CHAPTER VII

SWARAJ
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Gandhi was an applied philosopher who tried very throughout his life to put into practice the ideals which he deemed to be the highest. During his struggle against the British rulers, Gandhi’s main ideal was political freedom. He considered freedom of self-expression as the birth right of human beings. From 1915 to 1948 Gandhi worked in India for the sake of the country's freedom. He felt that without freedom nothing was possible. His aim was to liberate ordinary human beings from external restrictions so that they could develop fully. He cherished the dream of free India as the model of civilized living where men could live with goodwill towards one another.¹ It was Gandhi, who for the first time realised the deeper significance of the concept of Swaraj and gave a democratic orientation of it. In this chapter I wish to present the freedom as the concept of Swaraj which was the basic one in the Gandhian philosophy. For instance; the idea of Khadi, Swadeshi, Cottage Industries, Bread Labour, Basic education, Trusteeship, Non-violence and Satyagraha will be unintelligible without the concept Swaraj. Swaraj is the centre around which all these concepts revolve.

¹ Young India, 17-9-25
The word Swaraj as a unique concept cannot be logically defined. But generally, it is "self-rule and self-restraint,"2 in all affairs of life, both external and internal and "complete freedom of opinion and action without interference with another's right to equal freedom of opinion and action."3 In this sense the life in this ideal state, is absolutely free from all exploitation, and coercion, whether political, economic or moral-thereby getting fullest scope for the development of the self. On the other hand the concept of Swaraj may be considered as equal with the western concept of 'liberty' or 'mukti' associated with the concept of 'equality', 'justice', 'truth' etc. in Western tradition. This western concept of liberty is predominantly political swaraj. It owes its origin to the Greek enlightenment of that hoary antiquity. In this context, the wave of the European renaissance of the 19th century can be considered as a parallel to the reform movements connected with the ideal of swaraj in India.

In case of Indian swaraj, it is nothing different. Indian concept of swaraj reveals some distinctions from the western concept of liberty. Though the Indian concept of swaraj has too its political aspect, yet the Indian concept has its spiritual foundation also, which lies buried in the depth of the Upanisadic thoughts. So also Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda, and Aurobinda's concept of swaraj became more spiritual than political. Though the word 'swaraj' is mainly associated with the name of Mahatma Gandhi, it had already gained considerable popularity

2. M. Desai: With Gandhi in Ceylon, P.93
3. Young India: 27-10-21
in India. This term has a long history of its origin in Hindu philosophy. It means self-rule. In the Upanishads the meaning of 'swaraj' is 'one who rules himself'. On the other hand swaraj may be considered as the rule of the self. Because in the Taittiriya Upanishad the perfect soul is described as "Pranarama mana anandam santi samriddham swarajyam". In the period of India's national movement the profound political leader proclaimed that 'swaraj is our birth right'. According to Gandhi, the word swaraj is a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule, self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which independence often means. Gandhi said, according to Hinduism, an individual must be free to do what he considers to be best for self-realization. Such individual freedom is perfect only in a completely non-violent society. The people of the country, whatever religion they may belong to, are equal sharers in their common home and having equal rights and obligation. "Plato in his Republic had advocated that every man should be his own lawyer and doctor."

B.G.Tilak's concept of swaraj reached its political climax. He was at the same time an interpreter of the Bhagavad Gita also. In 1885, Indian National Congress held its first session. India attained independence in 1947 and within this period, political thinking in India moved in the direction of focussing attention on the need for self-

4. Taitteriya Upanishad : Ch. 1.6.2
7. V.T.Patil : Studies on Gandhi, P.54
government and 'ways of attaining it. Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) announced that 'swaraj' was the goal of India's political efforts. For India, there could be no national greatness, strength and hope except by the right political principles of self-government. B.G.Tilak said that "Our aim is self-government. It should be achieved as soon as possible." He demanded self-government on the basis of birth right: "Swarajya is my birthright: I will have it." Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915) emphasized on the steady introduction of self-government in India. Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950) advocated a responsible, constitutional and popular system of government in India entirely free from alien control. He stressed the notion of perfect democratic swaraj. He agreed that a foreign government, by its nature, is bound to deny freedom to the individual to develop self-expression. Self-government is necessary not only for individual development, but also for the completeness and full development of national strength. There can be no national development without national liberty.

Jawaharlal Nehru contributed a lot to the concept of swaraj by giving it an economic dimension also. He tried to make human minds

8. Dadabhai Naoroji: Political Liberalism and Economic Nationalism in Modern Indian Political Tradition, ed. by K.P.Karunakaram, P.55
9. Bal Gangadhar Tilak: Political Radicalism And Aggressive Nationalism in Modern Indian Political Tradition, ed. by K.P.Karunakaran, P.139
10. Ramgopal: Lokamanya Tilak-A biography, P.283
11. Gopal Krishna Gokhale: The Basic Approach of the Moderates in Modern Indian Political Tradition, P.85
12. V.P.Verma: Political Philosophy. P.379
13. Haridas Mukherjee and Uma Mukharjee: Sri Aurobindo and the New Thought in Indian Politics -PP.22-27
free not only from political bondage but from economic slavery also. Though Tilak and Nehru were supporters of the political and economic sides of swaraj, yet, they too showed deep respect to Indian's spiritualistic ideals. As Vinoba Bhave wrote, "the very term, swaraj or self-government implies decentralization of authority. The principles, therefore, have to be applied to every practical limit, to all fields, social, economic and political."\(^{14}\)

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) the father of nation was closely involved with political life from 1915 after returning from South Africa till his time of death. He became the central figure in the movement for national independence from British rule. Gandhi launched an incessant struggle to secure freedom for India from imperialistic bondage. For this goal he adopted various means of non-violence and love. According to Gandhi, "the first step to swaraj lies in the individual."\(^{15}\) Gandhi never accepted swaraj of a nation to be anything different from the swaraj of each and every individual of that nation. He openly expressed the view that "Swaraj of a people means the sum total of the swaraj (self-rule) of individuals."\(^{16}\)

Though the concept swaraj literally means 'home-rule', but at the hands of Gandhi, it underwent a radical transformation. Gandhi used it as a purity concept. It stands for the purity of body, mind and soul taken.

\(^{14}\) Sachdeva & Gupta: Modern Political Thought, P.359
\(^{15}\) Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, P.409
\(^{16}\) Harijan: 23-5-1939
together. Both Gandhi and Plato had a spiritual approach to history. Freedom, according to both, can be obtained through a process of inner purification.\(^\text{17}\)

Swaraj is a purity concept because, if there is no purity, there is no swaraj. In this sense it is not a political concept, neither it advocates democracy, plutocracy, monarchy or dictatorship nor is it opposed to all these. Hence we can say that the concept of swaraj is not a political, economic, religious or a moral concept. Therefore it is wrong to say that Gandhi was either a democrat, a communist, a socialist, a nationalist, a religionist or a moralist. So to describe Gandhism and swaraj in these terms is to give a wrong description of this concept. Again this self-rule or home-rule lies at the periphery of the concept of swaraj. For a swarajist, it is immaterial whether he is ruled by his own people or by the foreigners. So, swaraj is not necessarily advocated against the foreign rule. One may rule oneself and yet one may not have swaraj. Even when one's own father or brothers are ruling oneself, one may not have freedom and may have freedom under foreign rule. The present socio-political situation obtaining in India may be cited as an example. Though we are ruling ourselves in India; our own compatriots are ruling us at present but we cannot say that we have swaraj, even if we have driven out the British from the land of ours.

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\(^{17}\) V.T.Patil : Studies on Gandhi, P.54
Swaraj is not a static concept. It can be called a dynamic concept. One can be said to be growing purer and purer but nobody can be said to achieve purity in its best. If a ruler is not pure or even not trying to grow purer, he is not fit to rule. If the members of a political party are not pure in body, mind and soul, they do not have any right to rule. Purity is the pre-requisite. If this ceaseless attempt is not there then there is no swaraj at all. A man can be said to have swaraj only when he is free from selfishness, greed, avarice, hatred and such other vices.

Gandhi's concept of swaraj has a very liberal interpretation. For Gandhi the four ends of swaraj include: "Complete independence of alien control, economic independence, moral and social upliftment (dharma) and non-violence. He described it as square which will be out of shape if any of its angles is untrue."\(^{18}\) Gandhi made it applicable to all spherers of life like political, social, economic and spiritual.

Gandhi on Political Swaraj:

Gandhi was immensely influenced by the 19th century democratic movement of the West and regarded democracy as an ideal solution to harmonize the interests of the individual and the state. At the same time he was not satisfied with the Western Capitalist democracy, since any sort of exploitation is a form of violence to him. Referring to the

\(^{18}\) The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Vol.LXIV, P.P. 191-92 quoted from Ramashray Roy: Contemporary Crisis and Gandhi, P.278
American and British democracies which are based on racial discrimination and capitalist exploitation, Gandhi observed, "......they have no right to talk of human liberty and all else unless they have washed their hands clean of the pollution".19 Gandhi pleaded for a decentralised democratic form of government. He was opposed to the imposition of power from above. He believed that the power should evolve upwards starting from the village level. So he visualized an ideal non-violent state based on a federation of self-governing autonomous village republics with equality pervading in every sphere of life. As he said, "True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village."20 According to Gandhi, the essence of democracy lies in individual freedom. But at the same time he observed, "Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle......Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the wellbeing of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which he is a member."21 Gandhi would not be satisfied with the mere transfer of power from one set of rulers to another set. He wanted that the power must belong to the people. In enunciation the ideal of Swaraj, he remarked, ".....my notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest."22

19. Louis Fischer, A week with Gandhi, P.51
20. Harijan, 18-1-1948
21. Ibid., 27-5-1939
Gandhi saw that the end of foreign rule did not necessarily mean the end of all the evils associated with it. He recognized the presence of such evils not necessarily due to the foreign rule but due to some imperfection in the way of the life of the nation itself. Therefore he wanted to purge these evils from the nation. This he felt to be necessary for the achievement of the swaraj in both the senses - political and internal.

Gandhi prefers to use the word swaraj for political freedom which can be called Political Swaraj. He used the term 'Swaraj' to refer to the removal of British rule from India and also installation of a national self-government. In this sense swaraj meant political freedom. By political freedom or independence, Gandhi meant, the removal of the British army in every shape and form. His struggle was to secure freedom for India from imperialistic bondage. Though the word swaraj traditionally meant 'own government or self rule', Gandhi used this word in a very deep sense. His meaning of swaraj includes its usual meaning and adds something more. Gandhi says, "As every country is free to eat, to drink and to breathe, even so is every nation free to manage its own affairs, no matter how badly."23 "The Swaraj of my dream recognises no race or religious distinction .......... Swaraj is to be for all....."24 Gandhi believed that every nation should have its own system of government in keeping with its own history, tradition, culture and civilization and not a mere imitation of another nation's. thus we must have also own our

23. Young India, 15-10-31
24. Ibid., 3-9-25
government suited to our genius: "Ours should be an unadulterated Home rule, however inferior in quality it may be".25 According to Gandhi if a country gets self-rule and the few powerful ones take up everything in their own hands and neglect the poor masses, it is not the swaraj of his dream. He takes particular care to emphasise this. "The swaraj of my dream is the poor man's swaraj. The necessities of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by princes and monied men."26 From this it is clear that real swaraj means that every individual should have a feeling of freedom. It is step towards which an individual realise at least political freedom. Gandhi said that real swaraj would come not by the acquisition of authority by the few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it was abused.27 In the political field Gandhi had great expectations, not only to free India from foreign rule but also in the forming of a better world order. According to Gandhi the Indian movement was not so much national in character, it stressed on the establishment of a universal, humanistic and global world order. Again on the political side, it was linked with boycott of certain basic consumer goods imported from Britain as a means to the attainment of swaraj or self-determination, as an expression of the spirit of swadeshi.

According to Gandhi, political freedom does not represent the fulfilment of a nation's dream. It only provides scope for the renewal of a nation's life. Freedom is a mockery so long as men starve, go naked

25. Harijan, 10-2-40
26. Young India, 26-3-31
and pine away in voiceless anguish. Hence freedom for the sake of the
dumb millions can never mean a form of mere political freedom but it
must include economic freedom which alone enables the people to enjoy
the fruits of political freedom. So Gandhi observed, "Let there be no
mistake about my conception of Swaraj. It is complete independence of
alien control and complete economic independence. So at one and you
have political independence, at the other the economic." 28

Gandhi on Social Swaraj:

Gandhi's swaraj was not only a political freedom. He gave
more importance to the concept of swaraj in social field also. Without
social harmony political freedom would not be able to produce the result
in which the swaraj of his conception was expected to produce more than
independence. Gandhi thought that the fulfilment of internal swaraj
represented by the harmonious life of the nation. He made his concept of
swaraj all comprehensive. For him it is 'Purna Swaraj' in which the prince
and peasant, the rich and the poor, the Hindus and the Muslims, people
belonging to all castes and communities got equal opportunities. This was
the social dimension of swaraj. But such position is beyond our present
world in this context. In the present society, rich people hold the reins of
society and poor people are left behind, whose development is ignored.
Gandhi was against such treatment of a group of people at the sub-human
level. He wanted to develop the nation through his scheme of constructive.

28. Harijan, 2-1-1937
programme, a programme of the people, by the people and for the people. His constructive programme was an attempt to develop society at the grass-root level with the locally available resources, which represented self-reliance and maximum possible self-sufficiency.

Gandhi conceived of free India as a republic of self-sufficient autonomous village communities under a Panchayat wielding all powers for community as a whole. According to Louis Fischer "village uplift was Gandhi's first freedom." Gandhi also said, "in a free India we will have Panchayati Raj." the Panchayat model need not be established in all the villages simultaneously. "There is no law which can stop a Panchayat from functioning wherever the people want it. Every group (of villages) or its member can have the Panchayat system whether the rest of India has it or not. Even if one village wants Panchayat Raj which is called republic in English, no one can stop it." Every village will be a complete Republic or Panchayat organised on co-operative basis. Gandhi believed in the government of the village through an annually elected Panchayat. It would have its legislature, judiciary and executive. Every village would grow its own food. It would have a reserve of land for its cattle. It would have a theatre, school and public hall. It would have its own water works. It would be a perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The government of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female.

29. Louis Fischer : Gandhi - His Life and Massage for the world.
30. Harijan, 8-6-1947
31. Ramashray Roy : Contemporary Crisis and Gandhi, P.155
possessing minimum prescribed qualification. In this sense we can say that there was perfect democracy based upon individual. According to Gandhi swaraj and democracy both are co-equal terms. "By swaraj I mean the Government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the adult population male or female native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the state and who have taken trouble of having their names registered as voters".  

Following the wishes of Gandhi, the Panchayati Raj was inaugurated at Nagaur in Rajasthan on the 2nd October, 1959, by our late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Since it has been introduced in almost all the states and most of the union Territories and more powers have been vested in people's representatives there.

Gandhi believed in a decentralised society with equality pervading everywhere in life. He recommends decentralization as a necessary political measure. Gandhi says, "I suggest that, if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralize many things".  

For him centralization means concentration of power in the hands of a few people with the possibility of its abuse and also adds to complexity of life; which is a destruction in all creative moral endeavour. Centralisation of capital or power, would lead to exploitation which cannot be maintained or defended without force or violence. Therefore decentralisation of

32. Young India, 26-1-1925  
33. Harijan, 30-12-1939
power can alone infuse the citizens to remote parts of the country with a sense a responsibility and pride. And this system also presupposes voluntary co-operative on the part every individual. "In this structure composed of innumerable villages.......life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals.......the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle, but will give strength to all within and derive its own strenght from it."34

Social swaraj includes removal of untouchability, equal status of living and religious freedom of every faith. These are the criteria of an independent nation achieving swaraj having swadeshi sentiment. Gandhi conceived of Hindu-Muslim Unity, Removal of Untouchability and Charkha or Spinning Wheel and Khaddar as the three solid pillars on which the structure of swaraj was to be erected. He said, "Seek you first, Hindu-Muslim Unity, removal of untouchability, and the spinning-wheel and Khaddar, and everything will be added into you."35

Gandhi believed that acceptance of other religions and ways of life is the reality and observance of one's own religion is the only ideal. One could follow one's own path of religion without offending the

34. Speeches, P.276, B.S.Sharma, Gandhi as a Political Thinker P.92 Quoted from B.K.Lal : Contemporary Indian Philosophy, P.149.
adherents of other religions even where there is an apparent conflict between the two. As a realist Gandhi accepted the inevitability of diverse religions and diverse creeds as natural.\textsuperscript{36} Hence the spirit of accommodation between the different sections was essential so that the physical and mental resources of all the sections could be used in the service of the nation.\textsuperscript{37} Gandhi believed that the solution to the differences among various sections of the society could not be possible by the method like the division of nation on racial or religious basis. He rather believed that the real solution lay in the establishment of harmonious relationship by generating the consciousness among different sections to respect the ways of life of others while living one's own way of life. The emphasis on this mutual respect can be seen in various observation of Gandhi on Cow-Protection. He pleaded for cow-protection along the line of least resistance and desired that the question of the stoppage of cow slaughter should be left to the community involved in it.

Gandhi stood for the essential principle that men qua men are equal and therefore all artificial distinctions based on race, caste, colour, creed and class are unreasonable and immoral.\textsuperscript{38} Gandhi was primarily concerned with the removal of untouchability. He saw that the presence of untouchability as a form of exploitation in any form would be detrimental to the goal of swaraj. The feeling of removal of untouchability expresses universal consciousness for abolition of all forms of exploitation. The

\textsuperscript{36} The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Vol.26, P.324
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., P.151
\textsuperscript{38} S.Radhakrishnan (ed) Mahatma Gandhi, P.8
concern with the upliftment of the harijans can be seen as the only reality and the harmony in society as the ideal. Gandhi equated colour prejudice of the West with the untouchability of Hinduism. In his own words, "we have made it (untouchability) hereditary with a rigidity not yet observable about its imperial edition."³⁹

Gandhi's conception of education was a balanced growth of body, mind and spirit, so that the development of man as a whole could be brought about. He also conceived of education in which body, intellect and spirit were in harmonious whole.⁴⁰ If the people wanted to build up a happy village, they must decide to provide for the education of the entire community of village children in the village itself. Teachers and pupils would apply some sort of productive work willingly through which they would learn whatever was useful for them.

Gandhi wanted such education which helped in the growth of a healthy body and also prepared the student for productive work to enable him to be self-sufficient. "Gandhi also evolved a scheme of basic education which had its central objective the method of learning by doing productive work."⁴¹

³⁹. The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.25, P.397
⁴⁰. Ibid., Vol.65, P.72-74
⁴¹. G.R. Madan, the Theoretical Sociology, P.181.
Gandhi on Economic Swaraj:

Apart from the political and social aspects, swaraj has its economic aspect also. Gandhi thought that all people of the country would enjoy economic freedom both in towns and villages. For him, political independence had no meaning, if it was not accompanied by economic independence. By 'economic freedom', Gandhi meant the freedom from British capitalists and capital, as also their Indian counterpart. Political freedom and social justice are meaningful only when economic equality can be realized in society. In the economic field Gandhi's swaraj was poor man's swaraj. "It is full economic freedom for the toiling millions."\(^{42}\) Gandhi said that in swaraj no one is pauper and the labour can always find employment to their fullest capacity. The meaning of swaraj is applicable to one and all with the same measurements and scale of equality. Purna Swaraj could be attained only when poverty, hunger, wants, deprivation and exploitation would go. Swaraj would promote a society devoid of economic disparity. No wonder it has been said by Gandhi that "working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between labour and capital. It means the levelling down of the rich ........and the levelling up of the semi strarved maked millions on the other."\(^{43}\)

Gandhi's life long dream and attempt were to develop self-contained villages based on agriculture and cottage industry with simple

\(^{42}\) Young India, 16-4-1936  
\(^{43}\) M.K.Gandhi : Constructive Programme, P.26
and cheap machines. Decentralized and autonomous village communities would help individuals live simpler lives, develop more of social sense, co-operative works, intimate neighbourly love.\textsuperscript{44} Gandhi's concept of economic development was based on the self-sufficiency and self-reliance of the village economy. In the economic sense Gandhi emphasized on the Charkha or Spinning Wheel which symbolized the preparation of the ground for the stability of swaraj. The spinning wheel was the living symbol of the integration of the real and the ideal to the Mahatma. He thought of it as a means of supplementing the income of the peasants.\textsuperscript{45} In it he also saw the economic salvation of the country and freedom of millions of Indian peasants from growing pauperism.\textsuperscript{46} It was symbolical of mass-consciousness of their involvement in the cause of the swaraj at the natural level. At the level of the individual it signified internal reform.\textsuperscript{47} Gandhi said that there was no alternative to Charkha that would restore the faith of man as man. "I cannot be satisfied, not till every man and woman in India is working at his or her wheel, Burn that wheel if you find a better substitute. This is the one and only work which can supply the needs of the millions without disturbing them from their homes......"\textsuperscript{48}

Gandhi was against mechanization and opposed the development of industrialization, producing a vast quantity of goods by

\textsuperscript{44} D.M.Datta : The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, P.126
\textsuperscript{45} The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.26, P.245
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., Vol-23, P.261-2
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., Vol-23, P.631-2
\textsuperscript{48} Young India, 15-9-1927
employing a small labour force. Machine represented a great sin for him. Gandhi was opposed to machines because-

1. It would create more unemployment.
2. Exploitation of the poor labourers by the rich capitalists and exploitation of one country by another.\textsuperscript{49} Gandhi says more clearly:

"What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such...........

I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all; I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of few, but in the hands of all. I......am aiming, not at eradication of all machinery, but limitation........The supreme consideration is man".\textsuperscript{50} Therefore, Gandhi advocated setting up of small scale industries, which provided employment to millions of workers. In 1919, Gandhi wrote in Young India: "Without the cottage industry the Indian peasant is doomed. He cannot maintain himself from the produce of the land only. He needs a supplementary industry. Spinning is the earliest, cheapest and the best. I know this means a revolution in our mental outlook. And it is because it is revolution that I claim that the way to 'swaraj' lies through 'swadeshi'. A nation that can save Rs.60 crores per year and distribute the sum among its spinners and weavers in their own homes will have acquired powers of organisation and industry that must enable it to do everything else

\textsuperscript{49} D.M.Datta : The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, P.126
\textsuperscript{50} N.K.Bose : Selections from Gandhi, P.66
necessary for organic growth."51 The concept of Swadeshi became a guiding principle, where foreign aid was unnecessary and Khadi became most important in the rural development and stood as a symbol of unity, economic freedom and equality. "The broad definition of Swadeshi is the use of all home made articles to the exclusion of foreign things, in so far as such is necessary for the protection of home industries, more especially those industries without which India will become pauperized."52 Gandhi was very eager to preserve and protect cottage and village industries through decentralisation of economic power. A corollary to Swadeshi was Gandhi's stress on Khadi. In the nature of the thing, Khadi required decentralisation of production and consumption.53 Khadi, village industries were not only aspects of Swadeshi, an weapon against British imperialism but they also had their constructive dimension. Through the practice of swadeshi and khaddar, Gandhi evolved a practical remedy for crushing poverty of the millions of village people who lived in India on the border line of starvation. Through the use of khadi, Indians would understand the dignity of labour. Moreover, manufacture and use of Khadi meant more and more self-dependence and use of leisure time for productive purposes. According to Gandhi, Khaddar was not meant to destroy all machinery. "It uses machinery for the poorest in their own cottages. The wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery."54

51. B.N.Ganguli : Gandhi's Social Philosophy, P.287
52. Young India, Vol II, P.297
53. Harijan, 2-10-1935
54. Young India, 17-3-1927
The necessities of life should be enjoyed by the poor men in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the monied men. A poor man ought to get all the ordinary amenities of the life that a rich man enjoys. Swaraj is not Purna Swaraj until these amenities are guaranteed to all under it.55 "He felt that a structure which permitted unrestrained growth of private capital was inimical to an equalitarian society. He held that like air and water land belonged to all and hence there could be no ownership of landed property. He wanted to abolish the right of ownership of property except in as much as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.56

Gandhi condemned the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few for it led to the glaring economic inequalities in the society. As he said, "Today there is gross inequality. The basis of socialism is economic equality. There can be no Ramarajya in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat."57 Economic equality for Gandhi does not mean that everyone should literally have the same amount of worldly things, but it means that everybody should have enough for his needs. Hence the real meaning of economic equality is "to each according to his need."58 Gandhi wanted to reconstruct the entire social order in such a way that each man would be provided with all his natural needs and no more. He

55. Ibid : 26-3-1931
56. Pyarelal, "Practical Trusteeship Formula" in Industrial and Perish by M.K.Gandhi, P.110
57. Harijan, 1-6-1947
58. Ibid., 31-3-1946
believed that if a single individual starts to practise socialist way of life without waiting for others, there is scope for more individuals to follow him. Exploitation and oppression are part of what can be called 'greed economics'. Gandhi aptly observes, "An economics that inculcates Mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth of the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal Science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life." It was Gandhi's desire that the good should percolate even to the last of the socio-economic ladder - the poorest of the poor.\(^{59}\)

In the case of bread-labour also, whatever position is occupied by one in the social ladder, one has to do some manual labour. One is not pure if he consumes the fruits of the labours of others. The same is the case with trusteeship also. Gandhi looked upon trusteeship as an alternative to the extremes of capitalism and socialism. To remove the exploitation of one class by another and in the interest of the poor Gandhi stressed on the theory of trusteeship and looked for the change of the heart in the rich for using their portion of wealth. There should be a true partnership between the capital and labour with the state functioning as mediator between the two with the minimum use of force. His concept of trusteeship is a very good measure to reduce inequality and so poverty. The rich should act as trustees so that their superfluous wealth may be

\(^{59}\) M.K.Gandhi, Sarvodaya (cd.B.Kumarappa), P.33
used for the benefit of the society as a whole. If the rich fail to behave as trustee of their wealth for social ends, the methods of non-violence, non-co-operation and civil disobedience should be used as infallible remedial measures. Gandhi's 'trusteeship' stressed co-ordination and co-operation between capital and labour and thereby permanently bridging the long-standing gulf between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

Gandhi's quest of equality is rooted in Indian culture. Class war is foreign to the essential genius of India. He wanted to evolve communism on the fundamental rights of all on equal justice. This was his vision of Ramarajya or Swaraj. To set labour against Capital is no use. It will land us into a vicious circle. Labour and Capital are equal partners in a common enterprise. Capital as such is not evil, it is its wrong use that is evil. If the principle of bread labour were followed universally, economic equality and a harmonious society would be the natural and inevitable outcome. So Gandhi aptly observed, "According to me the economic constitution of India and, for the matter of that, the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. This monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple
principle is the cause of destitution that we witness to-day not only in this unhappy land but other parts of the world too.\textsuperscript{60}

**Gandhi on Moral order in Swaraj:**

Apart from these political, social, economic fields the moral dimension constitutes the most important and significant dimension of Swaraj. Gandhi treated swaraj as standing for some moral principles like truth, charity, justice, benevolence, equality etc. "Real swarajya consists in restraint. He alone is capable of this who leads a moral life, does not cheat anyone, does not forsake truth and does his duty to his parents, his wife, his children, his servant and his neighbour. Such a man will enjoy swarajya wherever he may happen to live. A nation that has many such men always enjoys swarajya."\textsuperscript{61} India won swaraj not simply on the support of political and economic factors. Gandhi's ideal of 'Truth' and 'non-violence' along with its methods of 'satyagraha' etc. are full of deep moral and spiritual meanings. For the attainment of Hind Swaraj, Gandhi suggested passive resistance or satyagraha, which is a soul-force or the force of love and truth. If we wish to achieve Swaraj through truth and non-violence, wrote Gandhi, "gradual but steady building up from bottom upwards, by constructive effort is the only way."\textsuperscript{62} "I suggest that, if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralize many

\textsuperscript{60} Quoted, M.Prasad, Social Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, P.306
\textsuperscript{61} The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. VIII, P.373
\textsuperscript{62} Ramashray Roy : Contemporary Crisis and Gandhi, P.279
A man can be said to have Swaraj only when he is free from selfishness, greed, avarice, hatred and such other vices. So is the case with a nation or a country. When all the members of a country or a nation are free from such voices then they can be said to be enjoying swaraj. Swaraj consists of virtues which distinguish a man from other animals. To have swaraj means to be virtuous. Virtues are not only the bases of individual life but are the bases of all human societies. Since Gandhi inherited the traditions of Indian idealistic philosophy which recognises the primacy of spirit over matter, his approach was indeed moral transformation of the individual which is the basis of all social and political dynamics.

Apart from this moral dimension of swaraj, Gandhi had treated swaraj as a synonym of 'Ramarajya'. An attitude of service should possess the mind of all men in general in Ramarajya: the strong serving the weak, the wealthy serving the poor, the learned serving the illiterate. In Rama Rajya, basically there is no difference between a pauper and a prince, since all men are children of God and possess the same divinity. Here Gandhi's "Ramarajya" offers a total view of human life considered both individually and collectively, as much in social, economic and political affairs as in moral, religious and spiritual in which the ideal before this swaraj is sarvodaya which means 'welfare of all men'.

63. Harijan: 30-12-1939
64. Ibid.: 12-11-38.
Gandhi was highly optimistic to hold that people undergoing self-rule would reach the summit of democracy which he identified as Rama Rajya. Ramarajya is said to be a state of perfect anarchy, a stateless society, governed by no other law except the moral law implicit in human nature and by no other force except the force of love.  

Though Gandhi treated the term swaraj as a synonym of Ramarajya but generally there are two interpretations of Ramarajya-the traditional and Gandhian concept of Ramarajya in political sense. The former interpretation as formulated in Ramayana of Valmiki rule of Rama, the son of the king Dasaratha of Ayodhya according to which Ramarajya is a political system based on benevolence, consideration for good, peace and social amity. But Gandhi's Ramarajya was not from this Hindu standpoint. "By Rama Raj I do not mean Hindu Raj, I mean by Rama-raj, divine raj, the kingdom of God. " He used the name 'Rama' to describe his God, the eternal, the unborn, the one without the second. Thus, by 'Ramarajya' he meant the kingdom of God (i.e. truth) on earth. As Gandhi found his God in the very being of man, Ramarajya was, for him, the people's sovereignty. In this sense, Ramarajya and swaraj are synonymous terms. 

The second interpretation of Gandhi is that "politically translated, Ramarajya is perfect democracy in which, inequalities based

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65. Dr. K. S. Savena (ed.): Gandhi Centenary Papers. Vol. 3, P. 54
66. Young India, 19-9-1929
67. Ibid, 4-5-21

212
on possession and non-possession, colour, race or creed or sex vanish. In
it land and state belong to the people, justice is prompt, and cheap and
therefore, there is freedom of worship, and of speech and the press, all this
because of the reign of the self-imposed law of moral restraint. Such a
state must be based on truth and non-violence and must consist of
prosperous, happy and self-contained villages and village communities."

Again, on the other hand, there is influence of anarchists like Tolstoy. As
an individualist, he argued in favour of a stateless society. His concept of
'enlightened anarchy' will have to be viewed in such a context. For him
the state was an instrument of coercion which undermine the freedom of
individuals. Such a position is similar to the Marxist view of the state only
in form, but their methods of bringing about a stateless society are totally
contradictory. Though both Gandhi and Marx are anarchists and
individualists but there are fundamental differences. Since the French
Revolution the modern world has produced these two great
revolutionaries Marx and Gandhi. Marx's aim was to establish equality,
liberty and brotherhood among men to change the world. Gandhi also
laboured to achieve the same humanitarian aim as Marx, of establishing
equality, freedom, brotherhood and democracy. But though Marx and
Gandhi are revolutionaries Marx believed in violent revolution to end an
inequitable, unjust and anti-social order. Gandhi believed in a real
revolution to end the tyranny and oppression of the weak by the strong on
the basis of truth and non-violence. For the socio-economic and spiritual

68. Shriman Narayan: Relivance of Gandhian Economic, P.87
salvation of the individual, Gandhi believed in the efficacy of non-violence, while Marx stressed upon a violent revolution.

In his model of democracy, Gandhi conceived of an idealised polity where there would not be any state or government to regulate the right of individuals. This was termed by him as Rama Rajya. Ram Rajya was here the stage of development where ethical considerations would govern the life of the individuals. Hence we can say that Gandhian conception of Ramrajya signifies a state of enlightened anarchy that should be characterized by the absence of governmental coercion.

Though swaraj is the basic concept of Gandhism yet, his total vision of Indian society was much too idealistic, a mere dream and a utopia had no relation to the hard realities of contemporary life in India and the world. Swaraj is an ascetic ideal that Gandhi proved himself in his life. It is true that India attained political swaraj and freedom from foreign domination but failed to achieve complete swaraj. The concept of swaraj has become lifeless, we are far away from the good of swaraj because majority of the Indians today follow English culture, specially talking in English language, enjoying foreign food, putting on foreign cloths at their home, even celebrating foreign festivals. Gandhi reminded us of the social dimension of swaraj which we have forgotten. Gandhi's mission was to save people and inspire them with love of humanity.
From the social dimension, swaraj includes equal status of living, religious freedom of every faith and removal of untouchability which are the criteria of an independent nation achieving swaraj and having swadeshi sentiment. Our constitution also provides criteria of living together. There must be willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the wellbeing of the society. In swaraj, the common bond among people should be love and fellowship. But the main problem is that there is a vast gap between the ideas and their implementation. At present, it seems that despite living in a democratic environment, we have lost the basic respect for our fellow brothers. In Gandhian democracy the aim was to put an end to social evils like casteism, violence and corruption. But now these are gradually becoming burning problems in Indian society. Everywhere corruption, adulteration, extortion etc are going on without any restriction. Here there is a clear test of power. Money power and muscle power leading to all kinds of corruption in the parliament, the executive and even in the judiciary through the interference of politicians in all aspects of life which can be called 'pararaj' despite of 'swaraj'.

Gandhi with high hope conceived the idea of swaraj to see that India would have the privilege of undergoing genuine type of democracy. But perhaps it is difficult to bridge the gulf between theory and practice. Gandhi's programme for Indian regeneration was highly complex and involved a cluster of interrelated strategies of which cultivating the swadeshi spirit, satyagraha and the constructive programme were the most important.
The greatest failure is in the economic field. Large sections of population in India, year after year are living under poverty line. Gandhi's chief aim was to put an end to the conflict between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have nots. In his Hind Swaraj, Gandhi criticized not only modern civilization, based on science and technology but also the particular type of political and social set-up and the educational system connected with it. Gandhi mentioned the task of the doctors, the lawyers and other technocrats. He denounces the printing press and the modern machinery. But this rejection of modern science, technology and civilization of Gandhi seems to be only the slogan of going back to the primitive stage. Even sometimes Gandhi argued that it was better to die of certain diseases than to take any medicine. It is true that modern science and technology have posed certain problems before us. But sometimes these problems can be solved only by the help of science itself. Rather, here we can argue that modern science has surely been able to eliminate a great deal of suffering, disease, death from the surface of the earth.

Gandhi's idea of village sufficiency, Khaddar and handicraft are slowly going to disappear from human mind of industrialisation, urbanisation and modernisation. Now speed, progress, competition and the expected result of survival of the fittest are some of the features of human actions. Hence in this context the idea of Sarvodaya becomes an illusion.
According to Gandhi non-violent democracy is one important moral dimension of swaraj. The road leading to swaraj in non-violence or passive resistance. Perfect non-violence is possible only in a society of perfect human beings.\(^69\) In his struggle against alien rule, Gandhi conducted his movement on the principles of truth and non-violence. His non-violent and peaceful methods of resistance were tried in gaining for India its freedom from the foreign yoke. And if the politician prefers to state these two principles of truth and non-violence in political terms, there seems to be no other way in this nuclear age. But at present even the criminals are placed as the representatives of democracy. Gandhi said about democracy that "democracy, disciplined and enlightened, is the finest thing in the world. A democracy prejudiced, ignorant, superstitious will land itself in chaos and may be self-destroyed."\(^70\) So our Swaraj may be a failure for the wrong implementation of democratic principles.

Though, India after fifty five years of independence failed to achieve the goal of Gandhi’s complete Swaraj, but still, we should not lose our heart. For the sake of betterment of democracy some reforms are needed. People should be careful in selecting their leaders. The electors should be educated. Individuals without minimum qualification, criminals or economic offenders should be withdrawn from contesting elections. If once again, we can adopt Gandhian philosophy in nation building.

\(^{69}\) Dr.K.S.Saxena (ed). Gandhi Centenary papers, Vol-3, P.58
\(^{70}\) Mahatma Gandhi : His Life and Influence by Chandra kumar and Mohender Puri.
purpose, we are sure, we shall be able to solve most of the problems faced by the country at present. Then and then only, India will emerge as a strong nation. Because for Gandhi swaraj is a stepping stone, not a stopping place. The ultimate destination in Ramarajya, enlightened anarchy where everybody is the master of his destiny. Hence swaraj is not only a political concept. It is a comprehensive idea that includes all the aspects of life like political independence, social security and mental freedom from all sorts of anxieties. It implies a dignified scheme of interdependence. If somebody can achieve it someday, he or she will achieve the highest level of aesthetic bliss. Though the origin of swaraj is old but it has a dimension always towards something spiritual. It has no beginning and no end. Gandhi's attempt of spiritualizing politics and secularizing religion, in its true spirit, has a profound demand for a new world order.

Gandhi's spiritual humanism teaches mankind that to serve humanity is to serve God. His humanism is not based on the narrow and sectarian outlook but on the harmonious co-existence of all mankind. His idea of nationalism is blended with the idea of internationalism. There is no opposition between the two ideas. As he remarked, ".....it is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when peoples belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern
nations which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of, and rise on the ruin of, the other."\textsuperscript{71} Gandhi's conception of Swaraj does not amount to isolated independence but calls for a dignified scheme of interdependence. His ideal of internationalism is much too noble to be appreciated in an age of racial hatred and narrow patriotism. So he wrote, "For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive, I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India......The law of a patriot is not different from that of the patriarch."\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{71} M.K.Gandhi, Economic and Industrial Life and Relations, Vol.II, P.84
\textsuperscript{72} K.Kripalani (ed), All Men Are Brothers, P.159