on his classroom’s door that read “CLASS CANCELLED—REVOLUTION.” He had joined with and defended liberal and radical students and colleagues for their wartime opposition; now he was with them in their post-war resistance to the burgeoning *revanchist* militarism that would quickly morph into Nazism.

Einstein’s visibility made him a focus of the revival of virulent anti-Semitism. His work on relativity was denounced as a “Jewish perversion” not only by far right-wing politicians, but even by fellow German scientists. Einstein was by now an illustrious international figure. In 1921 he received the Nobel Prize for Physics for work on the photo-electric effect, which demonstrated the quantum nature of light. He was also a visible presence in the cultural and social life of the Weimar Republic. At the same time, Einstein became increasingly outspoken in his political views. Opposing the mounting racist and jingoist violence and ultranationalism in Germany in the 1920s, he worked for European unity and supported organizations seeking to protect Jews against growing anti-Semitic violence. As the European economic and political crises grew more acute, Einstein increasingly used platforms at scientific conferences to address political questions.

In the years before he was granted U.S. citizenship in 1940, Einstein’s political concerns were focused on the depredations of Nazi anti-Semitism and the rise of fascism. Once again, making use of his renown, he petitioned the government to allow refugees to migrate to the United States, but to no avail. He then joined with other European intellectuals to ask Eleanor Roosevelt to intervene with her husband, but the result was the same. This was not Einstein’s first conflict with FDR’s administration. He vigorously and publicly supported the anti-Franco forces in the Spanish Civil War. While the Nazi Luftwaffe bombed Spanish villages, the United States, along with Britain and France, enforced a phony “neutrality” embargo, denying Republican troops needed munitions. Despite organized demonstrations and appeals to which Einstein lent his name, the blockade was never lifted and the fascist regime imposed on Spain survived (with post-war U.S. aid) for nearly four decades. Nearly 3,000 American volunteers of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade defied their government to fight with the Republic, with Einstein an early and zealous supporter.

After the war, Einstein protested the incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Another major political concern of Einstein in the 1940s was the persistence of racism, segregation, lynching, and other manifestations of white supremacy in the United States.

II Answer the following questions in about 150 words: [2x10=20]

1. Einstein’s major reason for leaving Germany was to avoid military service and pursue his career in science. Do you think this decision seems to be consistent with the other political opinions that Einstein held?
2. After reading about Gandhi’s views on Science and Einstein’s political opinions, what insights did you gain about the relationship between science and society? Would you encourage others to read about the scientific views of non-scientists and the political views of scientists? Why/Why not?

III Scientism is an ideology that promotes science as the only objective means by which society should determine normative and epistemological values. Using the following meme as a prompt and drawing on personal experience, explain if you’re

more likely to express disagreement with a politician/artist rather than a scientist.
Give reasons. **Respond in 250 words. [1X20=20]**

The caption of the meme reads: Scientists have discovered that people will believe anything when you claim scientists have discovered it.


