1.1 **AIM**

The aim of this thesis is to identify and construct a conceptual framework of Kajaji's social and political thought. Kajaji's aim has been to spiritualize the social and political spheres of humanity, on the lines of Gandhiji, which he himself declared. Indian conditions are often understood and interpreted in terms of Western conceptual frameworks. The claim that the Western method of analysis is communicative, is mere due to familiarity of these concepts than precision and suitability to Indian social conditions. The counterparts of these concepts as available in Indian tradition and the present Indian context are located by critical analysis and drawing comparisons wherever necessary, without losing the main stream of Kajaji's thought.

1.2 **SOURCE**

We do not have a systematically written work by Kajaji expressing his views on social and political thought in the strictly academic sense of the term. This can probably be attributed to his aim namely that of instructing and influencing people than of merely producing works of academic luminosity. Many of his theories are expressed in simple form, which are gathered from a mass of other data. The following sources have been made use of for study in the preparation of this work.
1) Articles in newspapers and journals
2) Recorded speeches
3) Short stories written by Rajaji
4) The Ramayana and the Mahabharata written by Rajaji for the sake of children and the lay public
5) Small books and manuals like *Swarupa* and *The Indian Prohibition Manual*, in which the author tries to influence the social and cultural behaviour of people
6) And translations with commentaries like the *Barnimakal*, the *Bhagavata Purana* and the *Kural*

Another source which does not fall under any of the categories mentioned above was his simple life aimed at setting an example to the others and his reactions to political situations during and after the freedom struggle.

1.3 Rajaji's problem:

Rajaji’s main problem has been the question of rejuvenating the Indian society which, under foreign rule, lost its original bearings. This general problem presented itself in many forms of social and political problems. Among the social evils, the evil of drinking remained a problem for him throughout his life, despite his efforts to solve this problem. Casteism, Rajaji felt is too rampant in India to the extent of affecting the natural development of the individual personality and life in groups and, to add fuel to the fire, the political scene is very much influenced by casteism. The economic weakness of the country with its teeming millions of people below the poverty line and heavy foreign debts, Rajaji felt, affected the
social behaviour of the Indian citizens in the other fields also. Among the political problems, the various types of socialists recommended and tried in the West and grafted on to the Indian soil required Indianization without losing sight of what is said in the scriptures. On the cultural front, Rajaji was not satisfied with the existing pattern of education which lacked facilities to train young students in self-control and cultural orientation. The religious and philosophical concepts, practically came to a state of decline due to imbibing foreign patterns which are not conducive to Indian conditions. Rajaji felt that, whatever little was left in religion, it consisted mainly of following merely the external aspect of religion without understanding the inner principle—namely dharma, the ultimate principle that governs the universe at all levels.

1.4 **Rajaji's Role**

Rajaji's role has been that of a 'participant-observer' because of:

(i) his being a member of the society that was being studied by him,

(ii) his position as a public figure and

(iii) his involvement in the problems of the country as a social reformer.

It may be questioned that an involved person studying a certain society is bound to project his own reactions to the social stimuli presented to him. This can be countered as follows:
An outsider who is not a 'participant-observer' cannot have an insight into the value system of the society under study and such a person cannot also understand the reactions of the people. Inability to understand the value system or the inability to understand the people under study renders the value judgments of the observer mere empty statements and the prescriptions given by such an observer cannot lead to any successful solution. As an example, we can take the case of the foreigners who try to suggest certain solutions to some of the social problems of India. In most of the cases the solutions offered by the outsiders lack involvement and clarity of understanding of the real nature of the problem in its local setting. Some times the solutions offered by outsiders reveal a kind of projection of the social values of the society to which the outsider belongs.

Najafi's method consisted of analysis followed by prescription. His analysis consisted of empirical data collected from within the country and from outside countries. Wherever necessary he made use of statistical details in order to gain insight into problems involving a quantitative approach. As social problems involve a value-oriented understanding and judgment, Najafi did not make use of statistical analysis completely, but he restricted its use to economic problems which involve finance and resources, the evil of drinking in India and the language problem. He often made use of the term 'simple arithmetic' to refer to his use of quantitative analysis.
In topics concerning culture which required a qualitative analysis, Rajaji decried the use of numbers or the strength of majority to prove a point. Similarly continued existence of certain institutions or practices are not considered to be a justification for supporting them. He gives the example of Ravana who lived long, though he deserved to be exterminated for his evil actions. According to him longevity of chaos is not a justification for its continuance. In short, Rajaji believed in restricting dependence upon quantity or prolonged existence in evaluating social conditions which are of a qualitative nature. At the same time Rajaji made use of the historical and the comparative methods to a limited degree wherever such an analysis proved to be fruitful in trying certain social experiments.

As a story teller, he believed in the force of stories in bringing to light some of the problems which required explanation. Rajaji made use of analogies to a great extent in his stories and on top of all his approach was very much influenced by scriptural authority which he considered as an infallible source, if understood properly.

1.5 Method followed in the thesis

At the outset, the sources cited earlier have been made use of in searching for the concepts implicit in them. A few references quoted in other works, but not directly available could not be consulted. Some of the old-timers whose youthful age passed through the freedom struggle have been contacted to
gather extra information.

The pattern of exposition is inductive in that the relevant materials gathered have been analysed and necessary deductions were made at the end of each section and chapter. The work being mainly expository and the first of its kind, too much of emphasis on comparison has been avoided. The absence of an autobiography led to certain problems in working out a thorough mapping of Rajaji’s concepts. As Rajaji himself declared, he avoided committing his ideas in an autobiography to avoid self-glorification and the human weakness of trying to justify one’s follies or making them virtues by twisting facts. Necessary care has been taken to avoid involvement in destructive criticism or in politics.

The cluster of concepts available directly are arranged and analysed to see if any concepts implicit in them could be discerned. This method is followed owing to Rajaji’s concentration and action as that of a reformer and not as an academic philosopher.

Chapters have been arranged conforming to the ascending pattern of the arrangement of the purāṇaṅkhañ. The order of dharmo, artha, kāma and anekya has been followed in such a way that the exposition begins with Rajaji’s key concept namely dharmo. This is followed by the study of the economic institutions corresponding to artha. The chapters following the one dealing with economics cover the evil of drinking, caste and political problems as they are covered by kāma. The intervening chapters gradually build up towards a higher
orientation of values and lead to the chapter on religion and philosophy which are covered by the concept of mokṣa.

1.6 Content of the thesis:

The second chapter which deals with the key concept of Rajaji's social and political thought contains an exposition of the concept of dharma. Rajaji's descriptions of dharma as available in different works have been grouped together and the different concepts which go to make the definition are analysed drawing comparisons from scriptural sources. Whether Rajaji discussed economics or religion, his aim was to spiritualise the various activities of man so that the individual is trained to act within the frame work of the principle of dharma. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the relevance of a proper understanding of dharma as an aid to peace and personality development.

As already mentioned earlier, artha or earning wealth by righteous means follows from dharma. Economics or the nation's artha is discussed in chapter three. Although Rajaji is not an economist in the orthodox sense of the term he analyses the evils of the defective system of economics followed in India. The individual, according to Rajaji, is subordinated to either the capitalist or the State whether a State adapts free market economy or a collectivist economy. To avoid the evils of both the systems, Rajaji suggests that we should follow the doctrine of trusteeship as evolved by Gandhiji. Rajaji's exposition of the doctrine of trusteeship is based on the Tattvāvacara, the Gita and the Arthasastra.
The concept of deficit budgeting followed by pumping more money are discussed in the third chapter. The general contention of the monetarist school is also brought in for reference to show the position of Rajaji regarding our economic institutions. Rajaji’s criticisms against over taxation and incurring unnecessary foreign debt are based on his support of the monetarist school of thought. To avoid devaluation and to increase capital formation Rajaji gives a number of solutions which show much insight into the subject of economics.

Rajaji remained a vociferous critic of the concept of planning in India. Planning according to Rajaji suffers from two major defects, namely that of wrong setting of aims and that of adopting faulty procedure in working out and executing our plans. A big plan according to Rajaji will mean more expenditure, and more expenditure will mean more taxation, which means a limitation on production and added suffering to the individual.

Just as unlawful and immoral accumulation of wealth is dangerous to the individual and the society, uncontrolled indulgence in sense pleasures spoils one’s thinking, moral control and also reduces the efficiency of the nation in the fields of production and social order. The fourth chapter covers Rajaji’s efforts in trying to eradicate the use of intoxicating liquors. Rajaji’s analysis, aided by technical knowledge ranges from a study of the individual’s health to the nation’s wealth.
After expounding the evil effects of using alcoholic drinks, as stated by Rajaji, the fourth chapter deals with how Rajaji tried to propagate the concept of temperance. This included instructive lectures and demonstrations and persuasion by him and his workers. In the year 1937 Rajaji took a bold step of legalizing prohibition which met with a lot of criticism from opponents. Some of his opponents cited the failure of the Americans in introducing prohibition on legal scale and argued that India also would face a similar failure. Rajaji was charged of being an anti-liberal when he introduced the Prohibition Act. Rajaji's answers and arguments seem to be more utilitarian and altruistic than the claims of his opponents, who argued out of selfishness and subordination to vested interests.

Chapter five is a study of Rajaji's analysis of class and caste in India—a problem that has gone very deep into the fabric of our contemporary thinking. Caste in India, Rajaji feels, is as intoxicating as the use of alcoholic drinks in rendering people slaves to wild emotions.

The original idea of *varnasrama dharma*, influenced by history to a pathological level, has been degraded to 'casteism'. According to Rajaji the formation of a new caste is a dynamic process, and new 'castes' are added by caste segregation and endogamous marriages. Rajaji fought much for the cause of the depressed sections and took a leading role in securing temple-entry for the Harijans. The Negro problem in America
bears certain resemblance to our system of caste-segregation and the development of frustration among the suppressed sections. Bajaji’s advice to the Negro in America is to adjust himself to the culture of the land. Similarly he suggests that the whites in America should be prepared to absorb the coloured population and their ways by a more tolerant attitude towards the coloured people.

As Bajaji believed in the dynamic nature of society, he advocated that prolonged assistance to certain people would raise them to an elitist stature in society and advised the State to revise its policy of reserving opportunities to certain privileged groups. Bajaji’s definition of ‘casteism’ is an eye opener in that by casteism he means the misuse of privileges by any hereditary group, which may change from time to time. Backwardness is not static, but a dynamic process in society which should be identified in the light of social change. Settled ideas of backwardness, Bajaji contends, only mean a meaningless conservation perpetuated to use ‘caste’ as a bait and to build up a large number of dumb sheep followers for the benefit of the demagogues.

The progress of a people depends much upon its political aim which is discussed in the sixth chapter. The Indian adoption of socialism, Bajaji feels, is a wrong grafting of the Western concept in Indian soil. Socialisms advanced so far are successful in controlling the individual than in improving real welfare.

The trusteeship doctrine of Ghandi, according to Bajaji, does not have the evils of both capitalism and socialism. It
provides for freedom and the right to property without curbing public good. Rajaji's analysis of the socialism in India reveals that he is not for the hybrid socialism adopted by us after the death of Gandhiji. The dream of Gandhiji, of a non-violent state has been shattered by our socialism which inherited the business interests of the capitalists and the totalitarian control of the socialist countries.

Chapter seven covers Rajaji's views on democracy as an institution which serves the people. Thinkers like Macpherson refer to democracy from three angles namely, the western liberal democracy, the Eastern non-liberal democracy which is diametrically opposite to the Western variety and a third variant represented by the developing countries of Asia and Africa.

Rajaji's views seem to lean more towards the Western liberal type of democracy. But Rajaji's analysis of the Indian variety shows that we can fit this type in the third variant mentioned in the theoretical framework suggested by Macpherson.

The question of the use of the term 'democratic socialism' drew Rajaji's attention, who criticised this concept as a mixed anomaly. The concept of democratic socialism is similar to the hybrid economy followed in India. Rajaji opines that such a combination leads to unrecognised suppression by some pressure groups or a tyranny of majority over a voiceless minority.

The officials who hide behind a screen of rules are under attack by Rajaji, for the transition from foreign rule to self rule produced a new mandarin system of officials.

Rajaji suggests a system in which the government controls
the society to a minimum and permits greater participation of
local bodies. A powerful centre, according to Rajaji, only
concentrates power in the centre but cannot provide for a real
growth of culture and personality which depend on certain
diversities.

The eighth chapter deals with the question of language
which is an essential medium of communication to promote
effective administration. The dilemma of arriving at a common
medium for administration has not been solved till now in spite
of many commissions and reports which only ended in heated
discussions and factions between major cultural groups.

Rajaji's approach to the question of official language
presents itself in two seemingly different phases. They are

(i) a period when he advocated the learning of Hindi and

(ii) a period when he denounced the imposition of
Hindi on the unwilling non-Hindi speaking groups.

Critics point out that Rajaji showed much inconsistency in his
criticism of the language policy adopted by India after
independence. Hindi as a language of communication, from the
point of view of utility was advocated by Rajaji. He said that
Hindi would be a national symbol and unity if adopted as a
national language and with this in mind he advocated for the
study of Hindi. When it came to be imposed as an official
language, Rajaji began his protests. Rajaji's main criticism
is that the centre did not take proper steps to make Hindi
popular among the people and started suddenly imposing the
language without proper preparation. Rajaji respected the study
of Hindi as a national language throughout, and there was no change in this. What he denounced was the imposition of Hindi as an official language, which reduced the non-Hindi speaking people into second rate citizens.

Hated to the British, according to Rajaji, has been carried too far to the extent of hating English language. This is a meaningless act, for the English language has already taken deep roots in our administration and in our culture. Rajaji's criticism of imposing Hindi as an official language bears greater sense and wisdom, which was only mistaken by his opponents who said that Rajaji was inconsistent.

Effective administration and well being in the state are the outcome of good training and proper use of knowledge. Rajaji believed in the free development of the child without any inhibitions. Free development within the accepted frame work of culture, Rajaji felt, would develop a scientific bent of mind towards acquiring knowledge. Although possession of knowledge is considered to be superior to a state of ignorance, it becomes meaningful only when it is pressed into the service of mankind. Otherwise mere acquisition of knowledge becomes a selfish pastime. Knowledge without wisdom, Rajaji felt, would become vicious or would make the individual to sell himself to vicious persons.

A moral frame work to guide knowledge should be the basis of education which alone can create real motivation for work and service. Rajaji was also aware that training in virtues in an atmosphere of ignorance will be a potential danger,
for virtue developed through ignorance is bound to break down at the slightest instance of disturbance or sudden exposure to tempting situations.

Education, according to Rajaji, cannot be limited to the young ones alone but it should be spread to other age groups and also to those who have not been exposed to education through regular schooling. An ignorant and uneducated section of people in a society would mean loss of participation from a certain section of the society who would be losing many of the finer aspects of life. It is the responsibility of the educated to spread knowledge in their own small way. With these ideals in mind Rajaji launched a number of programmes for the spread of literacy and education and he himself participated in such programmes.

Education dislinked from practical skills is not productive according to Rajaji. As one who was exposed to Gandhiji's views on basic education, Rajaji tried to introduce a practical orientation to young students at the elementary level so that their spare time could be made more useful. This policy of Rajaji drew much criticism and a different odium developed around this concept contrary to what Rajaji aimed.

The tenth chapter expresses how education should develop a taste for a refined way of life. In his general definition of culture, Rajaji drew much from scriptures like the Gita, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Kural and the Aranyakas in which
self-control forms the basis of a good life. In its positive aspect, culture includes acquiring a taste for refined arts in fine arts and in sublimating one’s inner elements of character. The normative and ethical approach to culture as suggested by Rajaji holds greater promise for improving the quality of the individual and the national ethos as such.

The eleventh chapter covers Rajaji’s views on religion and philosophy corresponding to the highest of the puruṣārthas namely nitya. His study of Vedanta shows a tendency towards a devotional type of theism without showing any negative attitude towards other forms of Vedanta or even other religions. Rajaji’s work on Brother Lawrence is a master piece revealing the finer emotions of Christian theism, which stands as an example for Rajaji’s religious tolerance. His passive and patient approach won the heart of a Muslim inmate in Vellore jail, who developed a taste for the study of the Gita.

Rajaji looks at Vedanta from a synthetic angle and at the same time his view does not deviate from the main stream of thought found in the prasthāna trayā. Vedanta is a universal religion which can appeal to the heart of any man. Rajaji’s theism developed on the lines of the devotional literature produced by the Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja leads to humanism. The link between his humanism and religion is formed by his moral theory of treating every one as an end and trying to see one’s self in everybody and vice versa. This moral theory added to
these develop into universal love and the concept of service before self. Though Raja R does not deify the other paths namely jnana and yoga, he says that this approach is an easy and utilitarian way to attain fulfilment of dharma in our contemporary world.

In the twelfth chapter an attempt is made to bring a synthesis of the results of the previous chapters so that an assessment of Raja R's contribution can be made in the light of the present day socio-political set up. In conclusion, Raja R's philosophy can be termed as a philosophy of dharma based on spiritual humanism.