



World Peace and Sovereignty: A Philosophical Study

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Abstract : The topic “World Peace and Sovereignty” is an important concept in the philosophical and ethical domain. World peace is the supreme ideal and various issues which hamper peace make it necessary to lay down the fundamental principles of philosophy, ethics and morality to fix it. Sovereignty in the context of Political Philosophy has been used as a tool to study world peace. Responsibility to humanity compels us to propose a reformulation in this era of waning trust in International law and organizations. In this paper, the problems of world peace and its causes have been discussed. By studying the concept of sovereignty, its various kinds, aspects, as well as the views of different Indian and western

thinkers, solutions to the problems of world peace have been suggested. It has been suggested that by adopting universal and political ethics, inner peace chained with world peace in the light of the views of different thinkers, world peace can be established. If people of the world adopt the above principles in their action, social disturbance can surely be reduced to minimum. To achieve a peaceful and conflict-free space in every walk of life, we ought to incorporate morality where one strives for the welfare of all rather than that of an individual.

Keywords: World peace, Sovereignty, Political ethics, Universal ethics.

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Introduction :

Peace and harmony in the world are the greatest need of the hour. World peace or peace on earth is the concept of an ideal state of happiness, freedom and peace within and among all people and nations on earth. In this modern era there is disharmony, violence and cruelty all over the world nationally and internationally. In spite of all the developments in science and technology, a fact persists in the world that one's precious life is not safe. This constant awareness of fear and tension makes every sensitive and compassionate person question the progress of our modern world.

In this world where everything is possible from artificial intelligence, modern weapons, advanced technology, etc., we find that equality, peace, humanity

and understanding have become merely philosophical concepts having no practical utility. As a consequence, the people have become machines with no feelings and emotions and though they are living in a world of glamour and advance technology, they are neither happy nor at peace with their inner self. They have become selfish and greedy to the extent that one nation does not even respect the sovereignty of other nations, which leads to a number of problems which the world as a whole is facing. Take for example the conflict between Israel and Palestine, Ethiopia and Eritrea, India and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq, and the civil war in Syria. The commentators blame this erosion of national borders as a consequence of globalization. National governments and citizens blame it on the multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, WTO, IMF, etc, for overstepping their authority, and favouring some over others. However, the root cause could be that the concept of sovereignty is losing its edge due to diminishing morality, world economy, hegemonic powers and power bloc, international law, international organization, and the end of domestic policy. Mahatma Gandhi once said: *"Peace will not come out of a clash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds"*.

Hence, it is imperative to understand what is genuine peace, what are the major problems hampering it, and how to attain peace at global level. Proper meaning of the term Sovereignty, its characteristics, kinds, theories, limitations, etc, have also to be analyzed. We have to redefine the context of peace. Hence, in order to solve these problems we must adopt a holistic approach and dialogue. It has also been written in the preamble to the constitution of UNESCO that *since war begins in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed*.

We cannot expect peace when people are hungry and jobless; when there are so much differences in a developing and an already developed country; where some people are doing good and some are far behind. That gap should be the goal to work on.

Significance of the study :

This study is significant because an attempt has been made to discover the major problems which the world is facing today, such as, terrorism, refugees & migration, human rights and decolonization. These

directly or indirectly are impacted by Sovereignty and, in turn, disturb world peace. By this study we shall get to know about sovereignty, its challenges in today's world order. Here we shall discuss world peace in an ethical context. We shall also discuss the solution regarding the given problem by giving reference to philosophy and ethics.

Objective :

- To discuss the main problems of world peace.
- To find out how Sovereignty is related to different problems disturbing world peace.
- To provide solution to the problems of world peace by revisiting the views of different Indian and Western thinkers concerning Sovereignty.
- To provide solution philosophically for the discussed problems and challenges in the world order.

Methodology :

- Different books, study materials, journals, articles on the related topics have been studied.
- Data has been collected from various national and international organizations.
- A questionnaire survey has been done to meet the objective and for drawing conclusion.
- Different audio and visual documents and internet have been accessed.

Hypotheses :

- It is likely that this research will help in outlining a code of conduct for national or global ethics.
- It is likely that this research will help in promoting world peace through a right understanding of sovereignty.
- It is likely to influence decision and policy making of the world to strive for justice and excellence.

Review of literature :

The following books have been reviewed:-

- The book "Problems of Political Philosophy" by D.D Raphael deals with the analysis of theories & concepts and at the same time

introduces one to philosophical thinking within political ideas.

- The book "Principles of Political Science" by A.C Kapur gives us a complete account of the concept concerned providing in-depth knowledge of the topic.
- The book "An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis" by John Hospers shows ethical and philosophical attitude of different concepts used in day-to-day life.

Concept of sovereignty :

Sovereignty is the most important feature of the State because sovereignty gives legal standard to a State. It is the ability of the State to fully control its territory without any external entrances. Without sovereignty a State is just like colony and nothing else. Sovereignty should be absolute and unlimited, universal and all comprehensive, permanent and indivisible.

"Sovereignty as State is sovereign is to say that its rule, the laws have final authority; there is no appeal from them to any more ultimate set of rules, while the rules made by other associations are subordinate to the authority of the State's rule" (Raphael:154).

Sovereignty as a pure legal concept can be identified by the following characteristics:- Absoluteness, Permanence, Universality, Indivisibility, Inalienability, Universality.

World Peace and its problems affected by Sovereignty:

World peace is much more than absence of war and conflict, it could not be achieved in a state of chaos. It is directly proportional to the state of mind of every individual of this world. World peace is an ideal state of happiness, freedom, cooperation, cessation of hostility, ill will, jealousy. But now the question arises what stops us to achieve it. Some people argue that world peace is a good idea but it is only theoretical and is not in human nature. So what about flying? It is not a human nature either but we do it every single day. We as humans have accomplished so much in this world that the idea of human nature does not align with us. So why does achieving world peace seem so unrealistic. There are many problems in world which in turn will become seeds of serious conflict like human rights, migration and refugee, terrorism, decolonization somehow affected by

the concept of sovereignty. Philosophers like Thomas Hobbes and Jean Bodin when elaborated the notion of sovereignty in 16th and 17th centuries, established divine and natural law and were of the view that word of the sovereign is law. In today's world, their ideas are compelling, but irrelevant in practice. Recently, the concept of sovereignty has come to be associated with the idea of control over trans-border movements. The major problem of world peace in the context of sovereignty is the conventional norms of sovereignty which have always been challenged. A few states, most notably, the United States and China, have had autonomy, control, and recognition for most of their existence. Sovereignty blocks conflict resolution, giving rise to major problems, migration and refugee being a major one of them. Smaller, weaker States are the most frequent targets of external efforts to alter domestic institutions, but more powerful states are not immune. The reality is that under the hegemony of the power blocs and by working on their principle it becomes difficult for international organisations like the UN, IMF, WTO, etc., to probe universally and fairly which they actually advocate. All these issues sum up to major and serious conflicts in the world which hamper peace.

Views of Indian and Western thinkers :

Although there are a number of Indian and Western thinkers who have given their views on sovereignty, we have taken up the following due to limitation of the research.

Kautilya:- Kautilya favoured the hereditary monarchy system. According to him, a weak fortification of the territory can be a serious threat to sovereignty of the king. Therefore, he favoured absolute sovereignty.

Mahatma Gandhi:- Gandhi was opposed to the view of sovereignty. He disapproved sovereignty on the ground that it was the usurper which refuses to show obligation to the State. According to him, sovereignty commits an immoral act or is involved in unlawful activities. But at the same time he gives the concept of "Swaraj" which shows that he favours the existence of independent nation or sovereignty of a country. He was against the authoritative and suppressive control of sovereign within a State.

John Austin:- According to Austin, in every State there is an authority who is absolute, unlimited and

indivisible. According to him, the sovereign was a determinate person or a body of persons. His law was the command of sovereign.

Jean Bodin:-According to Jean Bodin, sovereignty is the supreme power over citizens which is unrestrained by law. He argues that this power is not only supreme but perpetual; for if it be limited as to time or so to scope, it cannot be supreme. It is a power which has its origin in the people acting as a corporate and originates in the will of the people who may themselves retain it.

Thomas Hobbes:-Hobbes's sovereign as called in the Leviathan is the creation of the social contract whereby the people enter into an agreement and thus terminate that dreadful condition of the state of nature by surrendering their entire powers to no particular man (or an assembly of men).

Jean Jacques Rousseau:-Rousseau was of the view that sovereign means all the citizens acting collectively. He does not vest its authority in a single person or an assembly of few persons and clearly differentiates between state and government and state and society.

Findings of the survey conducted :

For the purpose of finding the views on sovereignty, its effects on world peace, concept and nature, 50 respondents were interviewed and asked to fill the questionnaire containing 25 questions. The respondents were of the age of 17-25 years. Their educational qualification varied from undergraduate to postgraduate. On the basis of the response the findings are as follows:-

- Respondents were of the view that sovereignty is the supreme political power, unrestrained by law and is very essential for maintaining law and order within the State.
- They were of the view that the concept of external sovereignty is achievable in this era of globalization by respecting the sovereign status of respective country.
- They were of the view that to maintain world peace priority should be on humanity and assurance of human rights.
- They were of the view that applying philosophy and global ethics to achieve world peace is practical.

- They were of the view that a good society is best represented where one has access to education and improved social status. For creating a long term peace democratic election is very necessary, which establishes the importance of an authority or sovereign.
- They were of the view that lack of peace education is one of the major causes of many conflicts and problems. Many of them also hold the view that an ethical, moral and philosophical approach can help in solving the challenges of sovereignty and its impact on world peace

Conclusion and Suggestions :

By revisiting history, theories, views of different thinkers, challenges of sovereignty and redefining world peace, analyzing its major problems affected by sovereignty and a field research by proposed questionnaire of 50 respondents on this topic a conclusive view of the overall disparities has been established. Thus, it becomes important to establish the fundamentals of global ethics to deal with the problems of world peace affected by sovereignty. Following solutions can be suggested to overcome the problems hindering world peace affected by sovereignty.

Individual Approach to attain world peace through inner peace

Thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi and Dalai Lama stress on individual approach to establish world peace. Mahatma Gandhi gives his view on soul force, forgiveness and proposed theory like Sarvodaya or welfare of all. Dalai Lama gives his view on compassion and love in his book "Human approach to world peace". World peace should be redefined by individual peace as person first individually then through family, community, nation and lastly in the world can contribute their bit. Individual peace is attainable by inner peace because whenever that person faces some conflict, he tries to solve it through peaceful means. There are many scientific researches which show that anger and anxiety lead to deadly and hazardous diseases whereas a calm and compassionate mind help you focus better, faster and most importantly healthier. If these factors of inner peace could be achieved by an individual it would help him in contributing to a peaceful and non-violent society or perhaps world. Only by revisiting or recalling the moral, ethical and philosophical approach one can

establish peace and harmony in recent scenario where everything prevents one from recognizing other human beings, nation, nature as a part of us. The absence of philosophy, morality, ethics creates an illusion of every life forms and non-violence prevails in society. So, if we want global peace we need to start from our self as even one person is equipped enough to break the cycle of non-violence. Even during the worst times we should not think of going against inner peace, ethics, morality, etc.

Political ethics to combat challenges of sovereignty

Ethics deals with right or wrong about the work we do or mainly the principles on the basis of which we act. Ethical theories like Utilitarianism, or that of Aristotle, Kant help us to deal with the challenges we face in modern day sovereignty. According to Aristotle morality has nothing to do with rules, as rules can be applied only in particular situation. Kant considers that a moral dilemma can be solved by focusing on duty rather than inclination, which helps many problems arising in the context. Kant and Aristotle are very much similar in giving the importance to intention that everything which we do has some reason, where some of the reasons are better than others and what matters the most is intention. Coming to ethical theory of utilitarianism which states the right action is that which gives us maximum happiness but again the subject comes on the means and the ends of the process. It may appear to nations that by their acts of threats, invasion or even war on another nation will disturb its sovereignty, peace and harmony and shall not bring happiness and prosperity in return. But it can become the opposite also. Hence, political ethics should be maintained by all sovereign nations. "In the famous precept of Jesus, you are not told to ignore your own needs entirely; you are not even told not to love yourself; but you are told to love your neighbour as much as you love yourself. And who is your neighbour? Not just your family, not just the person living next door, not just your town's people and country people, but every human being that exists. Everyone in the world, just by virtue of being human, is your neighbour". (John Hospers: p.260)

Moral Intelligence

As stated above, we have the potential but without bringing it to the surface nothing is achievable hence the first step towards it is bringing compassion that is mainly

benevolence, care, love, concern for others and it all will start within our selves. When we talk about ethics, morality, we often question as to how is it practical in this world. The answer can be when our intelligence is regulated with warm heartedness, morality it will be constructive intelligence. Intelligence filled with negative emotions and immorality are destructive intelligence. If we look at the fundamentals of humanity we find that we have same ethics, morale, philosophical reality, etc. There is barely any difference, and no good ground to fight. But when comes the difference of nationality, religion, ethnicity, class, caste then lot of barriers arise. Hence, we should always look upon the problems from fundamental human levels which involve ethics, morality and the philosophy of existence and solve it through our moral intelligence.

Universal approach to ethics : Universal ethics

Gautam Buddha was one of the main pioneers who showed the world importance of gratitude and calm mind presenting universal approach to ethics, which is understood to mean active sympathy or willingness to bear the pain of others. In this world which is well connected and interdependent a universal approach is essential and to consider that any conflict is going to affect us personally is a matter of fact. Our living is very much dependent on that of others. Since the day we are born, if a sense of gratitude or gesture that we show to our mother is applied to everyone on this planet, peace will exit. Regarding it the basic nature of human being and not considering it of something very idealistic and theoretical can solve the problem.

Achieving world peace philosophically

Very few of us fundamentally understand the depth of our possibilities, and it can't be done from our education but through expectation. Mahatma Gandhi who is seen as the messenger of peace proposed concepts like Ahimsa or non-violence, Satyagraha and Sarvodaya or welfare to all. We live in the world having a population which is over seven billion people. In this world of extraordinary technology, generation gap, that makes us more distant than closer; we see that human conflict is on the rise. Hence, it becomes more important than ever before to remind ourselves the importance of forgiveness, love or compassion especially in this era where the whole world is well connected like never before. In today's world, the prosperity of one's country

and continent depends on the rest of the world. Once we consider rest of the world as part of us then the very basis of conflict, cheating, hatred, bullying will be no longer there. There are many people who help out of compassion, care but they are taken for granted so there should be discussion and wide applause to such people which gives impression to others that there may be many negative things but at the same time we have the potential or ability to reduce evils. In order to give new shape to this planet we should have vision, willpower, determination, self-confidence, more optimistic attitude and all these are very much related with a compassionate heart. So, it is equally important to develop both a positive mind and a warm heart. For being a responsible citizen, willpower and determination is needed, which are very much connected to mind. We have to establish a sense of concern, perseverance, compassion for others. Apart from this awareness, it is essential that one should realize the real consequences of any war or violence.

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