In the foregoing pages of the thesis, I have tried to understand what Gandhi meant by the concept of *swaraj* and how it can be attained. It is evident from the analysis presented in the previous chapters that *swaraj* means self rule, self restraint and should not be confused with mere political independence. In order to understand Gadhian concept of *swaraj*, it was necessary to understand other related concepts such as *satya* or Truth, *Ahimsa* or Nonviolence, the concept of Satyagraha, as a philosophy of life itself and the relation between ends and means. But it is difficult to comprehend a person’s ideas in their full richness, without knowing his life and ideals as he tried to practice them. So, in order to appreciate Gandhi’s ideas about *swaraj*, i.e., self rule, it seemed necessary to draw some light on the life, personality and thought of Mahatma Gandhi. After reading writings of Gandhi and many a scholars, I have come to the conclusion that there was nothing extraordinary about the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. But from the ordinary beginnings he rose to be the bravest and greatest man of our times and became the leader of humanity for generations to come through his sincere devotion to the ideals of Satya and Ahimsa.

The secret of his moral and spiritual success was this, that he considered his 'conscience' as the living presence of 'God' Himself in his body and he was always afraid of this 'little voice' of God in his body. His deeper dedication and devotion towards his conscience shaped his life in to the most spiritual life of our times. But life itself is a continuous whole of our lived moments and what we do during these moments or the karmas which we perform plays a formative role in our lives.
Gandhi had a very ethical and religious foundation of his life. He was alive to the ethical teachings of the great souls of East and West. Under the Indian sources, which kept his soul inspired, were the souls of his parents, his spiritual guide Rajchandra, many a saintly persons belonging to different religious faiths, who used to visit his father in his home during his childhood. He kept his conscience free from all the bondages of material world, man and society. He was influenced by Socrates, Ruskin, Thoreau, Carlyle and Tolstoy who became his teacher of nonviolence and respect for bread labour. From Socrates he learnt to live and die for Truth. He was a widely read man. However, we can say that he read a lot, assimilated a lot and experienced a lot. What ever he believed to be true, he was ready to sacrifice anything for the realization of Truth.

Gandhi was an original thinker, in the sense that he refused to accept anything which his conscience did not accept. It was because of his originality and the practice of truth that he could oppose the age old evil practices of untouchability and religious discriminations. The logic, he gave was from the Indian scriptures, Bhagavad Gita and the upanisads. He said if everything is in God and God is in everything, then there can be no ground for hatred for any living being. He was a true believer of advaita and ‘believing’ meant practicing in Gandhian philosophy. He said we should have integrity in our thought, word and action. If we believe in advaita, then it should be practiced in our day to day life and in our social life as well. On this ground he opposed all discriminations towards untouchables. If God is one and how can the individuals be different and high or low. Faith in advaitism and discrimination and exploitation of untouchables are contradictory.

The influence of Bhagavad Gita and Ishavasya Upanishad is the main source of Gandhian spiritual thought and
subsequently his political thought as well. Gandhi himself used to call Gita as his eternal mother, his spiritual dictionary and his daily reference book. After reading Gandhi and Bhagavad Gita, it appears that his thinking and actions became an embodiment of Bhagavad Gita to some extent. Most of the time what he said was based on the teachings of Bhagavad Gita and Ishavasya Upanishad. The Ishavasya Upanishad's first verse made it very clear to him that the whole world is nothing but God itself. Man's stay is temporary on this earth. So he should not forget that possessing or hoarding of material things is of much use. So man should not feel greed for material things. The first verse of Ishavishad which became the foundation of his thought is as follows:-

“इशवास्यमिदं सवं
yat krio 'janani jagat
Tena taksate bhujaiva
Maa gudha: karasiva chadhanaa
”

The influence of Bhagavad Gita on Mahatma Gandhi can be summed up in three verses of Bhagavad Gita. The first two verses selected here are those which brought him back from the falsehood of the world to the truth, from the material world of objects to the world of spirituality and from the world of violence to the world of non-violence and love for the whole human race, animals and nature as well.

“ध्यायतो विष्णुपुरुषः: सत्य-सतेपूर्णजायते।।
संज्ञात् संजायते काम: कामातु-क्रोधोपिवजायते।।”

“क्रोधातु भवतिसम्मोहः: सम्भोग-मुल्लिनियं:।।
समृयंभायादुबुञ्जनारो बुञ्जनाशायणायं:।।”
Under the influence of the above verses he realized that the lure or attraction for and pursuit of the material objects is the root cause of all anger and violence. It is the cause of the degeneration of man and civilization. If civilization is to be saved, the race for material things, desire for more and more enjoyment and the environment propagating matter as the ultimate goal has to be stopped. Otherwise 'man' as individual and society are whole bound to degenerate and destroy ultimately. It is on the basis of these two verses that Gandhi criticized the modern civilization which is Western civilization, which is no civilization in fact but a propaganda of the greedy, the profit seekers and body worshippers. For their selfish interest they have invaded the whole world and have made man forgot their perennial values of rta and dharma. Gandhi calls this 'Yuga' as Kalyuga and the age of 'Satan' in Hind swaraj. He says what ever is happening here, is all unethical, unreligious and immoral. He has cursed the doctors and lawyers, who are minting money by sucking the blood of man. He has condemned the modern life style in which man is getting away from his roots, i.e. his values his home and villages and running towards big cities and big countries. They are working from morning till late night but even then leading unhappy and alienated lives. Inspite of big hospitals and entertainment houses, man is sick, mentally as well as physically. There is a race of violence. Every body wants to be richer than the other. This is resulting in the corrupt and violent picture of society where there can be no peace of mind.

Gandhi saw what is happening around us, clearly explains that if a man or society will run after material goods, then the result is in violence and destruction. But Bhagavad Gita has given an antidote to this situation also i.e. what man should do. The antidote on which Gandhi based his life and thought is as follows:

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This *shloka* of Bhagavad Gita gave a very clear direction, path or method to lead a life progressing towards the realization of *moksha*, i.e., the life of *purushartha*. Man can never seek and realize *moksha* while running after matter, as that will result in violence and ultimately destruction of man and society both. But if he wants to save himself from this destruction then he has to learn and practice self discipline, control of senses which are always the seeker of baser enjoyment. By getting the senses subdued and becoming even minded every where, one is to engage in the welfare of all beings in order to seek God. Gandhi concluded that there is no other way than what the above *shloka* of Bhagavad Gita has preached. So he decided to live his life experimenting on these lines. It was his finding that the path of service of humanity is the sole way which can liberate man, give him *moksha* and *swaraj*. He suggested further that a social structure also based on these lines can be created. He has given us a picture of non-violent society which aims for the welfare of all and not of the maximum number as Bentham has suggested. Gandhi ji calls it a *Sarvodya* society. It means a society which aims at the uplift of each and every one living in it.

From the above; it becomes clear that Gandhi does not mean by *swaraj* political freedom only. It was his faith that political freedom can not solve all the problems. If we shall rule our country as the Britishers ruled us, the demand for *swaraj* is baseless and useless. According to him, *swaraj* has four sides: moral *swaraj*, social *swaraj*, political *swaraj* and economic *swaraj*. Out of these four, moral *swaraj* is of the utmost importance. Moral *swaraj* means, building of the character of all the men living in the country or society, through the right kind of education. Social *swaraj* means the *swaraj* for all the sections
of the society, especially the untouchables, women and minorities. He believed that all the sections of society should enjoy the fruits of swaraj. It means that even the poorest, meanest and humblest are to be taken along with the main stream of the nation. If, even a single person is left unattended, then the swaraj will lose its meaning. According to Gandhi one who is powerful, has more responsibilities for doing service, that is, the welfare of others. He has stressed on the duties and not on the rights. Gandhian social swaraj is not for those few who have the access to the resources rather they are given the charge of service to bring all others upward.

Economic swaraj means that in his ideal society, people will be self reliant and self dependent. Society will adopt Swadeshi as a principle. People should not depend on other countries for meeting their basic needs in the form of import, aids or help rather they should be self dependent. Co-operation will be the bases of mutual relations with the neighbours. Those who have more money or resources than their needs, they will not use the surplus money for enjoyment rather will consider the surplus money as a trust and will use it for the welfare of those who really need it. He has given a spiritualistic approach to economics. Manual labour will be necessary for all men living in Gandhian swaraj.

It was Gandhi’s faith that power corrupts man. So he was not in favour of big states or nations. We can infer that he was aware of what big countries or states can do as these big nations definitely exploit the smaller states and ultimately exploit the individuals living in these states. Gandhi stressed on the decentralized village republics as the possible solution to this problem.

Swaraj, in any form, individual or collective, inner as well outer, micro as well macro, it is always a state to be realized. It
can not be given to us by somebody to enjoy it. It has to be realized or attained by paying the heaviest price. The greatest thing what man has been blessed with is human activity, human effort, i.e., Karma. When our activity, effort or Karma is turned towards the welfare of others that will lead us to towards swaraj. Individual or collective or inner or outer. The objective of realization of swaraj is possible through disinterested human activity or disinterested karams. This has been discussed in the chapter swaraj and self realization.

The basic problem discussed here is how can we attain, According to Gandhi, swaraj or moksha, or self realization or social change or our inner change or revolution or attain the ideal. Satyagraha is philosophy of life. Life basically means 'action' and Satyagraha is a journey from the actual to the ideal. It is the method of struggle for winning the victory of Truth. No ideal can be attained without struggle, if it is worth attaining. It means bearing suffering peacefully inflicted upon himself by the opponent. During this struggle we are required to be truthful by maintaining integrity in thought, word and action. Gita also preaches the same lesson and the lives of the great men have also taught us the same lesson. If we believe in some truth, we are required to say it, and act for its realization in all circumstances. It means when ever we find something wrong or unjust, we are required to oppose it whole heartedly.

We can say that opposition to untruth is not something new but Gandhian method of opposing untruth is new as he opposed injustice non-violently in a collective way. Earlier this method of opposing had been used individually only as Prahlad opposed his untruthful father. Sikh history, is also full of individual stayagarhis; e.g. Guru Arjun Dev, Guru Teg Bahadur and two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh. They all were satyagrahis who lived and died for truth. In the West the
crucifixion of Christ reminds us of a great satyagrahi. Socrates, is also there who fearlessly and peacefully accepted all the suffering inflicted upon him in the true spirit of Satyagraha. But Gandhi's Satyagraha is unique in itself, as he succeeded in motivating the masses to participate in Satyagraha and bear any kind of suffering inflicted upon them by the opponents, for the sake of the realization of swaraj.

A satyagrahi is a soldier and he fights with the soul force, love force, inner force. Inner force can not be attained over night. satyagrahi has the moral power. He is much more braver than the soldier having and practicing the physical force. A satyagrahi requires greater moral training and strength. This comes through the practice of moral vows. It is the practice of moral vows which can make him a true satyagrahi. Gandhi has given eleven vows to be practiced by satyagrahis in his Satyagraha Ashrams, which were the training camps for the satyagrahis. These vows are discussed in detail in the chapter dealing with Ahimsa and Satyagraha. Truth and nonviolence are the fundamental values for a satyagrahi and these virtually include all other values, if realized properly. A satyagrahi is required to have faith in God. But he is required to know the true connotation of the term truth and nonviolence. So Satyagraha and nonviolence are very closely related with each other. According to Gandhi with the practice of satyagraha we can realize truth or bring about social change or win over justice by nonviolent means.

In the end, the problem of controversy over the choice of means is discussed. Gandhi believed in organic unity of ends and means. He believed that means and ends are interrelated. According to Gandhi a good end can not be attained by bad means. He disagrees with those who say, 'means are after all means and for a good cause bad means can also be used'. But
to Gandhi the cause does not remain good, if bad means are used for its realization. The end looses its quality if bad means are adopted. So he is not ready for the choice of inferior means for a good cause.

Secondly, he believes that it is the means only which are in our hands. End is in the hands of God, we may or may not attain it. But we should always concentrate on the purity of our means for the realization of a good cause. Nonviolence is the means for the realization of Truth. Truth can never be realized through violence as we can never win the heart of God or some man through violence. Gandhi says that we should practice nonviolence in its purest possible form i.e. as a creed and not as a policy. A good end can never be attained by bad means. The quality of the end depends on the purity of the means. So the lasting solution towards the attainment of swaraj, which is a nonviolent state of mind or society, is possible through the practice of satyagraha and nonviolence only, as means.

According to Gandhi means are the seeds and the end is like the fruit. We shall reap exactly what we sow. He aimed at the realization of a non-violent society and it can never be realized through violence. Secondly moksha was his ultimate goal or aim of life and we know that it can not be realized through violence. The term nonviolence has a wider connotation in Gandhian thought. It is non injury in the negative sense and love in its positive sense. The use of non violence in the positive sense can convert the heart of the opponent, but it requires a longer time. Ultimately, it can bring the Gandhian results. Love begets love finally.

The conclusion we draw from the present study is that we are living in the age of Satan. Evil and violence has entrapped us. Man is becoming inhuman. He is destroying man, animals and nature. Big temples and mosques are the objective of man
instead of ethics and morality. Man is forgetting what the scripture says. The enjoyment of the physical comforts has become the objective of man. Number of hospitals and the entertainment houses is increasing but alienation and loneliness is the problem of today's life. Man is suffering from mental and physical pain. The predicament which Gandhij explained in Hind swaraj has much deteriorated today. Gandhi has suggested an antidote to this situation. Whatever he said is based on our scriptures. He believed in the basic goodness and blissfulness of humanity and he was sure that man can regain his spirituality. According to him man can regain his peace, if he stops running after matter, i.e., material comforts and possessions and adopts a life style of manual labour, welfare of others (selflessly) and practice of moral vows. The life of matter leads man and society towards violence, consumerism and corruption. These things take away man's values and destroy his character and ultimately he looses everything. It is the result of the negation of religion and morality. In this age, man's worth is not assessed in the terms of his character, but in terms of his wealth. We are surrounded by the destructive forces of terrorism, materialism, consumerism, moral depravity and corruption. Human values are fast declining.

Gandhi did not consider the contemporary modern life to be a sign of progress. Material progress without the moral progress is the sign of Kalyug. Real progress is that where moral progress goes side by side with the material progress, social progress and economic progress. He has given us a picture of such a nonviolent society where human soul can progress. He gave us an idea of decentralized village swaraj which resembles to our ancient Vedic form of state or Ram Rajya.

'Man' is the central point in Gandhian thought. It is man only who has to shape the state and society. Gandhi has laid
much stress on the character building of man. Man’s character depends upon the values society in cooperates, in order to built the infrastructure for human progress.

Gandhi has rightly emphasized on the moral progress of man. Materially man is developing and he may develop more in the coming times, but moral values have to be realized. This realization requires rigorous practice of moral values. Unless and until we take a vow to love others, to practice self control, to practise *aparigraha* i.e. non possession and *astey* i.e. non stealing such values can not be even thought of. Evil comes uninvited, but goodness is a matter of realization, which is possible, only if we are trained in the art of practising moral values. So love and nonviolence have to be realized in order to attain *swaraj*.

We are required to put in incessant effort for the realization of moral values. Complete adherence to the ethical vows is very difficult and is like an ideal only but we can practise it to the maximum limit of our capacity. So with our own *swaraj*, we can think of saving our family, our children, our friends, if possible, from moral decline and choose a path of moral progress. That is definitely a step towards the solution of present day problems. His emphasis on the purity of means can save the world from drastic wars and moral decline over the material gains in which world is lost today.

The whole of his life, seems to be a story of a great struggle to save mankind from this predicament of moral crises. We can draw the conclusion from this thesis that individual is to be saved in order to save society. Individual can not be saved by the sermons it is taking from the West. His character has to be built through proper moral education and practice of moral values. Gandhi’s critics need to see that he has stressed on the
perennial values which Indian tradition has given. It is with the practice of morality only that humanity can be saved.

The practical aspect of Gandhian philosophy is that if we succeed in becoming true to ourselves and teach the younger generation by our living examples of our practice of morality, we can think of success in saving our future generations. Indians had lived morally fulfilling lives in the past but in the last few centuries due to invasion, plunders, insecurity and lack of education, we turned away from our own tradition of truth, nonviolence, non possession, non stealing, control of palate, respect for all religions etc. We need to look towards our past to seek guidance. It is our tradition only which can guide us towards the attainment of swaraj.

This way we shall at least win one fourth of Gandhian swaraj i.e., moral swaraj and which is also the foundation of social, political and economics swaraj. We can think of the attainment of poorana swaraj or complete swaraj of Gandhian dreams, hopefully in times to come.

Gandhi was born in the 19th century, worked for Swaraj in the 20th century. Gandhi's ideas would remain relevant and practical in the 21st century and even in all times to come. His ideas will be a beacon light to the 21st century. As many as 82 Nobel Laureates have unequivocally taken a stand that "future of humanity lies only in Gandhi. Gandhi will stand to the rest of the time in the 21st century and the global programme of eradication of unemployment, poverty, communal tension, disease, etc. will be attended to by Gandhian thought in the 21st century." If we try to move towards the Gandhian swaraj then we are required to practice the Indian perennial values of satya, ahimsa, brahmcharya, aprigraha and astey. This will definitately solve many a 21st century's problems and an authentic step towards the realization of Gandhian swaraj.
REFERENCE

CONCLUSION

1. Ishavasyopanisad: Tr by Shashi Tiwari (Delhi: Bhartiya Vidya Parkshan, 1986) p.5
3. Ibid (II-63) p.66
4. Ibid (12-4) p.277