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THE UN MILLENNIUM GOALS IN GANDHIAN AND ATATURKIST PERPECTIVES¹

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**“The UN Millennium Goals in Gandhian
and Ataturkist Perspectives”**

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“Peace at Home, Peace in the World.”

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“There is no deliverance for any people on this earth or for all the people of this earth except through truth and non-violence in every walk of life without any exceptions.” – Gandhi

“Peace at Home, Peace in the World... Mankind is a single body and each nation a part of that body. We must never say 'What does it matter to me if some part of the world is ailing?' If there is such an illness, we must concern ourselves with it as though we were having that illness.” - Atatürk

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I. INTRODUCTION

In these days of crises over sovereign debt and austerity in the EU and USA, as the very core values and institutions of Western capitalism, banks and financial houses are being shaken to their foundation, what the world desperately needs are strategies to build a better world, growth with equity, peaceful and sharing. In this context, Western and non-Western ideas can contribute to efforts for the way forward toward a true Global Village. An efficient way to achieve freedom and equity in the Global Village would be through the United Nations Development Program's Human Development and the UN Millennium Development Goals (UN-MDGS)².

That, precisely, is what makes the nation-building visions of Gandhi and Ataturk, almost a century ago, so relevant today. These two giants of the 20th century overcame tremendous obstacles, internal and external, to translate their vision into reality. Their achievements offer ways to endogenize the MDGS in order to make them more appealing and effective. Specifically, as argued in this paper, Ataturk and Gandhi represent voices from the Third World that could be harnessed to promote MDGS as Global Public Goods (GPG) to guide transition to a peaceful Global Village built on freedom and equity.

It should be stated at the outset that, although Ataturk and Gandhi had radically different backgrounds, and differed in several aspects of philosophy, they also shared a strong sense of national freedom as a pre-condition for equity: Specifically, they believed in social justice based on the nobility of the peasant and a common idea of the state in the service of citizens for a better world. It is this common idea that is desperately required as the central pillar to construct a world of freedom and equity: A Global Village more sharing, non-violent, and tolerant in place of unregulated capitalist globalization benefiting a select (Western) minority.

The paper is organized in six parts. After this Introduction, Part II will offer a brief evaluation of MDGS to date as a prelude to Part III, which will evaluate Ataturk's own reforms from a Gandhian perspective. Part IV will highlight the Gandhian-Ataturkist

² As elaborated extensively in later parts of this paper.

concepts of empowerment of the peasant as the core of nation-building and economic development as a guide for MDGS-2015+. Specifically, it is argued that the Gandhian-Ataturkist ideas can transform today's unregulated capitalism into a global culture of shared prosperity through a renewed multilateral development strategy as MDGS-2015+. Part V will present a critique of globalization as the latest manifestation of Westernization merely an excuse for free capital mobility to enrich Western capitalism. Finally, in Part VI, some of the highlights emerging from the discussion will be noted.

II. EVALUATING MDGS TO DATE: ENDOGENIZING GOALS, TARGETS AND POLICIES

The UN-MDGS, originally adopted in 2000, represent an equity-promoting strategy of global shared prosperity of the global family. Influenced by the Indian-born philosopher-economist A.K. Sen, its philosophical foundations are universalistic, optimistic and non-materialistic. In technocratic terms, MDGS seek to translate international development into a Global Public Good (GPG)³ for the common good of humanity viewed as one, big family with equal stake in peace, security and development. At its core, it is a "basic human needs" set of policies arguing in favor of greater public spending for education, health, food, water and sanitation, gender equity, empowerment of rural communities, etc. The first MDGS expires, as unfinished business in 2015, and it is hoped it will be replaced, on a more secure funding basis, for the future.

Operationally, MDGS consists of 8 key goals, 18 targets and 48 technical indicators, all designed to measure performance in international development (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>). These are measurement-oriented tools, essential for impact analysis to satisfy donors and administrators. No attempt will be undertaken here to analyze and evaluate statistics or indicators to determine whether or not targets are being achieved. Such evaluation is done regularly both inside UNDP (e.g. the annual Development Reports: (<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/the-millennium-development-goals-report-2012/>)) and externally by international development experts.

³ The concept of justice as a "global public good" is discussed extensively in I. Kaul, I. Grunberg, and M.A. Stern, eds., *Global Public Goods, International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, UNDP and Oxford University Press, London and New York, 1999.

It is conceded, generally speaking, that considerable progress has indeed been achieved in most, if not all, of the MDGS fields since its inception.

Instead, the present discussion will focus on how to increase the appeal of the MDGS, in particular, in two domains: (1) in national jurisdictions, in developing countries themselves, and (2) through a global partnership by popularizing MDGS-2015+ in rich countries

ENDOGENIZING MDGS:

Nation-building is a unique experience, based on a country's own history, culture, resources and capacity for development. MDGS are no more than global best-practice standards. Just as international codes and conventions must be converted into national laws and regulations for enforcement, so it is with MDGS. These eminently noble goals and targets must be incorporated into national development plans and policies to have any chance of adoption and implementation.

The UNDP country programming, through representative channels, provides technical assistance and limited funding to national authorities. This is an extremely technocratic approach, which may work if and when willing bureaucracies and NGOs cooperate with international actors.

**“There is a disconnection: UN-MDGS strategy is unheard of;
it is as if it is alien, belonging to another world.”**

The public, however, is general unaware of MDGS operations in the field. Local opinion makers, academics, political or news media are generally unaware. Public's knowledge of MDGS in developing country societies is minimal. Typically, governments are expected to deliver national development: there is much debate on poverty reduction, unemployment, gender equity, health, and so on, but hardly ever are these inter-linked to MDGS. There is a disconnection: UN-MDGS strategy is unheard of; it is as if it is alien, belonging to another world. Likewise, other international development agencies such as WHO, ILO, UNICEF, FAO, WTO, are not much better. [There is somewhat better public awareness of the World Bank or IMF in the context of global financial crises, though not in terms of national economic development].

What is required is to endogenize MDGS by linking its underlying philosophy and premises to some national or local thinker, hero or major figure. In this paper, an attempt will be made for such a link with Ataturk and Gandhi, respectively, and through these national heroes, to connect past Turkish and Indian national development to current debate on MDGS, especially looking beyond 2015+. Ataturk and Gandhi are not merely national figures; they stand out as rare leaders whose vision and ideas are universal and deserve attention on the world stage toward building a more equitable Global Village. Their example can be multiplied by other national/global leaders (e.g. Kenyatta, Sukarno, Nelson Mandela and Martin L. King, just a few examples), in order to popularize and universalize MDGS in a renewed global partnership.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP: The idea of an equitable Global Village, a better world, more just, peaceful and sharing than the present, requires global partnership. The rich or developed countries, must contribute, not just through aid or charity but through trade and investment, toward building a truly Global Village. The weakest MDGS performance has been in the eighth on Global Partnership and it has no less than four Targets, all deficient or lagging relative to initial goals.

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, nondiscriminatory trading and financial system;

Target 13: Address the special needs of the Least Developed Countries;

Target 14: Address the special needs of the landlocked developing countries;

Target 5: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of the developing countries⁴.

While these targets require resource commitments on the part of the rich countries, core development aid is on a declining trend owing to austerity programs and fiscal constraints⁵. Trade and investment flows between the rich and developing world are far from compensating the decline in real aid flows, and, when, in fact, debt relief and humanitarian aid is excluded, resource flows for international development, in real terms, are falling. However, behind these market-based factors causing declining

⁴ www.unmilleniumproject.org/goals/gti.htm

⁵ www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg_goals/mdg8/

commitments in rich countries, it is also a fact that MDGS strategy is little known in these countries due to inadequate public education and information.

Clearly some drastic measures are required to promote global partnership. More public education and better PR and education in developed world would certainly help. But, what is especially lacking is the promotion of international development **as a case of Global Public Good (GPG)**. Considerable progress has been achieved in terms of global environmental standards and, to a lesser extent, in promoting international health as cases of GPG; but peace and security are far from being regarded as GPG. The fight against terrorism has been largely translated into more security forces, more military spending, more guns, guards and prisons.

What is required is a major global education and publicity to sell the idea of peace and shared prosperity in the Global Village as GPG. This is a philosophical challenge, but philosophical appeal can be enhanced, as suggested above, by linking to national and global heroes. The challenge requires a more holistic worldview, an appreciation of an integrated global family built on tolerance, religious and cultural diversity, but different parts of this huge family living in peace and shared prosperity with all other parts, as succinctly expressed in the Ataturk quote at the top of this paper.

Post-war economic development, and university courses in this field, has been Eurocentric⁶. What is now required is a more holistic worldview, a fusion of Western and non-Western worldviews. This is what makes Gandhi and Ataturk still so relevant. Gandhian perspective can be said to have had some influence on Human Development and MDGS via A.K. Sen, as pointed out below. There is also some evidence that the first 15 years of Turkish national development, much of it Ataturk's Golden Age, was an inspirational source of the UN's 2000 Millennium Declaration for 2015⁷.

⁶ See the author's *Westernizing the Third World*, op. cit. for an extended critique.

⁷ <http://www.lightmillennium.org/ataturk/list.html>. See also, UNESCO <http://www.turkishnews.com/Ataturk/unesco.htm>

III. ATATÜRK IN GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE

We begin with a short synopsis of basic elements of Gandhian Political Economy (GPE) rather than Gandhian economics as outlined in B. N. Ghosh's excellent recent book⁸. Chapter two of this book is mostly a historical attempt at analyzing the origins of GPE extending from Gandhi's experiences in South Africa⁹ and India, while chapter three and four deal with methodological issues.

The distinctive nature of GPE is its holistic nature, an all-compassing system of interwoven principles of economy, philosophy, religion, politics and sociology. Here Gandhi's holistic approach is a rational, yet non-Western method of capturing the soul of the individual based on four pillars: truth, non-violence, rejection of materialism and welfare of all. Gandhian rationality emerges out of humanism endowed in the soul of every individual leading to *individual-in-society*, a cooperative social being, rather than economic man of Western economics driven by self-interest. For Gandhi Western capitalism is unequal and thrives on aggression, power and exploitation. It must yield to human development that endows "citizens with freedom, dignity, equity and justice"¹⁰.

In contemporary terms, human development is the "basic objective of GPE."¹¹ Bottom-up economic development dignifies human labor by creating village economy. Economic empowerment at the grassroots goes hand in hand with enlargement of social capital, i.e. trust, cooperation and bonding, and local capacity development as local industries enable people to assume control over both resources and common destiny for a more self-reliant future. In chapter five there is a detailed discussion of exploitation¹², inequality and distribute justice, while in chapter six, there is an extended analysis of conflict and methods of conflict resolution. Gandhian approach to

⁸ B.N. Ghosh, *Gandhian Political Economy, Principles, Practice and Policy*, Ashgate, UK 2007 (hereinafter denoted as BNG).

⁹ In South Africa working as a young barrister, Gandhi soon realized, to his horror, that he had no choice but to work as an agent of the government exploiting the natives and colored classes for the benefit of the white minority. "The power was encapsulated in the legal institutions and culture." Ghosh, *Gandian*...p. 41

¹⁰ BNG: 25

¹¹ BNG: 28

¹² Gandhian exploitation is broad, covering not only labor market discrimination, but also gender and religious. He wished to root out caste and untouchability. BNG: 117.

conflict, especially in its tenant-landlord relations, has strong Ricardian and Marxist (class) antecedents.

Chapter seven, "State, Power and Policy" is a critique of British colonialism in India. For Gandhi, the British Indian state was "the agent of capitalism... a system of organized violence"¹³. However, unlike Marx, Gandhi did not wish for the "state to wither away"¹⁴ to a classless society. Rather, he wished to nationalize it and then utilize it for human development. Gandhi believed in the instrumentality of a national state, i.e. to enable "human capability expansion."¹⁵ Significantly, these ideas were later on further developed by the economist A.K. Sen, the architect of the recent development strategy outlined in the UNDP's *Human Development (HD) Report* and the strategy of Millennium Goals¹⁶. The idea of HD is taken up in chapter eight of the Ghosh book, while the final chapter nine provides an overall evaluation highlighted by the quote at the end of the book from Gandhi: "*There is no deliverance for any people on this earth or for all the people of this earth except through truth and non-violence in every walk of life without any exceptions.*"¹⁷

Or, in Atatürkist terms: "*Peace at Home, Peace in the World.*" Peace is universal and indivisible: It is the ultimate goal of humanity; it is what unites everyone, everywhere:

*"Mankind is a single body and each nation a part of that body. We must never say 'What does it matter to me if some part of the world is ailing?' If there is such an illness, we must concern ourselves with it as though we were having that illness."*¹⁸

World peace, peaceful co-existence is, using the economic terminology, the highest Global Public Good (GPG), the common shared universal goal. In peaceful world, the highest task of the State is to dedicate itself to deliver to citizens all the necessary

¹³ BNG: 27

¹⁴ BNG: 28

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ These are essentially equity-promoting "basic human needs" policies arguing in favor of greater public spending for education, housing, health, water and sanitation, food security etc. The first MDG expires, as unfinished business in 2015 and it is hoped it will be replaced, on a more secure funding basis, for the future. See

http://www.eadi.org/fileadmin/MDG_2015_Publications/Selim_Jahan_-_MDGs_and_Beyond_2015_SJ_Brussels_01.pdf

¹⁷ BNG: 251

¹⁸ <http://www.turkishnews.com/Ataturk/peace.htm>

means to enable them to attain their maximum potential capability: When there is no one whose welfare is sub-optimal, both national and global wellbeing are maximized. The task of maximizing GPG begins at the bottom of the social pyramid with socio-economic policy interventions to uplift the peasantry. This is the Gandhian-Ataturkist way.

IV. ATATÜRK¹⁹, THE ANATOLIAN GANDHI

The core of Ataturk's own nation-building philosophy was empowerment of the Anatolian peasant. Like Gandhi, Mustafa Kemal launched his Revolution²⁰ after a sea voyage, literally escaping a hostile (foreign) environment, both men on the run: Mustafa Kemal landed on 19 May 1919 in the port town of Samsun marking the start of his national liberation movement in Anatolia²¹. In this same period, Gandhi had gone from South Africa to India [in July 1914]. Gandhi began his Home Rule movement in 1920 after he was elected president of the All-India Home Rule League. In the same year Mustafa Kemal was elected president of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara.

From his disembarkation in Samsun, the future Ataturk relied on Gandhian methods to mobilize and raise the consciousness of the Anatolian peasantry in a miraculous war of national independence to win national freedom. Both Gandhi's and Kemal's common enemy was Western imperialism. Both needed allies in their revolutionary work. Ataturk's mobilized military and religious leaders of Anatolia, but most of all he harnessed the energy and power of the peasantry.

¹⁹ The most definitive, recent biographical study on Mustafa Ataturk is Andrew Mango, *Ataturk, The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*, Overlook Press, New York 1999, [which contains an excellent bibliography at the end]. An earlier, but still valuable study is: Lord Kinross, *Ataturk, The Birth of a Nation*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1964. For a concise evaluation of Ataturkist reforms at the golden age of Ataturkism, see Ozay Mehmet, *Islamic Identity and Development, Studies of the Islamic Periphery*, Routledge, London and New York, 1990, pp. 116-120. An exhaustive study (in Turkish) is by Sevket Sureyya Aydemir, *Tek Adam Mustafa Kemal (Unique Man, Mustafa Kemal)*, Remzi, Istanbul 2005 (in three volumes). Hereinafter referred as SSA. Other valuable sources, in Turkish, include studies by Emre Kongar and Ozer Ozankaya, to cite just two.

²⁰ In Turkish, *Devrim*, meant "a new beginning, as in turning a new page" signaling a peaceful transition from centuries of neglect of Anatolia under the Ottoman rule and the commencement of a bottom-up national rebirth, i.e. Development. Ataturk's "Revolution" was home-grown, i.e. national, not ideologically driven as in the Bolshevik Revolution, 1917.

²¹ The first sentence of his famous Speech is: "On 19 May, 1919 I landed on Samsun." See Gazi Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, *Gençler için Fotoğraflarla NUTUK [The SPEECH for Youth with Photographs]* Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, Ankara, Subat, 2010.

The War of Turkish Liberation was the first victory of a national (peasant) army from the (future) Third World against Western imperialism. A grateful and victorious Mustafa Kemal dedicated his victory to the Anatolian peasants. Similarly, Gandhi took on colonialism in British India with his long march, boycott and rebellion by unleashing the power of the Indian peasantry. After his victory²² and achievement of national freedom, Ataturk launched his second stage of nation-building. His Revolution was aimed at converting national freedom into social justice. Ataturkist social justice meant a fury of social, cultural and economic development to rebuild a modern Turkish nation. The Kemalist Revolution was populist and egalitarian, again reflecting strong Gandhian principles: Kemal's Republic in Ankara was a reward to the Anatolian peasantry because it was achieved with the blood and sacrifice of the peasant folk. The reward has not easy to achieve. Finally, after nine decades, it appears that Ataturk's dream [of national freedom leading to social justice] is finally [in the second decade of the 21st century] achieving maturity, even though Ataturkist centrist groups in Turkey appear to have lost ground.

The Golden Age of Ataturk's social and political form lasted from 1923²³-1934²⁴ [but more narrowly during 1923-28 as discussed below]. In this period Mustafa Kemal was at his revolutionary best, remaking and reshaping the Turkish nation. Ataturk's revolution lasted from the start of the Turkish Republic to the onset of the single Party supremacy at the 3rd Congress of the People's Republican Party, when the Six Arrows ideology was finally adopted²⁵. From mid-thirties, with Ataturk approaching his death, the national leadership in the Turkish Republic passed into the hands of Ismet Inonu, and, after Ataturk, a type of Party dictatorship²⁶ emerged, lasting till 1950.

²² The War of Turkish National Liberation, 1919-22 came some two decades before Indian independence, likely because it relied on non-violence.

²³ 1923 marks the signing of the Treaty of Lauzanne, [which replaced the proposed unequal Treaty of Sevres] marking the official international recognition of the Republic of Turkey.

²⁴ SSA, 3: 423 et. sq. The Six Arrows was introduced in the 2nd Party Congress in 1931, but adopted in 1934 and written into the constitution. Another useful source on this period is Emre Kongar, *Devrim Tarihi ve Toplumbilim Acisindan Ataturk – Ataturk from the Perspective of the History of the Revolution and Sociology*, 2nd edition, Remzi, Istanbul 1994.

²⁵ 1934 is significant also because it marked Ataturk's last major egalitarian reform, i.e. abolition of Ottoman titles, e.g. Pasha, Bey, and the adoption of Surnames for all Turkish citizens.

²⁶ At a time when most of Europe was under dictatorship, Ataturk himself was incorrectly described as a "dictator" [e.g. in H.C. Armstrong, *Grey Wolf: Mustafa Kemal, an intimate study of a dictator*]. This was factually wrong as Ataturk always enjoyed overwhelming support of his people. Mango's opinion of Armstrong [*op. cit.* p. 506] was that such a view is a "sensational mixture of gossip and men's club racism."

During the Golden Age, Ataturk was a genuine Anatolian Gandhi using non-violence and persuasion as his tools. He visited all parts of the country to persuade and promote his reforms for peasants and rural communities. But the metaphor must not be exaggerated: Whereas Gandhi relied always on non-violence; Ataturk was pragmatic and used all means necessary for his reforms. In a major non-Gandhian manner, he borrowed heavily from the West, but he did not forget the pre-Islamic heritage of the Turks. So, undoubtedly the two leaders have differences as well as similarities. Before the Golden Age, Ataturk was a military figure, crowning his achievements on the battlefield, and throughout his life, he never adopted non-violence as a guiding philosophy. After winning the War of Turkish National Liberation, he declared "Peace at Home, Peace Abroad", but, if all else failed, he relied on military means as a last resort as in the Kurdish rebellion or in the Hatay affair just before his death²⁷.

Ataturk's humanistic side is what makes him so appealing now in relation to UN-MDGS. The core of his humanism was an abiding belief in the goodness of the peasant, the energy and the capacity of the simple Anatolian folk to shape destiny. In this paper, the focus is primarily on Ataturk's lesser known humanism such as his egalitarian, pro-peasant and populist ideas. The basic theme of the paper is that Ataturk's reforms during the Golden Age shaped the soul and basic institutions of the Turkish Republic to empower the simple Anatolian peasantry: Embedded in the notion of *national sovereignty unconditionally belonging to the nation* [inscribed in Turkish Parliament] is the Kemalist notion that the Anatolian villagers, *koylu*, are the real masters of the Turkish nation. After Ataturk's death, Kemalism took an increasingly centrist, authoritarian and anti-rural orientation undermining much of the original ideas of Ataturk to ennoble the peasantry.

Ataturk occupies such a unique place in modern (especially in "official") Turkish history that many in Turkey consider him incomparable. Yet, every mortal's greatness is best appreciated when contrasted with or against a yardstick or some reference point. In this sense, Ataturk's modernization of Turkey is best understood if we evaluate his achievement in Gandhian perspective, emphasizing the people-focused transformation

²⁷ Mango, op. cit. pp. 508-9

he achieved during the Golden Age of Atatürkist Revolution, in particular during 1923-1928, but clearly up to 1934.

Ends and means are central in both Atatürk and Gandhi. Both shared a natural confidence in the capacity of the simple people, the soul inherent in the rural heartland of the nation, to achieve the overall, grand end of *human development (HD)*. For Gandhi "the true Indian civilization is in the Indian villages." ²⁸ For Atatürk: "the villager is the master of the nation." ²⁹ Both Gandhi and Atatürk believed end of HD is only attainable through the means of first national liberation, through a struggle to get rid of foreign domination. But, as a military leader, Atatürk's method of liberation was, unlike, Gandhi's national struggle, although both fought the same enemy, viz. Western imperialism.

Atatürk's war of liberation, of course, must be evaluated on the basis of the radically different historical differences of Turkey [and in particular of the Ottoman Empire] and India. The former was never colonized; rather through much of the last millennium, the Turks had been a conquering nation advancing and ruling much of Eastern and Central Europe from the 15th century on. Both India and the Ottoman Empire, experienced, especially in the 19th century, increasing European imperialist penetration; war and violence were as much part of British India as of the Ottoman Empire. Indian Independence finally came, in Gandhi's masterful hands, non-violently, but non-violence was no more than a transitory phase, Gandhi himself becoming a victim of the very violence he rejected. Turkish Independence, on the other hand, was the result of an additional four years of brutal war, immediately after WWI to fight and defeat the imperialist forces hell-bent on partitioning the Ottoman Empire. Both Gandhi and Atatürk regarded Western imperialism as enemy, not from ideology as Marx or Lenin did, but rather as oppressor of national freedom. Imperialism had to be expelled to enable the Turks and Indians to be masters of their own house.

It is in the post-liberation period of nation-building, in particular, that the two leaders shared similarity in underlying philosophies. The significant commonality in the views

²⁸ BNG: 69

²⁹ Mehmet (1990): 127. Full quote in footnote # 18

and beliefs of Gandhi and Atatürk lies in the program of socio-economic transformation they chose to conquer people's ignorance and underdevelopment. Populism in 1920s, meaning the welfare of ordinary people, was uppermost for both Gandhi and Atatürk.

Both subscribed to an egalitarian sense of social justice, aspiring to the betterment and empowerment of the peasant. The challenge of nation-building was to overcome poverty: the dismal living conditions of the bulk of the nation as a result of centuries of neglect and ignorance. To attain human development, both men believed in a two-stage achievement of human development, expressed in real time frame focused on actual conditions, the pitiful underdevelopment that existed in Turkey and India at the time: Following liberation from imperialism, both believed in self-reliant socio-economic reconstruction in a bottom up process aimed at transforming the individual's identity. However, Gandhi aspired to reshape the Indian soul, taking inspiration from endogenous (Hindu) culture, whereas Atatürk did not hesitate to import ideas and institutions from abroad [the very West he had fought] for reconstructing a new national Turkish identity.

For both men, however, first in the scheme of things came the struggle for political independence, *milli egemenlik* and *swara*. Both achieved success in the first stage, fighting on two simultaneous fronts against a common enemy, imperial aggression from the West and a decadent royalty that had become a willing tool of foreign penetration, the Ottoman Sultan and the 600 princes in British India. But whereas Gandhi relied on non-violence against both enemies, Atatürk fought and won on the battlefield. Atatürk achieved results much quicker. His military genius was guided by necessity since, at the end of the First World War, the imperialist armies had invaded the country to partition it away as war booty, creating new countries out of the Empire, not for the benefit of oppressed people (e.g. of Arabs), but to ensure Western control and ownership of such strategic resources as oil and gas. In India, Gandhi mobilized the people against the British rule that exploited the people through indirect rule, de-industrializing and under-developing India for the greater economic benefit of Britain. For imperialists, the welfare of the Turks or Indians did not matter; what mattered was the profit of Western interests.

It is, however, in the second [post-liberation] stage of human development that Ataturk and Gandhi have remarkable similarities in vision, method and strategy. At about the time when Gandhi was initiating his revolt against the British and was jailed for sedition for six years, Ataturk embarked on his second stage of human development, having successfully liberated his country in the first stage. Ataturk considered the second stage more important because it required a long-term war on poverty and underdevelopment to reach the highest level of human civilization.

The second stage was designed largely, but not exclusively on Gandhian foundations of non-violence: Ataturk's reforms were intended as non-violent³⁰ as Gandhian, but they were equally egalitarian, people-power driven through direct participation of the grass-roots. Ataturk visited communities, toured the country far and wide, to persuade and mobilize the people for his reforms. His mobilization strategy and his appeal to the peasant were populist and Gandhian. In one important respect Ataturk differed from Gandhi. The spiritualism of Gandhi had little room in the designs of Ataturk the pragmatist, who saw Western civilization as secular, a living model, from which to borrow, without, of course, sacrificing national independence. Gandhi, by contrast, preferred a life of austerity, a philosophy of plain living because he "adored voluntary poverty"³¹ as a rejection of Western materialism, favoring instead a more Hindu spiritual life-style.

Ataturk's end-vision was a prosperous Turkey, initiating a new People's Era based on socio-economic ideals which he outlined at the Izmir economic congress held in 1923, the year of the establishment of the Republic:

Friends, from now on we shall win new important victories, but those will not be won by the bayonet; they will be economic, scientific and educational victories. One cannot say that the victory won by our armies has brought true salvation to our country. This victory provides valuable ground on which our future victories

³⁰ Reforms by both Ataturk and Gandhi encountered violence. For example the most serious counter violence to Ataturk was in eastern Anatolia in 1925 when the Kurdish cleric, Sheyk Said revolted in the name of Islam which was likely a codeword for Kurdish feudalism. A few years later in western Anatolia there was the Kubilay lynching which generated violent reaction. It led to the creation of the notorious "Independence Tribunals." For details, see the authors earlier work, *Islamic Identity and Development, Studies of Islamic Periphery*, Routledge, London and New York, 1990: 119-20 Gandhi encountered violence by the British and he was killed by an assassin while Ataturk was similarly targeted in Izmir and elsewhere.

³¹ B.N. Ghosh, op. cit, p. 81

will be won. Let us not pride ourselves on our military victory, but rather prepare ourselves for new scientific and economic victories."³²

The victor of the National War of Independence surpassed his miraculous success on the battlefield³³, Atatürk masterminded directly his Anatolian reforms during the Golden Age of 1923-1928. The words of a close confidant, Falih Rifki Atay, are quoted by the pre-eminent Turkish biographer Sevket Sureyya Aydemir (hereafter referred to as SSA)³⁴:

"Taking the date of proclamation of the Republic as the starting point, the Reform Period, lasted from 29 October 1923 to 3 October 1928, covering 5 years, 1 month."

On the latter date, İsmet İnönü became the prime minister and Atatürk gradually distanced himself from government policy-making, relying increasingly on his trusted lieutenant. Subsequently, İnönü fell under the influence of others, especially a group of Soviet-trained advisors known as the *Kadro* group³⁵, favoring state control of economy and politics.

During the first five years of the Republic, Atatürk, the social engineer, was directly in control of policy-making. On 29 October 1923 he declared the Republic, ending the Sultanate. In March 1924 the Qur'anic schools, the Medresses, were replaced with a secular Ministry of Education, and the Caliphate was abolished. Also in 1925, the new dress code was introduced with a new Hat Law, whereby the traditional turban, or *fez*, was replaced by a modern hat.

There was one common aim behind these reforms: to conquer poverty in Anatolia and to transform the mindset of the Anatolian peasantry. Atatürk believed he owed his military success to the simple folk of Anatolia and to them he dedicated the new Republic. In a speech on 1 March 1922, while the War of

³² UNESCO 1963: 188

³³ Recounted recently in a fascinating best-seller in Turkey, *Su Cilgin Turkler (Those Crazy Turks)*

³⁴ SSA, 3: 532

³⁵ Mehmet, 1990: 133

Independence was still on going, he left no doubt as to who were the real masters of Turkey and rural welfare was the top priority:

*Who is the master and owner of Turkey? We can all give an immediate answer to this question. The real owner and master of Turkey is the peasant, the producer. It follows that the peasant has a greater claim to prosperity, happiness and wealth than anyone else.*³⁶

In this same speech, Ataturk revealed his Gandhian economic philosophy that put him apart from Kemalists in later periods. Realizing that agriculture and village economy were the backbone of Anatolia, he abolished in 1924, at the same moment that he was disestablishing Ottoman institutions, the oppressive agricultural tithe even though it was the largest single source of tax revenue of the cash-starved state, representing almost a fifth of total budget.³⁷ In Gandhian style, Ataturk's reforms were significantly bottom-up, tackling rural underdevelopment first, in the periphery away from the center³⁸. He wanted to build new modern Turkey by raising productivity at the bottom, in agriculture first and foremost. He wanted the peasant population to become literate farmers, to produce more income and retain a higher share. For this reason, he endorsed modern farming techniques in what might be termed "intermediate technology"³⁹. In the vicinity of the new national capital Ankara, then an insignificant town in the Anatolian semi-desert, Ataturk established an experimental farm for introducing new crops and plants and initiating new farm technology; now, thanks to Ataturk's foresight in these innovations, Ankara can boast a green environment amidst extensive forests.

Ataturk's reform was targeted not on Istanbul, not even on urban centers, but on the Turkish heartland, Anatolia, lying in ruins and devastation in 1923.

Ataturk's reform package was one integrated program, bold in style, comprehensive in content, and radical in scope. In all of Turkish history there is no precedent for it

³⁶ UNESCO 1963: 187

³⁷ SSA, 3: 337, footnote 1.

³⁸ Center-periphery in Ottoman and Turkish history is a classic method of study, most notably in the works of Serif Mardin.

³⁹ Gandhi opposed Western mechanization as alienating and destroying the peasant. Ataturk approved modern farm technology so long as it enhanced productivity and created value-added for peasants. Ataturk would have preferred land reform over mass migration of rural labor displaced by premature farm mechanization resulting in *gecekondus*, urban slums, in major cities.

although as Bernard Lewis⁴⁰ and others have documented, the Reform Movement had a long history, typically as failed experiments.

One fundamental principle stands behind all of Atatürk's reforms: His idea of development was imbedded in social justice, an egalitarian worldview with a deep respect for the simple man, the peasant, the villager of Anatolia. He developed this respect for the ordinary people during his military campaign after his landing in the port city of Samsun on 19 May 1919 which marks the start of War of National Liberation⁴¹ when the victorious Allies had decided in Versailles to partition the Turkish homeland.

Atatürk, the social engineer, was Gandhian in method as well⁴². He chose and initiated a process of transformation to rebuild and reconstruct the nation to the highest level of contemporary civilization, which he considered to be one, global trend-line along which all nations had to evolve⁴³. His reforms were to be non-violent and problem-solving approach in direct contact with the ordinary people. Atatürk emphasized practical solutions at the village level over abstract philosophical blueprints. His method was Gandhian, i.e. go to the people, to engage them, win their hearts and mind, by guiding, cajoling and seeking approval bottom-up, consulting the ordinary people in clarifying his own mind and blending these with expert advice at the center on technical matters. Once he made up his mind, he moved into implementation with determination and clarity of purpose. In implementation of reforms he personally engaged the target groups through direct participation. He frequently went on field visits to all parts of the country, absorbing actual reality in villages and towns, meeting and talking with ordinary people as well as local leaders, to learn about the desperate living conditions. His social laboratory was the homeland, now at last liberated. This liberation was the people's victory, no less than the military. Atatürk was everywhere

⁴⁰ *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, London, 1968

⁴¹ See his famous 6-day long Speech, a personal account, rich in documentation, of the National War of Independence. See *Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Gençler için Fotoğraflarla NUTUK [The SPEECH with photographs for youth]*, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, Ankara February, 2010.

⁴² BNG, see in particular, the section on "Civilization, Transformation and Reforms", pp. 38-9

⁴³ A significant difference must be noted between Atatürk and Gandhi as regards the idea of civilization. We return to this later.

received like a hero, by rich and poor alike, but the ultimate conquest he yearned for was the poverty the simple and honest Anatolian peasant, now master of the Turkish homeland. But everywhere this homeland lay in ruins. Ataturk's greatest mission was its transformation to be achieved non-violently immediately following national liberation.

Ataturk's deepest conviction, what drove his reform agenda was that the poverty of the Turkish homeland was due to the official neglect accumulated and institutionalized during the Ottoman centuries. He viewed Ankara, the new capital, as a symbol, a mirror of institutionalized poverty in the Turkish homeland. Thus, on 21st September 1923 when Ataturk's mind was occupied with the momentum decision to replace the Ottoman Sultanate with the Republic in which power derived from the people, he attended the opening ceremony of the Children Aid Society in the capital with his wife, Latife hanım, with whom Ataturk had a short, tempestuous 2-year marriage. On this occasion, he confided to her his inner thoughts in these highly revealing words:

*"Latife, look at the deplorable condition of this land, look at Ankara. Is it truly possible to transform the poverty and neglect of this land and make it our homeland? How could a regime (i.e. Ottomans) rule this land for centuries with such utter neglect, and then call it homeland? Who are they kidding? Even my close associates are ever ready to criticize the peasant for his low productivity, yet they see nothing wrong in their loyalty to the same regime that has depressed the homeland to such poverty. This is the essence of our challenge I WILL EXPLAIN THIS TO MY PEOPLE. I WILL SUCCEED WITH PEOPLE POWER."*⁴⁴ (Authors' translation. Capitals added for emphasis.)

People power, for Ataturk, was both the spring-source of reform as well as a mobilization tool, a necessary condition for a particular reform. People power, in both these senses, was expressed during field visits and travels in Anatolia. The Turkish heartland represented social laboratory to observe and articulate the people's social and economic problems *in situ* as well as occasions to launch reform derived from national will. The introduction of the dress code was an example of Ataturk's bottom-up revolution. He took the lead, and his strong personality was decisive in this reform,

⁴⁴ S. Eris Ulger, *Latife Gazi Mustafa Ataturk Inkilap*, [Latife Gazi Mustafa Ataturk's Revolution] Ankara, 2005, p. 111, This paper was presented at the PIONEER OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: ATATÜRK – A Two-Day International Conference. Organized and presented by The Light Millennium and College of Arts and Letters at Stevens Institute of Technology on April 19-20, 2013. <http://www.lightmillennium.org> - <http://www.stevens.edu> 18

but it was not dictatorial. Ataturk used persuasion. He introduced this daring reform, which leaders from Sultan Mahmut had tried in vain in the preceding 100 years, during a visit to Kastamonu-Inebolu, a region renowned for its conservatism. On 24th August 1925, on the outskirts of Kastamonu, wearing a Panama hat as a symbol of modernity, he proclaimed:

*"We need to embrace civilization. Our ideas and mentality, from head to toe, must be transformed. Look at the situation of the entire Turkish and Muslim people. Everywhere there is suffering because people's minds and mentality cannot comprehend the transformation and development demanded by civilization. We can no longer stagnate. Civilization is such a fiery force that it burns and destroys those who stay disinterested."*⁴⁵

Almost instantly, such was his charisma, the townspeople, including the local Muftu (the local chief cleric) obliged by casting away their fez and replacing it with a modern hat. Once the town people were won over, the mayor and the local bureaucrats followed suit. The next day, in neighboring Inebolu, Ataturk announced to a group of assembled teachers and youth the source of his inspiration and incentive for reform:

*"Whatever steps and reforms I have initiated to date for the good of the nation and country, it has always been in consultation with the people, and their support and encouragement has given me strength and encouragement. There is nothing in our actions or decisions to date that is contrary to national interest."*⁴⁶

The people of Ankara, including the civil service and the more sophisticated classes whom Ataturk distrusted for their Ottoman habits, gradually followed the example of Kastamonu, as did the entire nation. The traditional headwear, the *fez*, was gone quickly as Turks began to change not only outwardly in dress, but also their mindset.

Ataturk's alphabet reform was, for him, a necessary complement of the dress reform; indeed it was the core component of his entire modernity project. He wished to conquer illiteracy and do it immediately because literacy represented a mental revolution, reading and writing opened the gates to scientific knowledge for all citizens.

⁴⁵ SSA, 3: 228

⁴⁶ SSA, 3: 230

Ataturk intended to alter the psychology of the Turkish peasant, to shock and steer the tradition-bounded individual out of the deep-rooted Islamic traditionalism; he believed this was the way to liberate the inner soul, so that the individual could attain the maximum capability in the modern age with secular education and knowledge.

Ataturk met stiff opposition, including from his closest ally Ismet Inonu who wished to phase the alphabet slowly over a 7-year period. Ataturk thought it could be done in 6 months. It took 3 years of planning and endless debate in an Education Commission in parliament, from 1925 to 1928, and it was finally introduced in 1928 only due to the personal impatience of Ataturk. An act of parliament was passed on 1 October 1928. Ataturk spared no effort in arguing and persuading officials and bureaucrats, but the decisive factor in the alphabet campaign was the clever way by which he mobilized popular support up and down the country to get approval. At Sarayburnu on 9 August 1928, he declared to a large gathering of townspeople:

*"The new Turkish alphabet must be introduced quickly. Teach the new Turkish alphabet to every citizen, woman man, porter and carpenter. As you perform this duty, remember that it is a national disgrace when 80% of the nation is illiterate, with only 10 or 20% being able to read and write."*⁴⁷

Thus, Latin replaced the old Arabic script and the old *Medresse* system of memorizing the Qur'an was henceforth based on the modern curriculum was implemented. The manner in which the alphabet reform was introduced was pure Gandhian: It turned into a mass popular movement in which every citizen was directly engaged, and a national crusade was launched, Ataturk himself becoming a "teacher", encouraging and cajoling everyone else around him, not only school teachers, but politicians, reporters and an army of volunteers taking part in a huge social experiment in open yards, halls and village squares to learn the new alphabet.

Ataturk's political theory was no less egalitarian. He wanted a secular political space in which every person was equal. For him, equality of citizenship was the bedrock of democracy; ideally within a multiparty system, when conditions were conducive. One person, one vote, including women, and emancipation of women were reforms

⁴⁷ SSA, 3: 304

introduced well before many European countries. Ankara became the national capital and Republic was chosen, not only to escape the decadence and corruption of Byzantium/Ottoman Istanbul, but as a move **in organic relationship** with the people of Anatolia. Ankara of 1923 was no more than a large and neglected town, lacking basic amenities, even a hotel. Ataturk wanted a fresh start, a total break with the past, a bottom up revolution, uplifting the ordinary Turkish people out of the inertia and ignorance they had been reduced by centuries of Ottoman neglect.

Ataturk believed in one universal civilization to which all nations aspired. He saw human progress, as a competitive struggle, as a process of scientific and secular achievement, overcoming obstacles and climbing to the top of a mountain: There are many nations and many paths, but all converging on one ultimate civilization⁴⁸. At the particular time [in the 1920s], the West was way ahead of the Turkish nation on the way to the mountain top. Accordingly, Ataturk wanted the Republic to catch up to (Western) contemporary civilization, with every citizen enjoying equal rights in a Modern Republic committed to the rule of law, with secular laws and gender equality, every citizen eligible to vote and hold office. Ataturk's nationalism, [better patriotism] was an all-embracing Turkish identity blended out of Anatolia. "Turk" for the Ottomans was a pejorative term. For Ataturk it signified a return to authentic, pre-Ottoman roots. It was not meant as a forced assimilationist concept; rather as a melting pot idea resting on tolerance and acceptance of differences. After Ataturk, Turkishness has encountered new challenges of neo-Ottomanism, Islamic fundamentalism and ethnic identity, most significant of all, Kurdish/PKK terrorism in post-1980⁴⁹.

Paralleling Gandhi who, to his dying days, remained steadfast in his belief of One-India, home to Muslim and Hindu embracing all caste and non-caste, Ataturk's nationalism, centered on Turkish citizenship within a unitary state with one national flag, one national identity and one national language. The Turkish mosaic incorporated a wide ethnic diversity of Kurds, Laz, Circassian, Arab, Muslim and a variety of

⁴⁸ Some quotations are useful from: Turkish National Commission for UNESCO, *ATATURK*, Ankara, 1963: 143-47 "It is vitally important to walk successfully in the path of civilization...nations trying to live on with medieval institutions and primitive superstitions are condemned to destruction...only in contemporary civilization can it [i.e. the nation] find the scientific and other sources of strength and vitality for a struggle in the international field."

⁴⁹These topics are discussed in some detail in: Yilmaz Colak, *Turkiyede Devletin Kimlik Krizi ve Cesitlilik*, (The Identity Crisis of State in Turkey and Pluralism) Kadim, Ankara, 2010.: 116-125 and chap. 8

Christian minorities. The label “Turkish” was not a racial category (Ataturk himself had been strongly opposed to *Turanism* for this reason⁵⁰). For Ataturk there was no ethnic priority or hierarchy, putting Turkmen above or separate from others. He knew very well that Anatolia was a home of great ethnic diversity and all had contributed to the liberation of the Motherland. He believed that just as all had combined to achieve the victory in the National War of Independence, so they would cooperate to forge a new united nation through education and bottom-up development. “Turk” was meant to be a generic, all-inclusive label, in place of “Ottoman”, now abandoned. Patriotism of *Turkiye*, the Turkish homeland, as defined in the National Pact, was as far as he was willing to go⁵¹.

Ataturk’s patriotism was to be developed through public education. Primary education was made compulsory so that within a generation literacy could be conquered and the age of ignorance replaced by informed citizens, “masters” of the nation. He placed teachers in a special status, entrusting them with a sacred mission in the fight against illiteracy. He wanted this fight to be fought bottom up, in villages and he wanted literacy tied to vocational skill acquisition for productive employment. That was the purpose of his ill-fated Village Institute, an adult education project which was ultimately sabotaged by reactionaries. Through such projects, Ataturk wished to overcome illiteracy and eliminate the great rural-urban divide, hoping to equalize the disparity in living standards between peasant and urban communities.

Ataturk’s secularism was at variance with Gandhi’s views on religion. Belief in God was, for Ataturk, a private faith; no political party should claim to speak for Allah. A single citizenship, an official identity in a modern state, must be removed from religion, sect, ethnicity or tribal affiliation. In Ottoman times competing ethnic identity had resulted in division and conflict. Muslim-Christian-Jew as different Ottoman *Millets* meant competing loyalties. In the modern Turkish Republic, Muslim law of *Mecelle* and *Sheri’at* had to be replaced by modern European laws and every citizen would have equal rights and obligations. Everyone who fought and contributed toward the creation

⁵⁰ Turan, a purely Turkish homeland extending from Turkey into Central Asia, was an ideology popular among some Ottoman Young Turks. Ataturk, dismissed it as impractical. See B. Lewis, op. cit. 352-3.

⁵¹ Lewis on p. 353, cites Ataturk’s speech to the Grand National Assembly on 1 December 1921 in which he rejects Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turanism as “fantasies”, useless and dangerous.

of the Republic was now entitled to Turkish citizenship. "*Ne Mutlu Turkum diyene*" [*What Privilege to call oneself a Turk*], the slogan of citizenship, represented a generic identity placing everyone on equal footing in law and politics. Similarly, there would be official gender equality. Women would no longer be second class, polygamy would be ended and marriage be regulated by modern civil law.

These were radical reforms, unprecedented in scope and impact in Turkish history. They created backlash, often from amongst Ataturk's closest circles. The earliest and most violent anti-Ataturk campaign was launched by a traditional Kurdish fanatic in Southeast Turkey, led by Sheyk Said. Revolting in 1925, Said led a mostly Kurdish force to oust the "Godless" regime of Ataturk out of office. Said was defeated by Ataturk in the name of equality of citizenship in a unitary state. Kurds, like everyone else, were Turkish citizens, Ataturk's melting pot was centered on an official Turkish language, but subsequent generations of Ataturkists [i.e. authorities and figures who styled themselves as custodians – typically using the Turkish slogan "*izindeyiz*" : "we are walking in your path"] who adopted a centrist, authoritarian *national identity*, suppressing ethnic diversity, including Kurdish, by military force. It has failed miserably and in the latest phase, pluralism is being pursued within a more flexible democratic state⁵². The Republic was not won against foreign powers who desired to partition Turkey to be lost in internal secessionist struggles.

The 1934 Congress of the People's Republican Party (CHP) was the high watershed of Ataturkism. Influenced by the worldwide Depression, and the rise of Dictatorship in Germany, Communist Russia, Italy and Spain, the CHP moved, against objection from a sick and dying Ataturk, to establish a single-party domination of the Turkish Republic. The new ideology was known as *Six Arrows*⁵³ (*Republicanism, Nationalism, Populism, Statism, Secularism and Reformism*)⁵⁴. Ataturk peacefully passed away on 10 November 1938 and an era suddenly came to an end. By then young Turkish Republic faced huge internal and external threats. The world was by then hijacked by Hitlerism and the 2nd World War was just round the corner. During this period, CHP and

⁵² Yilmaz Çolak, op.cit.

⁵³ For a brief evaluation see the author's, "Turkey in Crisis, Some Contradictions in Ataturkist Development Strategy" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 15, 1983.

⁵⁴ SSA, vol. III: 421-434

the State were under rule of the national chief Ismet Inonu, who, in the end understood the limitation of the single party system and opted for multiparty transition in 1950 when he was overwhelmingly voted out of office. The economy, however, had already passed under state control with *etatism* as the guiding economic philosophy solidly entrenched until the national fiscal bankruptcy in 1980. Although Turkey experimented with multi-party democracy after 1950⁵⁵, economic development was always centrally controlled by inefficient and dysfunctional military and non-military bureaucratic elites with little concern for the welfare of the rural populations. The contest between military and civilian elites at the center resulted in three *coup d'états* that only seemed to have the effect of retarding economic and political development⁵⁶.

Overall, despite significant differences especially in secularism/spiritualism and in the struggle to regain national liberation, Gandhi's and Ataturk were exceptional leaders, nation-builders against impossible odds, with a common belief in social justice for all in a peaceful world⁵⁷. Ultimately, it is this common belief is their lasting legacy: It can be summed up, in modern economic jargon, as follows: *Social justice for all in a Global Village is a global public good*⁵⁸.

Shared global prosperity is the necessary pre-condition for a non-violent and, hence sustainable world. Currently, the UN-MDGS strategy is arguably the most significant multilateral effort to actualize global shared prosperity as SPG. This confirms very closely to Ataturk, "peace at home, peace abroad" as a basis of egalitarian socio-economic development to sustain the nation as prosperous and independent. Ataturk believed that once poverty and under-development are defeated through nation-building, a universalistic or global civilization would emerge as natural evolution. Each and every nation doing its own nation-building would ultimately converge on universal

⁵⁵ Ataturk Karpaz, *Turkey's Politics, The Transition to Multi-Party System*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1959

⁵⁶ For an extended discussion, written some 30 years, but still valid, see Mehmet 1983

⁵⁷ Significantly, UNESCO had taken the lead in acknowledging Ataturk's contributions. UNESCO Centenary of Ataturk's birth:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0003/000370/037018e.pdf>(Page: 21)

November 1979

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0007/000747/074752eo.pdf>

Also, see <http://www.lightmillennium.org/ataturk/list.html>

⁵⁸ The concept of justice as a "global public good" is discussed extensively in I. Kaul, I. Grunberg, and M.A. Stern, eds., *Global Public Goods, International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, UNDP and Oxford University Press, London and New York, 1999. See also, E. Mendes and O. Mehmet, *Global Governance, Economy and Law*, Routledge, London and New York, 2003.

peaceful co-existence. Gandhi's non-violence, by contrast was cultural relativism, acknowledging great diversity within a large country like India: diversity in religion, culture and beliefs. This great diversity, he believed, could be reconciled in his overarching idea of One India. Naturally, Gandhi would have endorsed the idea of One World, peaceful, sharing and non-violent. Accordingly, Atatürkist and Gandhian visions ultimately converge: Both men believed in national independence as a starting condition. Given independence, Gandhi and Atatürk believed in the infinite power of the state to deliver good governance (e.g. derived from MDGs) to all its citizens, regardless of sex, race or status. Externally, both had an abiding belief in the peaceful co-existence of nations in One World, a just Global Village.

V. ARE GANDHI AND ATATÜRK STILL RELEVANT?

Gandhi and Atatürk were not trained economists or political scientists. One was a lawyer, the other a military general. Both men were engaged in struggles against Western imperialism, and later in nation-building. They both fought injustice and exploitation, and adopted a common dedication for social justice, in particular for the peasants and the poor folk of the nation.

Like Gandhi and Atatürk the road to global peace passed through political and economic independence, followed by national reconstruction. The two shared the same goal of a peaceful, non-violent world. Where the two differed the most was in strategy, in the choice of development paths to get to a peaceful world. Atatürk believed in a unified global civilization; he set to borrow from European law, politics and economics, in the process creating some contradictions in Atatürkist development strategy⁵⁹ Gandhi, educated in England and shaped by British colonialism in India and South Africa, was hostile to Europe. For him, "the British state in India was an incarnation of a Satanic state"⁶⁰. Gandhi regarded Indian religion⁶¹ and culture as positive force, he respected in particular the values of the peasant, and he wished for a decentralized system with more power to local government in order to empower the soul of the people and build a self-reliant Indian economy. In this system, village was central, the

⁵⁹ See Mehmet 1983.

⁶⁰ BNG: 183

⁶¹ Although he rejected caste and untouchability, Gandhi respected Hinduism. BNG: 117

key to a just and fair economy. Empowering the village and peasantry was the way to build economy, bottom up. It liberated the soul, ennobling the individual, while also harnessing local community resources in a self-reliant development from the village upwards.

This matches Ataturk's vision of "the peasant being the master of Turkey." Unlike subsequent centrist, *etatist* economic development, guided and controlled from the center in Ankara, Ataturk wished (in his Golden Age) a bottom up, Gandhian development process. Unfortunately, however, ethnic and special interest groups (e.g. Kurdish Aghas and feudal system in Anatolian heartland so well described in the famed Yashar Kemal's novel, *Memed, my Hawk*) prevented land reform and village development dear to Ataturk's heart. Nevertheless, social justice for the bulk of the population was central to both Gandhi and Ataturk. That belief makes them very much relevant today.

In the contemporary world of globalization, two major global trends are dominant in markets. One is the digital technology of computers, cell phones and internet. This technology represents a new capitalist innovation. Digital technology is extremely capital-intensive, and in both the developed and developing worlds, high capital-output ratios are destroying jobs everywhere. The rise in productivity generated by digital technology is a boon to capitalists and financial elites, shifting income distribution everywhere against the working classes while enriching the minority at the top owning and trading in capital assets. It is no wonder that the world's richest men include Bill Gates, the creator of Microsoft and creators of Apple, Facebook, plus a small financial elite, the so-called 1% in the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

The second major global trend is the growing asymmetry between capital mobility and labor migration⁶². Neo-liberal advocates of globalization, principally the World Bank, IMF and the dominant Western voices at the WTO, argue passionately for freer trade (meaning only free mobility for capital and technology), while turning a blind eye, or worse still endorsing non-tariff barriers restricting labor mobility. Freer trade, featuring

⁶² For an extended discussion, see O. Mehmet, E. Mendes, R. Sinding, *Towards a Fair Global Labour Market, Avoiding a New Slave Trade*, Routledge, London and New York, 1999

freedom of movement for Western technology and capital, is clearly good for Western capitalism. But western capitalism, thriving on inequality, is unfit for a world of social justice built on tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Dignity of the individual, resting on "Peace at home, Peace Abroad", should be the guiding principle of a just and peaceful world.

While the digital technology is promoting a One World civilization, the asymmetry between capital and labor is fragmenting the global family. That is precisely why a global humanistic strategy like UN-MDGS is desperately required to put the national development agenda back towards peace and shared prosperity as GPG.

VI. GLOBALIZATION TORN APART OR A WORLD OF SOCIAL JUSTICE? UN-MDGS 2015 & BEYOND

Is the current globalization a trend to take the world toward the peaceful, non-violent world envisioned by Ataturk and Gandhi? Hardly. How can it be in view of financial meltdown, Euro and sovereign debt crises, international terrorism, US-led wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and regional conflicts in Africa and elsewhere?

The current global economy rests on the hegemony of Western capitalism symbolized by the IMF-WB-WTO system. It is a Western construct and is too neo-mercantilist to lead humanity toward the kind of Gandhi-Ataturk vision of global peaceful co-existence. The system's own contradictions are tearing apart the very centers of capitalism itself. **The disunity over German-style austerity versus the Anglo-Saxon growth-stimulating approach, highlighted by the Greek default, is nothing else than the bankruptcy of an outmoded capitalist system.**

The *laissez-faire* of free capital mobility in a world of restricted flow of labor, is pushing the world to renewed waves of violence and conflict. **As the gap between the haves and have-nots become wider, the world economy becomes increasingly dysfunctional and unsustainable.** As the capitalist competition for resources (e.g. oil, water) intensify and privatization and capitalist penetration into remaining rain-forests and other areas of natural riches spill over into conflict over resources,

unregulated market forces breed terrorism and Huntington-style clashes. **The world is then a world torn asunder by intolerance, conflict and terror.**

Global partnership or multilateralism is needed for a world of social justice in accordance with the vision of Gandhi and Ataturk. Though neither of them attempted to map out a grand, global vision, their ideas and values may nevertheless help in creating a peaceful and tolerant world. Whether that world is one of cultural diversity *a la* Gandhi, or whether it mirrors a universalistic culture as Ataturk believed the key pre-requisite is peaceful co-existence and shared global prosperity in One World. Such a global vision requires a brand new multilateral commitment, e.g. making UN-MDGS beyond 2015 a reality.

In turn, such a commitment would require a wholesale remaking of the institutions managing world economy – deliberately and multilaterally that is exactly what happened at the end of World War II, occasioned by the challenge faced at Breton Woods and San Francisco leading to the creation of the UN and IMF-WB. Now, more than half a century later, a similar challenge exists, and one needs to go back to voices from Gandhi and Ataturk, to pay attention in particular to their common struggle against Western imperialism and toward greater social justice for all. Although colonialism and imperialism are long dead, neo-mercantilist institutions still dominate the world economy. **Global social justice remains as elusive a dream as ever.** The IMF-WB-WTO system work to reward Western economic interests at the expense of the Rest. This unfair system must be replaced or transformed for a fairer distribution of global income and wealth with international taxation⁶³. Without a fair global distribution of income and wealth, peaceful global coexistence is bound to remain a dead letter, an empty dream.

⁶³ As discussed extensively in Mehmet (2013.)

VII. CONCLUSION

Gandhi and Ataturk were men of vision, voices from a non-Western world fighting imperialism. They both waged war against a capitalist West for the freedom and dignity of the individual. **They were victorious and their struggle and achievement represented what was wrong with the West: aggression, greed and exploitation.** Now as then, the world needs fixing: Gandhi's and Ataturk's ideas of nation-building, of empowering the peasant, implementing bottom-up development, can now inspire us toward great leaps forward.

What sort of leaps?

Global institutional reform must be based on the idea that international development and global shared prosperity are GPG. The general public, in rich and poor countries need to be educated that investing in a development strategy such as MDGS is investing in a more secure, peaceful and better world; a new world of peace and social justice, beyond *laissez faire* capitalism.

In money and banking, reform is required multilaterally to avoid periodic monetary melt-downs, caused by toxic assets being internationalized by self-serving interest group in charge of banking and financial system, improperly supervised in the name of free market theories. A trading and financial system that constantly impoverishes the periphery and destroys individual dignity in Africa, Asia and Latin America in order to enrich the minority of capitalist interests in the West must be replaced by global partnership jointly managing the international trade and finance as global public goods.

The aid system and resource transfers from the rich to the developing world are in desperate need of reform. More specifically, tied aid flows and politically motivated

Western transfers need to be replaced by international taxation to finance autonomous development and anti-poverty programs in developing nations⁶⁴ In such a renewed

resource transfer system, the welfare and dignity of the peasants and rural poor must feature prominently in a bottom-up development process by utilize leaders like Gandhi and Ataturk, to mobilize local resources, build capacities and win public support for MDGS policy implementation in national development efforts.

For too long, thinking and theorizing on world's development has been Eurocentric⁶⁵. When it comes to charting a new path for world development, it time to pay attention and endogenize voices from the developing world. What better voices in this venture than Gandhi and Ataturk, two of the greatest nation-builders the world has ever seen!

The challenge now is to reconstruct the world economy for a truly global partnership, peaceful and tolerant, on social justice principles of Gandhi and Ataturk. Strategies such as UN-MDGS represent the "best practice" to transform our divided world into a peaceful and sustainable Global Village built on freedom, tolerance and shared prosperity.

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⁶⁴ On this, see Mendes and Mehmet, op. cit. Chap. 5

⁶⁵ O Mehmet, *Westernizing the Third World, The Eurocentricity of Economic Development Theories*, Routledge, London and New York, 2nd ed., 1999.