CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Towards a conclusion let me try of sum up my efforts in this thesis. To begin with I was trying to understand Social Sciences, Social scientific researches and the process of knowledge production. The distinction that is made in Indian philosophy between aparavidya and paravidya, Vijnana and Jnana could roughly be translated into English as a distinction between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge, which is intellectual and cognitive, resulted only through sensation or sense-object-contact. We find empiricist philosophers of the west treating this as the only knowledge proper.

Wisdom, Jnana or Paravidya transcends cognitive and intellection: it is anubhava or experiential knowledge. Cognitive knowledge is demostrable as well as explanatory but experiential knowledge can neither be demonstrated nor be explained using categories. If simple has to be experienced.

Yet another aspect of the Indian knowing is about the idea of affectivity of knowledge. Knowledge must affect the knower and then only it becomes knowledge proper. Knowledge is not an exclusive or disconnected phenomena, statiz and inert. Knowledge must be functional in the sense that it must function to affect, refine and even bring changes to the concerned. Ultimately knowledge functions to better, perfect or refine all to whom it is being given.
Such qualifications of knowledge are fantastic phenomena with the Indian systems. Modern researches with a western bend or orientation do not often pause to look at these differentials. Perhaps at some places knowledge production ends in merely making new data-based information and not going beyond.

Both Buddha and Gandhi fully carry the Indian tradition of making differences to people through knowledge. Gandhiji speaks about this process of refinement through his concept of education. He calls education an activity that is supposed to draw out all potentials of those who are getting educated.

Gandhiji was speaking about the same affectivity and refinement the Indian wisdom conceives of. Perhaps this aspect should be come cardinally important to knowledge production process of social scientific researches in our nation.

Contexts or backgrounds become essential to understand anything. An attempt to run through the context and background of Buddha become the Genesis of Buddha in the second chapter. The genesis of Buddha places Buddha in a context that went into the making of the Buddha. It may be said that the coming of Buddha was a necessity for Indian culture, tradition, spirituality and for the people.

The attempt to run through Buddha philosophy had indeed being hazardous. I donot know how far I could do justice to the great sage. The spirituality and growth of Gouthama’s teachings forms the next chapter. It is amazing to see all the recreative transformations of
Buddhism in far flung lands through great creative minds and sages. It was indeed an experience to look at the Mahatma through Buddha. Wasn’t the Mahatma was becoming another Buddha? The Mahatma had always worked with common people. He spent his life to refine and better, millions of common people. This one man had successfully transformed many to people in the entire world. The Mahatma was personifying the affectivity knowledge. In this sense the Mahatma stands out as a unique Indian with the largest contribution.

OBJECTIVES REALISED

Social background led to the formation of Buddhism.

Buddha and Buddhism is indeed the product of Vedic social background. Perhaps it is natural that every thing in Nature has these three stages of growth, development and decay. It may not be exaggerating if I say that these three stages can be extended to almost every thing. The Saraswatha Sindhu Civilization also underwent these three stages and Buddhism is the phenomena that began as an antithesis to the third stage of Saraswatha Sindhu Civilization. Unlike it is mostly spoken, Saraswatha Civilization has more than 3000 settlements, out of which only less than 5% had been explored. The Vedic civilization was spread over a vast area perhaps reaching down to the South and upto the river Sindhu in the North. There must have been a glorious period in this Vedic culture, but slowly it had deteriorated with unspeakable rigidity. At this point there sprang for many miserables with miserable existence. The
situation needed repair, correction and the society needed saviours, redeemers and reformers. Buddha comes as all these and more. Here the first objective is taken care of.

A journey through the philosophy of Buddha is the second objective and this had been attempted in the third chapter. Philosophy given directly by Gauthama as well as philosophies constructed by his followers is made explicit in the chapter three.

To understand the Mahatma through analyzing principles of Gandhi was the third objective. In fact in the entire thesis, this was my consistent attempt whether in relation to Buddha, or in relation to Dharma or in relation to Indian Nationalism or in relation to common Indian people. Indeed this objective of attempting to understand Gandhi was always there in all that had been attempted in this thesis.

How and how far the influence of the Buddha is the fourth objective. This is taken up in the fifth chapter and a great deal of survey through literature, concepts as well as philosophy had been carried out.

Looking at Mahatma Gandhi through Buddha was the fifth objective. Though chapter five is entirely devoted to this objective through out this thesis this comparison had been ongoing phenomena.

Our present world is a much progressed world which is making technological and scientific advancements, perhaps on
hourly basis. The living condition of a common man has become far better than even his immediate ancestors. Science and technology is increasingly making the world smaller and indeed a global village.

At the same time there still are misery, poverty, hunger, destitution and hunger deaths. All our scientific progresses and technological advancement could do nothing much to put an end to the suffering of millions. How are we so helplessly failing in dealing with these problems?

Yada charmavadakasam
Veshtasyanti manava
Tada devampijnato
Dukkhassyanto Bhavishyati

(Thaitharyupanishad)

When all our greatness through all kinds scientific, technological and progresses, even jointly put together is miserably failing to help man’s pain and suffering, the above quotes Upanishad mantra becomes very significant. The Mantra simply says that man can make all kinds of progresses and advancements to the extent of making the very sky flexible enough to wrap around oneself like a simple bedsheets: but with all these dukkhessanti (end of sorrow suffering) is not achieved.

Both Buddha and Mahatma tried to end sufferings of man and for both of them spirituality was the only means except the lokayatas all Indian schools of philosophy makes this prescription of spirituality as the only way through which man can escape
suffering. This philosophy goes to making India essentially a spiritual land.

This ancient Indian wisdom is indeed time tested and simply cannot be meaningless and without any significance. The ancient archetype may appear outmodelled and as a matter of fact no one shall prescribe a going back through time which shall of course be meaningless. It is not the case that contemporary Indian is without creative minds. What we must do today is to find significance of ancient wisdom in our immediate and present times to re-invent the ancient Indian knowledge and its present significance to make use of them for the good of mankind. Let this re-invention be temporary but it must be an ongoing process, in such a way that each future generation must receive the training to make this re-invention a reality to suit their requirements in their times which must go on.

For our present times we can take lessons from Gandhi who had made attempts to re-invent not only the Buddha but also many great Indians in our near past. What really made Gandhi tremendously great is precisely this, he had practically re-invented ancient Indian wisdom in his times and the people of his times were immensely benefited. His times went by and those illuminated people illuminated by people like Buddha through people like Gandhi also went by. For our times we need new re-inventors who can take inspirations from personalities like the Mahatma and go on with the process of making ancient Indian culture, knowledge and spirituality a reality and significant phenomena in contemporary times; which must also go on with changing times over and on.