CHAPTER - IV
CONCLUSION
From the time immemorial there has been a keen desire for peace in human mind. It is true that there have been innumerable wars in the past, but man has always thought in terms of establishing peace in the society, country and the world. Peace as a matter of fact has been a necessary condition for progress. Albert Einstein the world famous scientist and father of nuclear energy has said about Mahatma Gandhiji -

"Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this, ever in flesh and blood, walked upon this earth".

He further extending his views about non-violence of Gandhiji said that revolution without the use of violence was the method by which Gandhiji brought about the liberation of India. The search for peace is one of the most important problems facing the mankind. Mahatma Gandhi has gone to the root cause of the world strife inorder to find a solution.

Gandhiji’s Ashram vows contributed by all the knowledge and experience, philosophical, religious, moral and economic, mixed together are the fundamental for establishing a classless society. He aimed at the

sublimation of the individual and through this the uplift of the society, the
dream of his life. His Āshram is a model for the realization of this dream
and the Āshram vows are the basic principles to be followed by all the members
with the aim of Sarvōdaya.

Gandhiji's thought grew with him. He did not deduce a system
from postulates as conclusion from premises in a syllogism. His concepts
are existential and they indicate a development value. The method is heuristic
not holistic. He found them in life's tumble of events. We must not fragment
his teachings. His thought has grown round a cluster of ideas. They all
centred around Truth and Non-Violence.

Gandhiji's passion for Truth, found in every person a divine fire,
with a diamond-sharp sincerity opposed every force which enslaved man,
woman or child. The central conviction of man's dignity and divinity flamed
forth in many revolutionary articles of faith and spread over the whole spectrum
of celestial and terrestrial being in the Advaitic Spirit. This became his
God, that is Truth, his human-divine conception, his spiritual orientation,
secular toleration and belief in the moral order of mankind, his conviction
that higher values are basic to politics, economics and other material pursuits,
his fascination for sarvōdaya and abjuration of violence, his communism
without cruelty and government without coercion and his creed that there is
innate goodness in every man. And this is the secret of his merger with the hungry, the poor, the sick and the down-trodden. He was a Mahatma because he realised that regardless of station, colour, creed or skin everyone was ātman and any system that diminished or denied this truth was unjust, asuric and ultravires.

The social philosophy that sustained his life work and lifestyle was as eclectic and open minded as Gandhiji himself. An open minded system of social philosophy has one essential characteristic unity of thought and practice. The primacy of this unity was recognised by Gandhiji. Gandhiji was a revolutionary thinker. He revolted wherever the status quo offered a challenge to his conscience. He stood for the sanctity and supremacy of the human conscience. His acceptance of spiritual determinism gave him supreme faith in the inevitable emergence of the non-violent society in the future.

Gandhiji showed to the whole world efficacy of the principle of love and peace as instruments of social change. His undying faith in the goodness of man and the efficacy of non-violence is beyond doubt. Since the individual is the basis of all social progress, one should place greater reliance on the development of the individual than of any intellectual device. Man is not a “lost” creature. He is ever capable of self-development. The
fundamental Gandhian means for bringing about social change rests on the
reformation of the individual, "internally, morally and spiritually". If all
individuals practised self-control, a control over all senses, followed the principles
of truth and non-violence in their daily dealings and tried to incorporate
these principles in their thoughts and attitudes, society would gradually gravitate
towards the ideal he cherished. Essentially, all the teachings of Gandhiji
were entirely based on the concept of individual perfection by a strict adherence
to Truth and Non-Violence.

The world today is in the throes of a new birth. Social philosophy in
the East and West, tried of their "isms", and ideologies are eagerly groping
for some new synthesis. The basis of freedom is the dignity of human
personality. Every individual by virtue of his humanity, is an end in himself
and cannot be regarded only as a means for purpose extraneous to himself.

Modern society has affected man in two ways at the same time, he
has become independent, self-reliant, critical and egocentric on the one
hand, and isolated, alone afraid on the other. The two processes have gone
through together and are two aspects of a dynamic system, viz; the individual. It
is sometimes difficult to see both these aspects, especially the Inner processes.
We are prone to imagine that the problem of freedom lies in gaining more
and more freedom from external restraints: social, political and moral. This
is the traditional freedom which undoubtedly has to be increased and maintained, but we have also the more important and difficult task of acquiring and realizing our own individual selves and becoming more and more free in our mind and in our spirit. This is sometimes known as spiritual freedom. All other types of freedom are but stages towards the ultimate goal.

Gandhiji believed in human freedom and denounced all kinds of suppression. He believed that the ideal society of his conception should be an "ordered anarchy". Such a society would carry the ultimate values of non-violence, freedom, equality and social equilibrium\(^2\).

Gandhian philosophy viewed in terms of its ideology, ideals, agencies and theories can help us to find out the evils of our times and provide us some answers to our questions. We shall reinterpret Gandhiji with the postulates of ideology, ideals, agencies and theories in the field of his conceptualization of individual and the model of a normal society. Our interest in the field of individual society relations is qualified by two important points. (1) The controversy of individual versus society as to who influences and dominates whom, and (2) our own present engagement for carrying out and designing a society for our country. Our object here then is to assess Gandhiji in terms of the "individual" and the model of his "society". Swami Dayananda

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Saraswati worked for the national social and religious unification of India. For this purpose it was necessary to abolish foreign rule, eliminate caste and class distinctions and integrate India religiously. He said that the hereditary caste system, based on birth and not merit and the outrage of untouchability, had no sanction in the Vedas. He attacked polytheism and idolatory as being inconsistent with the teaching of the Vēdās. He also opposed child marriage and supported widow remarriage and female education. This approach to the problem of untouchability was yet another step in the direction of secularisation which has been carried to the fullest extent by Mahatma Gandhi and his followers.

All these multifarious activities and reforms stressing as they did the greatness and the glory of India’s past infused into the minds of the Hindus a sense of national consciousness, which further stimulated into growth by the frictions and exploitation resulting from foreign domination. Ultimately all the causes and effects coalesced and produced the Swadēśī Movement of 1905. The Ārayasamāj had stimulated the awakening: Tilak, Swami Vivekananda and in recent times Mahatma Gandhiji gave it additional vigour.

Lokananya Bala Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1916) is the other great son of India whose work for the independence of resurgent India is significant. Lokanaya Tilak's devotion to the mother expressed itself in his heroic struggle for her Swaraj. He believed that freedom was the basic condition of all progress.

"Swaraj is my birth right and I will have it", was the flaming utterance of his soul. "Without swaraj, our life and Dharma are in vain".

Gandhiji believes that the teaching of the Gīta, viz., “It is better to die performing one’s duty or svadharma but paradharma or another’s duty is fraught with danger”, applies to swadesi also, for swadesī is svadharma applied to one’s immediate environment⁶. Swadesī is a spiritual discipline and if properly carried out by us will enable us to reach the goal of Sarvādya, which aims at the welfare of all, not merely materially but towards the ultimate end of spiritual realization.

Gandhiji also recommends the removal of untouchability which follows from the principle of spiritual unity of all life. With a view to purify Hindu religion, Gandhiji declared:

"Untouchability is not only not a part and parcel of Hinduism, but a plague which it is the bounden duty of every Hindu to combat. None can be born untouchable. To consider so is to support rank irreligion fit only to be destroyed."

Thus Gandhiji welcomes inter-caste marriage particularly between *savarṇa* and untouchables and open temples for them. At least those who belong to the same faith should not be refused entrance in the places of prayer and worship. "*Harijan*" is another name given by Gandhiji to the sections of Hindus who were considered as untouchables. Untouchability itself has been declared illegal by the Government under Article XVII of the constitution of India. Mere legal enactments will not hold good. The general conscience of the people at large must change. As Gandhiji observes:

"Removal of untouchability means love for, and service of the whole world, and thus merges into *ahimsa*. Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barrier between man and man, and between the

7. Ibid, p.32.
8. "Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability', shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law". The legal implication behind the term "in accordance with law" means that under the present article, read with article (35 (a) iii) Parliament has enacted untouchability (offences) Act 1955, which must be read along with the present article.
various orders of Being. In dealing with the problem of untouchability." Gandhiji even went to the extent of calling himself a sanātana Hindu. He comes to the conclusion that whether his theory is correct or not. Untouchability is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity, and love, which are the divine attributes of God. And as we are the children of God, we should love and treat one and all equally. Gandhiji says,

"I believe in the rock-bottom doctrine of Advaita and my interpretation of Advaita excludes totally any idea of superiority at any stage what so ever. I believe implicitly that all men are born equal and when I ask you to purify your heart of untouchability, I ask of you nothing less than this -that you should believe in the fundamental unity and equality of man".

Gandhiji championed the concept of equality on metaphysical grounds. Every man is equal in the eyes of God as the Gītā points out. Hence every man should be legally and politically equal. He never would confuse equality with patronisation or condescension. According to Gandhiji, racial and social equality is a necessary accompaniment of freedom. Hence,

he felt that political freedom without social and racial equality was thoroughly inadequate and even illusory. Gandhiji was a great champion of the right to equality. This presupposes his faith in justice. He observes:

“The first condition of non-violence is justice all round in every department of life”\(^{10}\).

The chief evils against which Gandhiji fought were racialism, imperialism, communalism and untouchability. In South Africa, he fought against the racially discriminatory policies of the Whites. In India, as a reformer, he fought against social injustices and oppressions. According to him, no one could be actually non-violent and not rise against social injustices. His crusade for the liberation of the suppressed lower classes in India shows his deep attachment to the concept of social and economic justice.

Gandhiji’s crusade against untouchability and his leadership of Indian Independence Movement were based on ideals of social and political justice. His fight against untouchability was an advance in the direction of the recognition of human rights. To Gandhiji, the curse of untouchability was only a prominent phase of the great devil of inequality in action, in diverse forms and manifestations. As a \(\text{Vedantist}\) and a \(\text{Vaishnava}\); Gandhiji believed in the spiritual oneness of all life and hence he was fundamentally\

opposed to untouchability and considered its removal as an issue of great importance, surpassing even political independence. Gandhiji wrote:-

"Untouchability as it is practised in Hinduism today is, in my opinion, a sin against God and man and is, therefore, like a poison slowly eating into the very vitals of Hinduism........... that untouchability is an old institution nobody has ever denied. But if it is an evil, it cannot be defended on the ground of its antiquity. If the untouchables are the outcasts of the Āryan society, so much the worse for that society. And if the Āryans at some stage in their progress regarded a certain class of people as outcasts by way of punishment, there is no reason why that punishment should descend upon their progeny irrespective of the causes for which their ancestors were punished ........... the existence of untouchability amongst untouchables is an additional reason for cultured Hindu Society to rid itself of the course, with the quickest despatch ........... In its inception, untouchability was a rule of sanitation and still is in all parts of the world outside India. That is to say, an unclean person or a thing is untouchable but
immediately his or its uncleanliness is shed, he or it is no longer untouchable. We should, from our childhood, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is, for every one who has realized this, to commence bread labour as a scavenger. Scavenging, thus intelligently taken up will help one to a true appreciation of the equality of man”11.

In Gandhiji’s view “untouchability” is a universal menace and all oppressed people have to oppose it. It has taken various guises in various countries with differences in degree. Everywhere, its basis is economic which is micaled “political”. Indian ‘untouchability’, arose Gandhiji observe, out of conquest of Āryan over the so-called ‘Aboriginees’ to whom the present-day Harijan has to trace his ancestry.

Gandhiji was a protagonist of the concept of common good of all. As a religious man he believed in the spiritual unity and equality of mankind. Gandhiji writes thus:

“Everybody is agreed about the necessity of this (communal) unity. But everybody does not know that

unity does not mean political unity which may be imposed. It means an unbreakable heart unity”\textsuperscript{12}.

Religious bitterness is a sign of lack of non-violent atmosphere. The last sixteen months of his life were devoted to the eradication of communal violence which broke out in India as a result of the decision to divide the country. To the end of his life, Gandhiji refused to accept the “Two Nation Theory” and was absolutely unreconciled to the “Vivisection” of India. His pilgrimage in Noakhali will remain one of the brightest chapters in his life. He proved that no disaster could shake his implicit faith in the fundamental goodness of men and in the efficacy of non-violence. In conditions of civil war in 1947, he became a one-man force in Bengal and preserved peace there. The Pathān Afrīdis in Pakistan had attacked the state of Kashmir, and forced the Mahrāja to accede to the Indian Union. The Indian Government had to rush troops to Srinagar to protect the state. That means peaceful transfer of power had taken the shape of a civil war. The responsibility of the Government of India was greater, because even after partition, nearly five hundred million Muslims had remained in India and similarly two or three crore Hindus had remained in Pakistan. Gandhiji’s last fast and his martyrdom for Hindu-Muslim unity for which he worked all his life showed how he stood unflinchingly for his

principles undaunted by the consequences. In short, Gandhiji upheld communal harmony, for he believed in *Sarvadharma Samabhāva*. A passionate lover of humanity, an implacable foe of injustice in whatever form or sphere, it is small wonder that Gandhiji early espoused the woman’s cause. Throughout his long life of service, he preached forcefully against the wrongs done to women in the name of law, tradition, and even religion. He has spoken out fearlessly against enforced widowhood, *purdha*, the dedication of girls to temples, prostitution, early marriage, dowry system, the economic bondage and material slavery of women. Gandhiji championed the cause of women. He considered woman as ‘the incarnation of *ahīṃsa’*. Casteism must be up-rooted. Inter-caste marriages must be encouraged. This will pave the way for social, emotional and national integration.

From Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Gandhiji, almost all identified spiritualism and truth as the core factor of Indian socio-political transformation. In the case of the *Harijans* of Travancore Kumara Guru, being Messiah and Mosses, not negated the Indian reform tradition. Thus he was able constitute a new strategy of Harijan emancipation. In this strategy he had given emphasis to truth (which was identical to Gandhian approach of truth) and spiritualism.

Travancore being a meeting place of national and alien religions since the dawn of history, he was forced to build new paradigms of emancipation. Thus he constructed new religious postulates based on Christian as well as Hindu axioms. His conceptual religious postulation of Revealed Salvation of God was a novel one and it was in true sense the modern theological concept of ‘Liberation Theology’. In the early decades of this century the conceptual axioms of liberation theology was alien to all. Anyway, being a revolutionary he was pioneered in the field of liberation theology through his new interpretation to Christian and Hindu philosophy.

Earlier, religious and social issues travelled through the parallel roads. Instead of making mutually complementary to each other, it never met together. On the other hand the suffering millions counted their hardships and set backs as the outcome of some unknown curse in the past. They found solace under the shade of religion, not in the material alternatives. But these poor people contented with the guaranteed ‘promised land’—next world after their death. The depressed classes conventional retreat from the material truth to illusory spiritual truth was challenged by Kumara Guru through his conceptual axiom of Revealed Salvation of God. While he was in the field (karmamaṇḍalām) of Harijan emancipation schema, he never resorted to violent means. He was very particular to the purity of means and end. It truly justifies Gandhian impact over the whole of India. As the
researcher had mentioned earlier, some early Kerala Harijan leaders opted the violent meance to attain the goal of Harijan emancipation. Kumara Guru was aware of the strength of savarṇās around him. So Kumara Guru discarded the conventional style of violence and opted the path of Gandhiji.

He never wished the decline and impoverishment of savarṇa sections, instead he stressed the need of sarvādaya. Whenever, wherever, Kumara Guru operated his mission, he was in compromise with savarṇa sections. Through his sagacity and intelligence he was able to won the hearts of all walks of life and made use of them for the common good of the Harijans. In short we can say that he played a great role in moulding public opinion in favour of the causes of the depressed millions of Kerala.

On the plane of social action (karmamulālm), his organizational framework of PRDS functioned well through his manifold programmes of revitalization of Harijan compartments. To Pulaya and Paraya community, whose sufferings were much deeper than that of the other depressed classes of Kerala, the leadership of Kumara Guru much helped to ease the social tension which accumulated through generations and averted them from violent

14. Mentioned in the earlier chapter about the adilahalas and Kumara Guru's approach towards these revolts. Kumara Guru's intervention eased/reduced tensions of savarnas as well as avarnas. Thus it proves researcher's conclusion.
meance. In short Kumara guru’s leadership avoided a militant (violent) phase in Harijan emancipation movements of Kerala, and he championed for social equality and justice for the ‘sons of God’ in the material world.

Like Buddha and Mahaveera, he opted middle path, which was a compromise towards Christianity and Hinduism. He believed in the true God that is truth which is neither Hindu truth nor Christian truth. His organizational tempo and compromising attitude towards savarna created an atmosphere of social rethinking about old discriminatory and prejudicial approach of the society. The untouchables and unapproachables of the society got united under the organizational tempo of Kumara Guru got an opportunity to negotiate with savarnās. In short without shedding a single drop of blood, savarnās gradually reduced their egoism and avaranās gradually improved their ego and the society as a whole reached to the atmosphere of social justice.

Kumara Guru as a social reformer and saviour of Harijan multitude dedicated his whole life for the well-being of the erst while slave communities of Kerala. He had taken the service of depressed society as a divine mission entrusted by His Grace. In the words of Swami Vivekananda,

“a struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things: sympathy for the poor and bread to their

hungry mouths, enlightenment to the people at large; and struggle unto death to make men of them who have been brought to the level of beasts, by the tyranny of your forefathers"\textsuperscript{16}.

Thus it is true in the case of Kumara Guru also.

It is true that Kumara Guru had little formal education, and imbued with the spirit of \textit{Harijan} emancipation, he learned everything from the contemporary society through observation and interaction\textsuperscript{17}. Gandhian ideologies and paradigms were once alien to the erst while slave communities of Kerala. It was because of the defective social structure which consciously and deliberately alienated the basic groups. But to them Kumara Guru functioned as a bridge to the nationalist spirit which included \textit{Harijan} emancipation. Like Gandhi, Kumara Guru also was in search of truth. According to Sita Ram Singh,

\begin{quote}
"an Indian instinctively plays to be led from untruth unto truth, from darkness unto light and from mortality into immortality. This insistence on truth has marked Indian life through the ages. Truth has been identified
\end{quote}

16. Quotes from Krishna Chaitanya, ibid.
17. See discussions in the Chapter - III.
with God (Satyanārāyana), worshiped on all auspicious occasions. From the most sophisticated intellectuals to the commonest people in the rural areas, all have installed truth on the highest pedestal”18.

Kumara Guru realised the factual truth that the notion caste/jāti is a rigid system of social stratification and it has remained almost intact for many centuries. So it is quite difficult to uproot the very concepts of social stratification through aggressive attack on rotten systems. And it was proved that Kuṭāra Guru was able to ease the boundaries of caste through peaceful interaction and sowing the seeds of Sarvādaya concepts in the social structure. That ultimately will generate longlasting impact on society and it will bear fruits of social equality. Thus the postulations of Kuṭāra Guru began to bear fruits in the present social scenario.

Like Gandhiji, Kumara Guru a famous Sarvādaya leader in Kerala fought for the removal of untouchability and he sacrificed his whole life for the upliftment of Harijans. Both Gandhiji and Kuṭāra Guru by their devotion to the ideals of liberty, equality, justice and welfare, succeeded in welding the Indian people into an organic political community. In short, both Gandhiji

18. Sita Ram Sigh, General Presidential Address in the fiftyforth session of Indian History Congress held at Mysore on 6th December 1993.
and Kumara Guru upheld communal harmony, for they believed in *Sarvadharśina Samabhāva*, i.e., equal respects for all religions.

Gandhiji’s and Kumara Guru’s ideas are relevant even today. If we are able to live according to the ideals of Gandhiji and Kumara Guru; we may be secure that this country of ours will survive as it has survived for centuries, for many more centuries and its philosophy will make a healing of nations and bringing of peoples together. It is this philosophy that inspires for instance, an old prayer:-

"Sarvās taratu durgāni
Sarvo bhadrani paśyatu
Sarvas taḍ buddhim apnotu
Sarvās sarvatra nandatu"

It means :-

"May all beings safely cross the hazards and hardships of life! May all see the beaming face of happiness!
May all attain to right knowledge! Let there be universal rejoicing".