The Study of the Ethico-Religious Philosophy of M.K. Gandhi (who is none other than Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi) is both an expository and critical study of his Ethical and Religious views, of which Ethics and Religion are the two most conspicuous and predominant part of a coherent whole, dominating but not discarding the other organic parts of that whole. The very positions, held by Gandhi in the fields of Ethics and Religion, will be scrutinized and thus the judgment will be formed and evaluated, made on his ethical and religious achievements. This may, we hope, help particularly the students of Gandhian Moral Philosophy and in general, may help the masses to come to the road of moral progress.

Some thinkers have written on Gandhi's views on Politics, Sociology, Economics and Education. Hardly a few have touched the Ethico-Religious side of Gandhi's intensive and extensive teachings. My attempt, I humbly say, may prove a new one in the advancement of this particular aspect of Gandhi's Philosophy.

Before we see the plan of the thesis, we should remove the basic objection as to whether M.K. Gandhi can be a subject for an Academic study.

Some thinkers suggest that M.K. Gandhi's Philosophy cannot be subjected to an academic study for he has not given a new theory.
Though he has not given a new theory, his whole life was not an individualistic one but an institutional one, for he has been of great help in raising the ethical level of many a man. So, Gandhi’s Philosophy is, it may seem to us, deemed worthy for an academic study for the above reason. There are other reasons too. Gandhi is not dogmatic. He is a genuine thinker. He has his own conclusions, whether people support them or not. The very method of his arriving at the conclusion with his analytical penetration is notable.

Some devotees of Gandhi have placed him on a very high pedestal and considered his every thought as above analysis as they thought he was sacrosanct. No doubt he is a great spiritual personality, but it does not mean that his every thought is right in toto, and should not be scrutinized. As Gandhi has severed in some respects from the traditional Hindu Philosophy, it becomes worthy of study for it may have brought new points in our ken and may have the wholesome as well as unwholesome effects in the near or long future.

The planning of the chapters of the thesis is as following. With reference to the first chapter on Ethics to know Gandhi’s ideas in a very limelight or in their subtlety, we should compare his ideas on the subject with those of other moral thinkers, e.g. Gandhi’s idea of Moral Judgment sums up the views of some outstanding Moral Thinkers, when Gandhi lays stress on (1) that the morality of an act depends on ‘motive’ and also (2) ‘the action itself is good’. He uses motive and intention in his idea of moral judgment without an apparent distinction. But if we
go deeper, we may have the summation of the partial truths expounded by the Intuitionists laying stress on motive, the Utilitarians on intention, J. Muirhead on consequences, Ross on circumstances, Bradley on a system as an ordered whole, and Hegel on 'the total act in all its bearings'. So Gandhi's ideas have been studied with reference to these points.

Gandhi's ideas on the second chapter dealing with 'Ethics of Education' make us think and help us to reform our modern education by removing its defects. Gandhi shows the remedies to the ill-discipline of students. Gandhi's ideas on education lay stress on the Higher Values of life and do not neglect the lower values of life, namely of earning bread as he has laid stress on Bread Labour, small industries and manual labour. Gandhi's ideas on International Relations far exceed in beauty and preciseness when compared to the ideas on the International Relations given by Aldous Huxley. Where as Huxley poses the Nation's Detailed Planning against Internationalism, Gandhi does not do so as he considers Nation as the part and parcel of the World and sees the good of the World and that of the nation at the same time, i.e., as the two moments of one thing as a whole.

With reference to the third chapter on 'A Brief Study of The Theories of Social Philosophy', Gandhi lays stress on the purity of means as important as the great end in view is remarkable. Many thinkers at the time of a difficulty throw to the wind their ideas of purity of means. The steadiness of Gandhi's mind in his acid tests of life is worth our penetration and notice. In this
chapter, the various 'isms', having both strength and limitations, are explained and they culminate in Sarvodaya, which means the good of all the aspects of all individuals.

With reference to the fourth chapter on 'Self-Realization', the methods of self-realization given by Gandhi are the notable ones. The three yogas, The Jnana yoga, The Bhakti yoga, The Karma yoga, treated from Gandhi's view and their synthesis draw our attention. His meaning of prayer is unique. The meaning of prayer given by Gandhi is hardly imagined by most of us. The portion of prayer is dealt with in full details.

In the fifth chapter, 'The Philosophy of Religion' relatively a big one, proving its importance among other chapters, Gandhi's concept of religion is gathered from his numerous expressions on it expressed at various times. His methods of religion are unique. We come to the central portion of the chapter, 'what is Philosophy of Religion?' which is dealt in details. In it we know the Nature of Religion and the Relation of Religion to the other Activities of life. Naturally this portion has become relatively bigger than it is expected ordinarily. Gandhi's contribution to religion is worth noting. He lays stress not only on toleration but clearly states that one should have respect and love for another-religion. Gandhi's idea is secular in religion, i.e. he does not lay stress on the next life, but lays stress on this very life, considering the importance of the maxim, 'Virtue has its own reward.'

With reference to the sixth chapter on 'Mysticism,' the core of
religion, the various types of mysticism are treated and lastly, we have seen how far Gandhi is a mystic.

In the seventh chapter on 'Truth in Theory and Practice', after discussing the Nature of Truth, Gandhi's definitions of God are scrutinized and none of them are satisfactory from the point of reason, but from another point (that of intuition), those definitions, giving the basic truth, are right and satisfy us. Gandhi's conception of 'Truth is God' is more perfect than his earlier conception of 'God is Truth'. Truth, one of the five-ancient vows not in air-tight compartments, is shown to work in the practical life also.

In the chapter eighth, on 'Non-violence in Theory', the doctrine of non-violence is separated from the practice, only to understand the doctrine. The method and Technique of Ahimsa is treated in details. 'How the Gandhian Dialectic Operates' invites our attention. Without understanding the Dialectic, one cannot understand Satyagraha and Compromise.

In the chapter ninth, on 'Non-violence in Practice', separated from 'Non-violence in Theory', not in air-tight compartments but for our understanding it in details, we learn the forms and ways of Satyagraha. Mashruwala's Practical Non-violence draws our attention as Mashruwala's contribution seems as if it is a revised copy of Gandhi's doctrine of Ahimsa for the moderates. Jain's Doctrine of etymology namely Syadvad is used in Ahimsa and thus we learn many ways of looking at principle of Ahimsa in Practice. Lastly, in this chapter, 'some Polemical Problems' arrest our
With reference to the tenth chapter on 'Brahmacarya and other Vows', how far Brahmacarya or self-control can be practised is dealt with and the fogs of ignorance related to the subject are thrashed out. Gandhi's Idea of Self-control is criticized and still there is the evaluation of Gandhi's idea of self-control. The point which drew our attention a good deal is the one which is discussed: whether the Natural Means (self-control) can go together with the Artificial Means for Birth-control or not. And lastly, in this chapter, other vows, namely, Bread Labour, Non-possession, and Non-stealing are discussed and we note therein Gandhi's contributions.

To read the thesis, there should be the proper frame of mind of the readers. So the queries with reference to the whole subject are given below only to whet the curiosity of the readers. Did K.K. Gandhi reach the heart of religion or was he, in fact, on the periphery of it? Did he merely deal with ethical problems or was he really a Moral Philosopher? How far was he successful in casuistry? Is his philosophy, ethical and religious, a scientific one? Was he a Moral force? If he were, in what way? Is his ethics bereft of psychology? If his ethics is wedded with psychology, does it require still deeper strains of modern psychology? Is there the other side as given by P. Spratt, viz. the other side of K.K. Gandhi having masochism and sadism? In spite of human weaknesses, in what does his greatness lie, for he is considered as the light of Asia and world spirit?
All the above questions and such other ones require the penetration in arriving at the sound judgment and they are the meaningful topics which require deeper study and we shall see them in the thesis wherever the occasion permits.

I am very much indebted to Prof. A.G. Javadekar who has helped me throughout the preparation of my thesis. Due to his constant inspiration this work has found the form in which it is presented. It is certainly not exaggerating to say that this work would never have been completed if it had not received Dr. Javadekar's touch and if I had not been trained to keep a vigilant eye on my work. Besides expressing my debt of gratitude to Dr. Javadekar, I much express my sincere thanks to Dr. J.A. Yajnik, Dr. K.B. Vyas, Prof. M.V. Baxi and Shree C.P. Jerajani for their kind help. In the end, I cannot forget the cordial cooperation accorded to me by the staff of the library of the Gujarat Vidyapith and of Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad.

Baroda,
26th January, 1972

H. A. Gandhi