
EXCERPTA E DISSERTATIONIBUS IN PHILOSOPHIA

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de Navarra

JOSEPH KAKKARIYIL

Towards greater freedom: a movement from millean liberty to Gandhian Swarāj

[Hacia una mayor libertad: un movimiento desde la libertad
milenaria hasta el Swarāj gandhiano]

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SEPARATA

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Presentation

Abstract: What makes man, man is the freedom and execution of it in all realms but without harming the other in any way is the crux of the entire project. The first chapter of our project was about the *Autobiography* written by John Stuart Mill and its interconnectedness to our general theme of the liberty of the individual. His autobiography proves that the wisdom he imbibed in childhood and lessons of youth and old age guided him to form a concrete idea of human freedom that was essential for self-realization. The second chapter gives the clear-cut idea that without freedom any development that is attained is not development at all. It also reveals the fact that eccentricity, genius, individuality, dialogue, variety of human experiences, experiments in human living etc. are the factors that determine and enlarge the liberty of every individual. The third chapter is about the Autobiography of Gandhi, which deals with the experiments of Gandhi with truth. The fourth chapter is about *Swarāj*, the liberty par excellence, which finds in concrete application in the constructive programme. And the fifth chapter is a grand comparison of the approaches of Mill and Gandhi to human liberty, which shows that whether the approach is from the West or from the East, has the relevance even today. There is superiority in the approach taken by Gandhi with regard to the theme of liberty, wherein the emphasis is laid on *ahimsā*, morality and *Satyāgraha*.

Keywords: Liberty, *Swarāj*, the Principle of Harm, *ahimsā*, truth and morality.

Resumen: Lo que hace al hombre, hombre es la libertad y ejecución de él en todos los ámbitos pero sin dañar al otro de ninguna manera es el quid de todo el proyecto. El primer capítulo de nuestro proyecto trata sobre la Autobiografía escrita por John Stuart Mill y su interconexión con nuestro tema general de la libertad del individuo. Su autobiografía demuestra que la sabiduría que absorbió en la infancia y las lecciones de la juventud y la vejez lo guiaron a formarse una idea concreta de la libertad humana que era esencial para la autorrealización. El segundo capítulo da la idea clara de que sin libertad cualquier desarrollo que se alcanza no es desarrollo en absoluto. También revela el hecho de que la excentricidad, el genio, la individualidad, el diálogo, la variedad de experiencias humanas, los experimentos en la vida humana, etc. son los factores que determinan y amplían la libertad de cada individuo. El tercer capítulo trata sobre la Autobiografía de Gandhi, que trata de los experimentos de Gandhi con la verdad. El cuarto capítulo trata sobre *Swarāj*, la libertad por excelencia, que encuentra una aplicación concreta en el programa constructivo. Y el quinto capítulo es una gran comparación de los enfoques de Mill y Gandhi sobre la libertad humana, que muestra que si el enfoque es de Occidente o de Oriente, tiene relevancia incluso hoy. Hay superioridad en el enfoque adoptado por Gandhi con respecto al tema de la libertad, en el que el énfasis se pone en *ahimsā*, moralidad y *Satyāgraha*.

Palabras clave: Libertad, *Swarāj*, principio de daño, *ahimsā*, verdad y moralidad.

Mill presents the lack of individuality as the greatest defect of modern civilization: «By the natural growth of civilization, power passes from individuals to masses, and the weight and importance of an individual, as compared with the mass, sink into greater and greater significance.»¹ Under the tyranny of the majority, it was hard to be oneself; it was difficult to be different. The call to Conformism was the greatest evil of the modern civilizations. Another drawback of civilization is its indifference to the originality seen in the genius of our society. On Mill's analysis, indifference to originality is yet another regrettable effect of modern civilization, which values human beings in the mass but not as individuals. Behind Gandhi's severe condemnation of modern civilization lay his larger vision of «a total man living in an ideal state of *Swarāj*»; it was «a state of freedom from all bondage both external and internal.» Gandhi stood for self-control in all the areas of his life; and he was also a staunch supporter of liberty. We must affirm that far from being libertarian and permissive, Mill advocated the introduction of inhibitions, moral restraints and social pressures. He, therefore, can be seen as having argued for a combination of liberty and control. As part of the requirement I will be inserting one part of the fourth chapter, which deals with the key Gandhian concepts and their relationship with the theme of liberty par excellent, viz., *Swarāj*.

¹ J.S.M., *Civilization*, vol. 18, p. 126.

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Towards greater freedom: a movement from millenarian liberty to Gandhian Swarāj

1. LIBERTY AND GANDHIAN KEY CONCEPTS

1.1. Swarāj and Rāmarājya

The Gandhian model of democracy is known as *Rāmarājya*. As we think over the system of rule we can say that Gandhi always preferred democracy to all others and had a model to be placed before the people of India. Gandhi depicted the idea of a society in *Hind Swarāj* where every individual was the master of his own destiny. He neither wanted to copy the British Parliamentary system nor the Soviet, the Fascist or Nazi rule. He wanted *Rāmarājya* i.e., «sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority.»¹ He presented a democracy, the model of which was conceived by him at two levels evolving from a lower level to a higher level. At one level he envisaged of an idealised polity where there would not be any state or government to regulate the right of individuals. This form of polity was termed by him as *Rāmarājya*.² The other level of polity was visualised at the sub-level which would have a government that would permit maximum freedom to individuals. These two forms of polity developed from one into the other involving a movement from the lower to a higher form of democracy.

What is Ramrajya? It was that stage of development where moral considerations would govern the life of the individuals. *Swarājya* or self-rule or freedom was that stage of development where the people would still feel the necessity of government and state. Gandhi was one of the foremost proponents of democratic ideas. The exemplary society of Gandhi's vision is not a perfect society,

¹ SINGH, R., *The Gandhian Vision*, p. 210.

² PATIL, V. T., *Studies on Gandhi*, p. 27.

but «one in which all its citizens work toward perfection, knowing that they can always do better...»³ In its process of growth, *Swarāj* is a step to *Rāmarājya*.

Gandhi called his model of government *Rāmarājya* after the political order which was in operation in ancient India and which used to ensure the betterment of all by providing them an ideal living condition. Rama is the name of God in the Hindu religion; *rājya* means nation or kingdom. Therefore, *Rāmarājya* literally means the kingdom of God. Gandhi declares: «I must say that the independence of my dream means *Rāmarājya*, i.e., the kingdom of God on earth.» The coming of *Rāmarājya* essentially requires the abolition of all social evils and all exploitation. Gandhi envisioned his concept of *Rāmarājya* thus⁴:

Now for *Rāmarājya* it can be religiously translated as kingdom of God on earth. Politically translated, it is perfect democracy in which, inequalities based on possession and non-possession, colour, race, creed or sex vanish. In it, land and State belong to the people, justice is prompt, perfect and cheap and, therefore, there is freedom of worship, speech, and the press – all this because of the reign of the self-imposed law of moral restraint. Such a State must be based on truth and nonviolence and must consist of prosperous, happy and self-contained villages and village communities.

For Gandhi, *Rāmarājya* means the kingdom where ultimate power is vested on the people based on pure moral authority. *Sarvodaya* is *Rāmarājya* i.e., reign of God because God and His moral principles are obeyed everywhere. We can assert that this kind of allegiance to morality and to God is not found in John Stuart Mill.

Gandhi answers the criticism of the employment of the term *Rāmarājya* for his ideal society:

It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier province or address predominantly Muslim audiences I would express my meaning to them by calling it Khudai *Rāj*, while to a Christian audience I would describe it as the Kingdom of God on earth.⁵

³ VETTIKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p. 22.

⁴ KAVUNGAL, D., *The Philosophical Foundation of Mahātmā Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya*, p. 60.

⁵ *Harijan* (18 August 1946), p. 266: «My Rama is another name for Khuda or God. I want the Khudai *Rāj*, which is the same thing as the Kingdom of God on Earth.» Quoted in Pyarelal, *Mahātmā Gandhi: The Last Phase*, vol. 1 (Ahmedabad: Navjivan Publishing House, 1965), p. 549.

Not only Gandhi gave importance to the weak and poor individuals but also he emphasised the importance of the minorities. To him the minority has equal importance in the state as the majority and it is the duty of the majority to look after the welfare of the minority. In his political configuration both the minority and majority form the essential parts and neither should be subdued by the other. Here it is to be noted that Mill too stood for minorities in a democratic country.

In Gandhian political society the individual, the minority and the rural areas, all are given due importance and all are considered the integral parts of it. He thinks that if any part is overlooked then the whole suffers and there cannot be true *Swarāj* in such a society. «Real *Swarāj* will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused...»⁶ It is one thing to possess a power, yet it is another thing to use that power in a worthy manner; both Gandhi and Mill affirmed this truth.

1.2. *Swarāj and Democracy*

When that which is ideal (*Rāmarājya*) is made effective, it is called *Swarāj* or *sarvodaya* democracy, the democracy of the masses and for the masses. In essence democracy means all citizens partake in decisions that affect them. But in practice, the participation of the citizens in such decisions is indirect and restricted. Such a democracy is only representative and has every chance of degenerating into a voted dictatorship. It is more pronounced in a country with a large unlettered population. The implication is that democracy should be strengthened or in other words, it should be decentralized. The choice, therefore, of a developing country is not between democracy and dictatorship but between decentralized democracy and democracy of the despotic type.⁷ *Sarvodaya* Democracy and decentralization are totally related to each other and individual has full play in it by making use of every opportunity for self-rule.

⁶ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), *Gandhian Alternative to Contemporary Problems*, Delhi: Abhijeet Publications (2004), p. 55.

⁷ RAMASAMY, A. S., *Decentralized Democracy or Despotic Democracy*, in «Kuruksheetra,» (January 1994), p. 36.

Gandhi advocated representative democracy. Democracy is the only form of government which is based on public opinion or the consent of the people. It is carried on by the representatives of the people who are always subject to popular control and responsible to the electorate. Democracy, promotes the welfare of the people as a whole and not that of a particular classes. The real problem of today, as it appeared to Gandhi, was to devise checks and balances on the State and prevent its becoming a *Leviathan*.⁸

As far as Gandhi was concerned there was no democracy apart from village democracy. Since the vast masses of India lived in the villages, the pivot of the *sarvodaya* democratic state of his vision was the villages of India, conceived in an ever-widening oceanic circle. The individual was to be the centre of this circle, and should always be prepared «to perish for the villages,»⁹ and the village in its turn «ready to perish for the circle of villages,» till the last the whole became one life organized in the shape and form of a state consisting of widening circles and decentralized in its functions and activities. Such *sarvodaya* democracy had to be worked out decidedly from below by the people of every village and not by a few people at the top of the pyramid.

Since the last one's uplift or welfare is included in that of all, and also because Gandhi envisaged an integrated universal development of all – the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the 'haves' and 'have not's – a holistic human approach, he preferred to use *sarvodaya* rather than *antyyodaya* (uplift of the last).¹⁰

1.3. Swarāj and Swadēshi

While enunciating his own model of political system he rejected the adoption of any form of government imported from either the western countries or the eastern countries as he found fault in them. He thought that if *Swarāj* was to be desired it should be built upon *Swadēshi*. *Swadēshi* is an act of governance, which is democratic, aimed at the welfare of our immediate neighbourhood. *Swadēshi* is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote.¹¹

⁸ ISUNDARAM, I. & MAHESWARI, R., *Gandhian Thought and Philosophy*, 29.

⁹ VETTIKKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p. 23.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹ M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p.111.

Swadēshi is one of the means suggested by Gandhi to attain *Swarāj*. The word *Swadēshi* comes from two words: *swa* and *desh*. *Swa* means one's own and *desh* means the total cultural and natural environment of which one is an integral part. So the term *Swadēshi* means «belong to one's own country.»¹² It means one must love completely one's country and do whatever he or she can for its development without doing harm to others. It stands for self-sufficiency and the autonomy of the nation in all the spheres of life: economical, political, religious etc.¹³ Self-reliance is to be achieved by the careful use of the natural resources of the locality by the local people. As a token of one's love for the country, *Swadēshi* advocates the use of all locally made items.

In *Swadēshi* there is no room for selfishness...*Swadēshi* in its purest form is the acme of universal service. A True votary of *Swadēshi* will never be actuated by antagonism towards anybody...*Swadēshism* is not a cult of hatred. It is a doctrine of selfless service that has its roots in the purest *ahimsā* i.e., love.¹⁴

The relevance of *Swadēshi* with regard to the theme of liberty is that one must start the development of one's individuality, one's liberty, first in his own house, family, and village. The basic idea is this: Reform yourself first and then begin to think about the same for others. There is no conflict between globalism and *Swadēshi*, because *Swadēshi* was the spirit which dictated man to serve his next door neighbour to the exclusion of any other. Besides, «neighbour thus served had in turn to serve his own neighbour. In this sense, *Swadēshi* was never exclusive.» «It simply recognized the scientific limitation of human capacity for service.»¹⁵

How can the principle of *Swadēshi* be applied to a religion? It is *Swadēshi* when I restrict myself to my ancestral religion. By reason of the *Swadēshi* spirit, a person refuses to change his religion, not necessarily because he considers it to be the best, but because he knows that he can complement it by introducing reforms.¹⁶ In the domain of politics, one must make use of the indigenous and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In the field of

¹² KAVUNGHAL, D., *The Philosophical Foundation of Mahātma Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya*, p. 65.

¹³ M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p. 111.

¹⁴ PYARELAL, *Gandhi's Concept of Swadēshi*, in «Kuruksheetra», (December 16, 1976), p. 4.

¹⁵ *Harijan* (23 March 1947).

¹⁶ M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p. 111.

economics, as we have seen, one should use only things that are produced by his or her immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting.

1.4. *Swarāj and Ahimsā*

According to Gandhi man as an animal is violent but as spirit he or she is nonviolent.¹⁷ *Satyāgraha* and Non-violence are the only means to attain *Swarāj*. The only means for the realisation of truth is love or *Ahimsā* or *seva*, «service.» It is a breach of *Satyāgraha* to wish ill to an opponent or to say harsh word to him, with the intention of harming him. Attaining nonviolence involves the realisation of Truth. Attaining Truth involves the realization of nonviolence. Now if the essence of individual is the higher universal Self that is at one with Truth or God or Reality, then to inflict unnecessary, deliberate violence and suffering on another is to negate or violate Truth, God or Reality and one's Self. And inseparability of Truth and Nonviolence are closely linked with *Satyāgraha*, *Sarvodaya*, *Swadēshi*, etc.¹⁸

To be a *Satyāgrahi* means to be a nonviolent person. A man without the keys of *Satya* and *Ahimsā* cannot be a free person. Non-violence as preached and practised by Gandhi is not a single virtue or a single quality of life but congeries of qualities¹⁹ or virtues like compassion, selflessness, self-renunciation, to the extent of reducing oneself to zero; and therefore to Gandhiji quality matters rather than numbers. He advocated the practice of non-violence in every walk of life – individual, institutional, political, social and economic. He believed that *Ahimsā* is a weapon of matchless potency even though the results may not be clearly visible. But according to Gandhi, freedom from all forms of exploitation means '*Swarāj* and nonviolence.'²⁰ Note that to Gandhi exploitation is also a kind of violence.

¹⁷ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), *Revisiting Gandhi*, Delhi: Abhijeet Publications (2011), p. 70.

¹⁸ ALLEN, D., *Gandhi's Philosophy: The Struggle over Many Contradictory Philosophies*, in «Social Theory and Practice,» vol. 19, No. 3 (Fall 1993), p. 294.

¹⁹ MATHUR, J. S. (ed.), *Nonviolence and Social Change*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Mudranalaya (1977), p. 7.

²⁰ DHARMADHIKARI, C. S., *Hind Swarāj: A Brief Introduction*, in Siby K Joseph (ed.), «Reflections on Hind *Swarāj*,» Wardha: Institute of Gandhian Studies (2011).

Gandhi's concept of nonviolence was fundamentally a battle against all forms of exploitation and injustice which violates the divine nature of man. Gandhi writes, «The Nonviolence of my conception is a more active and real fight against wickedness. I contemplate a mental and, therefore, a moral opposition to immoralities.»²¹ Rather than Indian nonviolence being entirely natural and inevitable, it is clear that Gandhi deserves considerable credit in getting nonviolent action accepted as the technique of struggle in the grand strategy for the liberation movement. It was a political act made possible because Gandhi offered a course of action which was nonviolent but which above all was seen to be practical and effective.

Due to the inference of Gandhi, many who had no awareness of their bondage under the foreign rule, came to the awareness and got ready for the nonviolent fight. The situation of the leaders of India when Gandhi came to India was like the animals in the circus camp, who were really in bondage, but were happy to be in it, provided they were given something to satiate their petty interests. It was not that every Congressman accepted non-violence as a creed like Gandhi. There were very few indeed who were prepared to subscribe the dictum that *Swarāj* would be unacceptable if came through violence. The four successive stages through which *Mahātma* Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence has passed are: a) passive resistance (in South Africa), b) non-cooperation (1920-21), c) civil disobedience (1930-31) and *Satyāgraha* (1940-41).²²

Gandhi's all-embracing creed of nonviolence could be reduced to five main propositions²³:

- a) *Satyamevam jayate* i.e., Truth will always win and therefore, not violence but nonviolent suffering is the means to realise the truth and this realisation will boost up our freedom. Freedom is arriving at truth. Freedom gained through violence and untruthful means is not freedom at all. Because violence breeds violence and untruth breeds untruth. One must seek after truth. So it becomes clear that the theory of nonviolence is closely linked with *satya* and that *satya* finds its realization in patient endurance of suffering. Truth is like a brilliant

²¹ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), *Revisiting Gandhi*, p. 83.

²² ASIRVATHAM, E., *Political Theory*, p. 696.

²³ KALATHIL, M., *Gandhi and Non-violence*, in «Social Action,» Jan-March (1969), vol. 19, p. 2.

summer sun. Nothing can really conceal it. A cloud or little mist may occasionally succeed in obscuring for a time the brightness of that heavenly body. «Every truth is self-acting and possesses inherent strength. I, therefore, remain unperturbed even when I find myself grossly misrepresented.»²⁴ He calls truth the ‘Thought-Power.’ Teilhard de Chardin too expressed the same appreciation of truth as Jesus and Gandhi. He said: «it is enough for the truth to appear one single time in one single mind. For, it is to be impossible for anything to prevent it from spreading universally and setting all ablaze.»²⁵

- b) Service must come before self. It is not so much the service of one’s own self but that of others that is important and therefore, there is no possibility of violence against the other. Gandhi was not a philosopher lost in the ivory palace of speculation. He had both his feet planted firmly on this earth. He was convinced that Saving Truth impels one to action and such action is service, sometimes called charity and sometimes love. He wrote: «*Abimsā* means ‘love,’ in the Pauline sense, and yet something more than the love defined by St. Paul, although I know St. Paul’s beautiful definition is good enough for all practical purposes. *Abimsā* includes the whole of creation, and not only human.»²⁶ Love for self (self-interest) is the impediment to real freedom and it is there that we find the defects of our so-called political leaders of our country.
- c) The spirit of man is immortal: and therefore do not limit the pursuit of the soul to selfish, carnal interests.
- d) The spirit of man can soar upward to eminence by a process of self-purification. In fact, self-rule is possible only in a person whose self is purified. So the freedom and self-rule calls for reform of one’s self on a daily basis.
- e) The world is a large family; every man is my brother; every woman is my sister; every other creature is my friend. And so, the possibility of violence is ruled out. And there can be true freedom when one considers the other as his brother/ sister or as a friend. The man who

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁵ Teilhard de Chardin, quoted in KALATHIL, M., *Gandhi and Non-violence*, in «Social Action,» (Jan-March 1969), vol. 19, p. 3.

²⁶ KALATHIL, M., *Gandhi and Non-violence*, in «Social Action,» Jan-March (1969), vol. 19, p. 3.

adapts nonviolence has to direct against the evil, not the evil-doer, a very difficult thing to do without a continuous process of self-purification.²⁷ And self-purification is possible only through conscious suffering voluntarily taken by the *Satyāgrahi* for a good cause.

Non-violence as practised by Gandhiji had three basic elements²⁸: (i) Creation of a human society involving non-violent methods of resisting exploitation (ii) education of oppressed to take positive and Constructive steps to resist exploitation and development of good and harmonious relationship between oppressed and oppressor once the struggle was over (iii) ushering in of a non-exploitative decentralised economic and political institution. According to Gandhiji non-violence is a rule of action, it is the duty. His non-violence is not merely a philosophical principle; it is the rule of life.

In true liberty there is no possibility of *hi sã* or violence towards oneself and others. It is possible only in licentiousness. And in liberty the means used and the end envisioned must be moral and truthful and must be free from any sort of harm. So, when one harms the other, then it violates the rules of *Swarāj*. Western society has conquered other nations through violence and has colonized others and they proclaim that they are really practising *Swarāj*, which is a contradiction.

It is apt to quote Plato in this respect: «One should practise goodness not only towards friends and those who were good, but... one should forgive those who injured and who did wrong. One must not injure anyone. There was no evil in man which could not be vanquished and changed by gratitude for repeated good deeds.»²⁹ «While a few individuals here and there,» says Dr. Radhakrishnan, «tried to use the method of love in their personal lives, it is Gandhi's supreme achievement to have adopted it as a plan for social and political liberation.»³⁰ And so he concludes, «I do believe that all God's creatures have the right to live as much as we have. Instead of prescribing the killing of the so-called injurious fellow creatures of ours as a duty, if

²⁷ Kulapati's Letter No: 450, *Gandhiji: Spirituality in Action*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» vol. XVI, No. 5 (October 5, 1969), p. 15.

²⁸ MATHUR, J. S. (ed.), *Non-Violence and Social Change*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Mudranalaya (1977), p. 6.

²⁹ Plato, quoted in MUKHERJEE, S. & RAMASWAMY, S. (eds.), *Facets of Mahātma Gandhi: Nonviolence and Satyāgraha*, New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications (1994), p. 132.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

men of knowledge had devoted their gift of discovering ways of dealing with them otherwise than killing them, we would be living in a world befitting our status as men.»³¹

But at the same time one thing must be kept in mind the advice given us by Richards as how to approach Gandhi. According to him Gandhi struggled over what to do not only about unintentional violence to other forms of life, but also about how to treat disease-carrying rats, mosquitoes, venomous snakes, as well as rapists, insane persons, and other humans intent on committing violence. He even worried about the destruction of plant life necessary for his diet. Gandhi concluded very often reluctantly, that at times we must act in such a way as to violate the ideal of nonviolence, as in killing venomous snakes, or using violent force to resist the perpetrator of violence.³²

1.5. *Swarāj and Constructive Programme*

For Gandhi, nonviolent resistance (*Satyāgraha*) and constructive programme – «an embodiment of *sarvodaya*» – were corollaries of the same philosophical perspective. The constructive programme focused upon constructive ways of rebuilding a demoralised society.

Gandhi wrote,

[...] the constructive programme is the truthful and nonviolent way of winning *Poorna Swarāj*... (and) is designed to build up the nation from the very bottom upward.

The constructive programme aims at developing the collective capacity for building and maintaining a strong civil society. The prominent aspects of the constructive programme which Gandhi sponsored and operated at various levels, included communal unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition, promotion of *khadi*, development of village industries, improvement of sanitation in the villages, promotion of the idea of basic education, progress of adult

³¹ M.K.G., *Harijan* (9, January 1937); KUNZ, G., *Albert Schweitzer and Gandhi*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» (November 2, 1969), p. 113.

³² ALLEN, D., *Gandhi's Philosophy: The Struggle over Many Contradictory Philosophies*, in «Social Theory and Practice,» vol. 19, No. 3 (Fall 1993), p. 296.

education, welfare of women, education in health and hygiene, development of national language, economic equality, welfare of peasantry, establishment of more labour unions, help to hill tribes, care for lepers and beggars and suggestions for improving the lot of students. In fact, constructive programme is the programme aimed at realising *Swarāj* in all spheres of life.

It may «otherwise and more fittingly be called construction of *poorna Swarāj* or complete independence by truthful and non-violent means.» By «constructive programme» Gandhi aimed at expressing his method of rebuilding India according to his vision of a non-violent, non-exploitative social order. Through this he wanted «to bring out the full implication of the revolutionary approach of this non-violent method of individual and social transformation leading to *Sarvodaya* social order...(and) is therefore central to the understanding of Gandhi's concept of *Swarāj*, which was for him a step towards the ultimate goal of 'Rāmarājya.'»³³

1.6. *Parliamentary Swarāj (Independence) and Poorna Swarāj (Complete Liberty)*

In 1921, referring to «*Hind Swarāj*» Gandhi remarked, «I would warn the reader against thinking that I am today aiming at the *Swarāj* described therein. I know that India is not ripe for it. It may seem an impertinence to say so. But such is my conviction. I am individually working for the self-rule pictured therein. But today my corporate activity is undoubtedly devoted to the attainment of parliamentary *Swarāj*, in accordance with the wishes of the people of India.»³⁴ Attainment of parliamentary *Swarāj* (independence) is only a beginning for him and not an end in itself. The task of preparing people to be responsible citizen remained. Though Gandhi's immediate concern, as he made his entry into the mainstream of Indian public life, was the independence of India from foreign domination, his final goal was beyond the «Freedom at Midnight.» His dream was *Sarvodaya* – the rising of all – welfare of each and every human being, liberation from all that make one not fully human.

³³ VETTIKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p.31.

³⁴ Gandhi quoted in: PRABHATH, S. V., *Gandhi Today*, p. 157.

1.7. *Swarāj and the Principle of Ends and Means*

Gandhi writes: «As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between the means and the end. Realisation of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception. Impure means result in an impure end.»³⁵ In *Hind Swarāj* he wrote that even great men who have been considered religious have committed grievous crimes through the mistaken belief that there is no moral connection or interdependence between the means and the end. We cannot get a rose by planting a noxious weed. «The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.»³⁶ «You may never choose wrong that good may come of it,» he said to Mrs. Polak several years ago.³⁷ Note that to the attainment for freedom immoral, untruthful and violent means are never justified.

1.8. *Swarāj and Satyāgraha*

Recalling the words of Jesus³⁸ Gandhi believed that Truth will liberate the individual persons. And, therefore, the art of *Satyāgraha* is nothing other than the art of liberation. As regards truth Gandhi said, «One thing took deep root in me – the conviction that morality is the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality.»³⁹

Etymologically, the term *Satyāgraha* means passion for, or firmness in truth.⁴⁰ The term was coined by Gandhi in 1906, during his political movement in South Africa. It means maintaining a firm grasp on *Satya* or Truth or God.⁴¹ It is nothing but the prehension of truth. He gave three synonymous

³⁵ M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, pp. 63-64.

³⁶ KAVUNGAL, D., *The Philosophical Foundation of Mahātmā Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya*, p. 81.

³⁷ SHUKLA, Ch., *Gandhi and Marx*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» vol. XVII, No. 14 (February 7, 1971), p. 37.

³⁸ John 8:32.

³⁹ LOKESWARANANDA, S., *The Philosophy of Mahātmā Gandhi*, in «Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture,» vol. LXV, No. 2 (February 2014), p. 79.

⁴⁰ BAKSHI, S. R., *Gandhi and the Concept of Swarāj*, p. 244.

⁴¹ PAREL, A. J., *Gandhi: Freedom And Self-Rule*, p. 140.

words for *Satyāgraha*⁴²: First one was truth-force. He also called it love-force and he continued to call *Satyāgraha* as soul-force. Truth-force is based on the principle of justice. In public life, *Satyāgraha* was virtue's supreme expression.⁴³ He looked upon the whole concept of non-violence as a force for radical change. And it is a fact that living by Truth led Gandhi to two far-reaching conclusions: a) pursuit of truth in the individual life can only be the keystone of enduring creative activity and b) whoever seeks to realise truth must be ready to back it up with his life. And the pursuit of truth is the sign of the one enjoying real freedom. To use the beautiful words of Romain Rolland, «A man's first duty is to be himself, to remain himself at the cost of life.»⁴⁴ To be free and to remain unique are one and the same thing.

For the first time in history, he made the concept of civil disobedience a political doctrine of mass action, whereby he proved that there is freedom even not to obey the law when it is unjust and immoral. Secondly, he insisted that nonviolence as a tactic, if not as a creed, must be accepted by those who joined the movement led by him. It is this insistence on non-violence that made Gandhi's movement a mass movement and enabled it to become an active force.

Martin Luther King, who followed *Mahātma*'s path of *Satyāgraha* enunciated the 6 important principles of *Satyāgraha*⁴⁵:

- 1) Instead of physical aggressiveness, the mind and emotions are kept active, constantly seeking to persuade the opponent that he is mistaken.
- 2) It does not humiliate the opponent but gains friendship and understanding, in the process, reconciliation is the result, not bitterness.
- 3) *Satyāgraha* wages battle against the forces of evil and not against individual.
- 4) By accepting sufferings, it opens up tremendous educational and transforming possibilities and becomes a powerful tool in changing the minds of opponents.

⁴² JOSEPH, S. K. (ed.), *Contemporary Perspectives on Peace and Nonviolence*, Maharashtra: Institute of Gandhian Studies (2010), p. 2.

⁴³ TIDRICK, K., *Gandhi: A Political and Spiritual Life*, p. 85.

⁴⁴ Romain Rolland, quoted in: Kulapati's Letter No: 450, *Gandhiji: Spirituality in Action*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» vol. XVI, No. 5 (October 5, 1969), p. 14.

⁴⁵ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), *Revisiting Gandhi*, pp. 75-76.

- 5) Humans have a cosmic companionship with God, who is on the side of truth. Therefore justice would occur in the future.
- 6) Bitterness and hate are replaced with love.

It was possible for Gandhi to make civil disobedience a weapon of main action against injustice in India in the first half of the twentieth century for three reasons 1) there were some elements in Indian tradition which made it possible for the people of India to respond to Gandhi's call; 2) there were some aspects of the traditions of the British liberal traditions which enabled the British administrators in India to meet the Gandhian movements without the extensive use of force; 3) in the beginning of the twentieth century, mankind as a whole was in search of civilized and non-violent weapons to resolve political conflicts, and the Gandhian movement was one manifestation of this search.⁴⁶

1.9. *Swarāj and Morality*

Gandhi sought to combine the influence of moral power, love, integrity and goodness with non-violent strategy and techniques which resulted in providing an active, dynamic method of struggle.⁴⁷ The struggle was for freedom. And the means were *Satyāgraha* and Nonviolence. And the means were based on Morality. The *Satyāgrahi* holds on to the truth and refuses to compromise on basic moral issues in the face of punishment, persecution, and infliction of suffering on him. In fact, the term *Swarāj* means complete freedom from all oppressive structures and home-rule based on moral principles. A freedom bereft of moral backing is not freedom at all.

Only those who lead a moral life by fulfilling the obligations towards others are capable of *Swarāj*. So *Swarāj* primarily, speaks of duty towards oneself and others:

He alone is capable of *Swarāj*, who leads a moral life, does not cheat anyone, does not forsake truth and does his duty to his parents, his wife,

⁴⁶ KAUR, H., *Gandhi's Concept of Civil Disobedience: A Study with Special Reference to Thoreau's Influence on Gandhi*, p. 7.

⁴⁷ SHARP, G., *Gandhi Wields the Weapon of Moral Power*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House (1960), p. 5.

his children, his servant and his neighbour. Such a man will enjoy *Swarāj* wherever he may happen to live. A nation that has many such men always enjoys *Swarāj*.⁴⁸

So it is to be noted that a person who discards moral laws cannot enjoy *Swarāj*. Morality requires rising above self-interest.⁴⁹

1.10. Daridranārāyana and Swarāj (*Unity of all beings and faith in God*)

Daridranārāyana is one of the millions of names by which humanity knows God, who is unnameable and unfathomable by human understanding and it means God of the poor, God appearing in the hearts of the poor.⁵⁰ «But how am I talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day?» asks Gandhi. To them God can appear only as bread and butter. How can we be *Daridranārāyanato* the starving millions? The golden rule...is resolutely to refuse to have what millions cannot. The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to re-arrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with that mentality.⁵¹ Restricting oneself to the minimum of needs is a sign of a man enjoying true freedom.

At the core of *Poorna Swarāj* were the truths that we are all the Heavenly Father's children, imbued with the Divine Spark and equal members of the universal human family. The focus, therefore, has to be on the poorest and most helpless among us – «the *Daridranārāyana*.» Civilization in the real sense of the term consists not in the multiplication but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants, which promotes real happiness and contentment and increases the capacity for service.⁵² That we are all equal since we are all children of the same Father is at the back of the principle of liberty. And it is to be noted that one of the reasons for the plunder and exploitation and bondage is the greed that is in man and it is because of the same reason that Gandhi rejects the modern civilization marked by greed.

⁴⁸ JESUDASAN, I., *A Gandhian Theology of Liberation*, Ananad: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash (1987), p. 91.

⁴⁹ Ramasbray Roy, *Gandhi: Soundings in Political Philosophy*, p. 15.

⁵⁰ *Young India* (4 April 1929); M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p. 53.

⁵¹ *Young India* (24 June 1926); M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p. 55.

⁵² M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p. 54.

1.11. Swarāj and Untouchability

Gandhi writes: «I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. I, therefore, pray that if I should be born again, I should do so not as a *Brabmana*, *ksbatriya*, *vaishya* or *shudra*, but as an *atishudra*.»⁵³ Eradication of untouchability in any form was a significant goal before Gandhi, next in importance only to *Satya* and nonviolence. The rejection (disapproval) of caste system involves the rejection (disapproval) of untouchability which is the extreme manifestation of inequality that the caste system seeks to preserve and which is incompatible with Hinduism understood in the light of the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gīta*. In other words, untouchability is contrary to the *Varnasrama dharma*.⁵⁴ He says, «I have never been able to reconcile myself to untouchability. I have always regarded it as an excrescence.»⁵⁵ Gandhi attacked untouchability vehemently on the ground that there was no sanction for it in the Hindu religion.⁵⁶ Untouchability kept men in bondage for centuries and removal of it is the real *Swarāj*.

He writes that «untouchability is a corroding poison that is eating into the vitals of Hindu society...No man of God can consider another man as inferior to himself. He must consider every man as his blood brother.»⁵⁷ Not surprising, he insists that eliminating untouchability «is a reform not to follow *Swarāj* but to precede it.»⁵⁸ Gandhi, by using the term *Harijan*,⁵⁹ emphasises equality of all Indians both before law and before God...The use of the term

⁵³ SUNDARAM, I. & MAHESWARI, R., *Gandhian Thought and Philosophy*, p. 19.

⁵⁴ VETTIKKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p.21.

⁵⁵ RAO, K. L. S., *Mahātma Gandhi and Comparative Religion*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass (1978), p. 18.

⁵⁶ Gandhi observes, «Untouchability in its extreme form has always caused me so much pain because I consider myself to be a Hindu of Hindus saturated with the spirit of Hinduism. I have failed to find a single warrant for the existence of untouchability as we believe and practice it today in all those books which we call Hindu *Sbastras*. But as I repeatedly said in other places, if I found that Hinduism really countenanced untouchability I should have no hesitation in renouncing Hinduism itself.» M.K.G., *The Removal of Untouchability*, 18.

⁵⁷ *Young India* (23 February 1921).

⁵⁸ *Young India* (19 January 1921).

⁵⁹ *Harijan* literally means people of God. Gandhi used this word to denote all the so-called low castes. 'Hari' is the name of a Hindu God, and 'Jan' means 'people.'

Harijan thus implies the acceptance of not only the assertive secular power to *Harijans* but, more importantly their claim to human dignity. All persons are created equal by God (as *Harijans*). Gandhi called *Harijan* as men of God and believed that all the religions of the world describe God pre-eminently as the friend of the friendless, help of the helpless and protection of the weak.⁶⁰

While speaking about the effectiveness of education, he says that the education must be practical and ennobling: Real education consists in drawing the best out of yourself. What better book can there be than to go, day in and day out, to *Harijan* quarters and to regard *Harijans* as members of one human family? It would be an uplifting, ennobling study. In fact, to consider the other as one's own brother or sister is the best education.⁶¹ He pressed the nationalists to recognize that India did not deserve to be free so long as millions of *Dalits* were subjected to social and economic disabilities and daily indignities. Article 17 of the Constitution of India abolished untouchability and forbade its practice in any form.⁶²

He never tried to organise the untouchables and pitch them against the touchables. Instead, he used a number of measures like changing the hearts of the upper caste people, making the untouchables economically self-reliant, wiping out the fear of untouchability from their minds, affecting a change in their style of living, educating them, enabling them to enjoy religious, socio-economic and political rights, etc. For these, he used many techniques like *Satyāgraha*, organizing awareness campaigns, *Padyātras*, huge meetings and rallies, constructing village temples, forming Servants of Untouchables Society, publishing weekly to project the issues connected with untouchability and even causing legislative action.

1.12. Swarāj and Decentralization

Gandhi had a concrete agenda for implementing decentralisation of power. On a political level, it meant taking power from the centre and bringing it to the village. On an economic level, decentralisation of power meant discouraging big industries and encouraging village cottage industry. E.F.

⁶⁰ PANDEY, A., *Relevance of Gandhi in 21st Century*, p. 85.

⁶¹ KAVUNGAL, D., *The Philosophical Foundation of Mahātma Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya*, p. 86.

⁶² PANDEY, A., *Relevance of Gandhi in 21st Century*, p. 83.

Schumacher who advocated intermediate technology in his work «Small is Beautiful» quoted *Mahātma* Gandhi that the need of developing nations is not mass production but production by the masses. And it was Gandhi who said, «One machine can do the work of 100 ordinary men, but no machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.»⁶³ «Small is beautiful» thus would become the economic slogan. On a social level, the *Harijans*, tribal's, and members of the lower castes would be given all the rights of equality.⁶⁴

1.13. *Swarāj and Education*

What is education? Education is a process with two intertwining operations. It must be the development of the faculties and powers of the outer being pressing towards the inner truths culminating in the awakening of the secret soul and of the essential universality that is deep in the individual. It must be at the same time the pressure of the soul and essential universality in the individual for the growth under their secret guidance of the outer faculties and powers of the being.⁶⁵ The basic education proposed by Gandhi stressed very much on discipline and not in unlimited freedom. No training is possible without discipline and restriction.⁶⁶ According to him, a human being without education is not much different from an animal.⁶⁷ Therefore, it becomes clear that education and freedom are closely related. If only there is education, human being has a status greater than that of animals. And only if one is human, there is relevance for freedom. Gandhi held the view that the social aim of education does not come in conflict with the individual aim. «Man is to serve society and society is to help man.»⁶⁸

Gandhi believed that the social, moral, physical, economic and political regeneration of India is possible only through a sound system of education which should suit to the needs of the Indian youth. He wanted to develop a

⁶³ NEELAKANTHA, B., *Gandhian Consumerism*, in «Social Welfare,» (May 1994), p. 31.

⁶⁴ VETTIKKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p. 9.

⁶⁵ *Seminar held at Pondichery from August 12 to 16, 1967 under the Presidentship of Dr. C.D. Deshmukh*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» (September 24, 1967), p. 44.

⁶⁶ MANI, M. P. & BHARATHI, K.S., *Foundations of Gandhian Thought*, p. 191.

⁶⁷ KAPPEN, M., *Gandhi and Social Action Today*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited (1990), p.51.

⁶⁸ MANI, M. P. & BHARATHI, K.S., *Foundations of Gandhian Thought*, p.189.

system of education which could create such a society in which every individual can realise the highest aim of life and political consciousness.⁶⁹ He was of the opinion that creation of a nonviolent and non-exploitative *sarvodaya* society is the ultimate aim to be achieved through education. Further, he lays stress on limited freedom.⁷⁰ Since freedom is meant for the upliftment of all, self-restraint is the rule to be followed and the principle of *ahimsā* is the rule of the day. Gandhi asks: «...a man in the grip of sensual desire is a man without moorings. If such a one were to guide society, were would society be...?»⁷¹ Education must culture the character and only men of character can lead the country to self-rule.

In country like India, devoted to democracy, the importance of education cannot be overlooked. Nearly sixty percent of population in India remains illiterate. This is unfortunate while considering the role and responsibility of people in a democratic set-up. «By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man – body, mind and spirit.»⁷² He also maintains: «True education is that which helps us to know the atman, our true self, God.»⁷³ As Gandhi believed that an illiterate nation can never make any solid progress or achievements, he emphasised the need for educating all the citizens.⁷⁴ Opportunity for education must be the fundamental right of every citizen in *sarvodaya*. His demand for national education did not actually mean a total rejection of foreign education, but it meant the promotion of national culture as the first and foremost step for national regeneration.⁷⁵

Gandhi says that moral education must be the priority, which was wholly absent in the modern education presented by the West and especially by Mill. It should help one to co-exist with all living beings because the oneness of God and unity of all life is the basis of *sarvodaya* society. That is why Anon says that an education does not always teach one what to do, but if a person is smart it will give him some hints as to how to undo what he should not have

⁶⁹ KUMAR, R., *Mahātma Gandhi at the Close of Twentieth Century*, New Delhi: Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd. (2004) pp. 276-7.

⁷⁰ MANI, M. P. & BHARATHI, K.S., *Foundation of Gandhian Thought*, Nagpur: Dattsons Publishers (1987), p. 198.

⁷¹ *Bhavan's Journal*, vol. IX, No. 25, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, July 7 (1963), p. 17.

⁷² KAVUNGHAL, D., *The Philosophical Foundation of Mahātma Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya*, p. 85.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁷⁵ BAKSHI, S R., *Gandhi and the Concept of Swarāj*, p. 259.

done.⁷⁶ Gandhi advocated education as one of the means to enable women to assert their rights and to achieve emancipation from male domination, which is also an important point of consideration in our theme of liberty. «Education is necessary for women as it is for men. Not that the methods of education should be identical in both cases.»⁷⁷

1.14. *Swarāj and Emancipation of Women*

The struggle for the equality and dignity of women was integrated into Gandhi's programme for *Swarāj*. He says that in framing any scheme of women's education the cardinal truth (that men and women are complementary to each other) must be constantly kept in mind.⁷⁸ He campaigned against child marriage and said that child marriage is both a moral as well as a physical evil.⁷⁹ And he says that ordinarily a girl under 18 years should never be given in marriage. He too fought against *sati*, enforced widowhood, and *pardab*. He called in question dowry which reduces marriage to a market transaction. It is, he held, nothing but 'the sale of girls.' He condemned the practice whereby «an educated man is open to the higher bidder for his hand, and needy parents are open to negotiate the sale of their daughters, hardly out of their teens, to the oldest men who are prepared to pay the highest price.»⁸⁰ We can say that the above mentioned customs and practices of India held women in bondage for centuries and Gandhi as a reformer fought fiercely against it.

He disapproved the practice of *sati* on the ground that suicide is not the way for a wife to show love and devotion to her husband. A woman should prove her *satihood* not by mounting the funeral pyre but «by renunciation, sacrifice, self-abnegation, and dedication to the service of renunciation, sacrifice, self-abnegation, and dedication to the service of her husband, his family, and the country.»⁸¹

⁷⁶ *Seminar held at Pondichery from August 12 to 16, 1967 under the Presidentship of Dr. C.D. Deshmukh*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» (September 24, 1967), p. 44.

⁷⁷ *Women and Social Justice*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing Trust (1942), p. 5.

⁷⁸ GARG, L.K., *Historic Speeches of Mahātma Gandhi*, New Delhi: Axis Publications (2010), p. 79.

⁷⁹ M.K.G., *Women and Social Justice*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House (1947), p. 34.

⁸⁰ KAPPEN, M., *Gandhi and Social Action Today*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited (1990), p. 43.

⁸¹ M.K.G., *Young India* (6 October 1927); *Women and Social Justice*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing Trust (1942), p. 57.

Gandhi extends the same test of loyalty to the husband also. «If the wife has to prove her devotion to her husband, so has the husband to prove his allegiance and devotion to his wife. You cannot have one set of weights and measures for the one and a different one for the other.»⁸² «If we would be pure, if we would save Hinduism, we must rid ourselves of this poison of enforced widowhood.»⁸³

Then comes the drastic statement from Gandhi, which lays the axe to the fanatic attitude of the *Hindutva*: «We cry out for cow protection in the name of religion, but refuse protection to the human cow in the shape of girl widow.»⁸⁴ To force widowhood on little girls is, according to him, a crime, but with regard to adult widows he would rather reform the Hindu law and declare their marriage sinful (this applied to the widower as well).⁸⁵ Equally vehement was his criticism of prostitution. It was a matter of «bitter shame and sorrow, of deep humiliation» for Gandhi «that a number of women had to sell their chastity for man's lust.»⁸⁶ He considered prostitution «moral leprosy» which could be remedied only by public opinion. Actually all those customs and malpractices narrated above are a threat to the liberty of women and must be removed; efforts have been taken by the government of India to get rid of them but still individuals are practicing them in every nook and corner of our country.

As for women's inferior position in society, Gandhi says that it is the result of 'the interested teaching' of man. This, admittedly, is too simplified and understanding of the origin and nature of women's oppression in society. In Gandhi's teachings, one sees a tendency to deify and idealise motherhood. Woman as mother has, according to him, the power to create new ideals and put them into practice. Women have infinite capacity for suffering and they are the incarnation of *ahimsā*. If she is able to transfer the infinite love she has for her children to the whole of humanity and forge that she 'ever was or can be the object of man's lust, she can occupy a proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader.

⁸² M.K.G., *Young India* (May 1931), p. 122.

⁸³ *Young India* (August 1926), p. 105.

⁸⁴ *Young India* (August 1926), p. 105.

⁸⁵ *Young India* (October 1926), p. 109.

⁸⁶ *Young India* (April 1925).

1.15. *Swarāj as Self-rule and Swarāj as Self-Governance*

Swarāj (as self-rule) means inner freedom or positive freedom. Gandhi opines that without *Swarāj* as self-rule, *Swarāj* as self-government, can degenerate into state of oppression even in the so-called liberal societies. Self-government to be real has to reflect the will of the people. To govern themselves, the people have to be prepared and trained. He says that good government (whether foreign or Indian) is no substitute for self-government. «Just as a man would not cherish the thought of living in a body other than his own, so do nations not like to live under other nations however noble and great the latter may be.»⁸⁷ Inner change within the individual ought to be the starting point of outer changes in society. It is the transformation of the individual that Gandhi emphasised. Hence he insisted on, «Be the change you wish to see in the world.»⁸⁸ And this is also the way to practice *Swarāj* through *Swadēshi*, wherein the change begins with you and your immediate neighbour. A colleague of Gandhi wondered: What can one individual do to emancipate India? Gandhi wrote back, «Please do not carry unnecessarily on your head the burden of emancipating India. Emancipate yourself. Even that burden is very great. Apply everything to yourself. Nobility of soul consists in realizing that you are yourself India.»⁸⁹

1.16. *Swarāj and Panchāyat Rāj*

In his democracy, he also paid importance to all regions and all parts of the country. According to Gandhi, India cannot be imagined without its villages. To think of a developed India with its undeveloped villages is a ridiculous idea for him. Therefore, he championed the cause of an enriched village life. He propagated for making the village self-sufficient and self-reliant. He maintained, «Every village of India will almost be a self-supporting, self-contained unit.» Democracy «has to be worked from below by the people of every village.»⁹⁰ He projected the state as the servant of the people; it had the duty

⁸⁷ VITHAYATHIL, T., *Mahātma Gandhi and Promotion of Human Rights*, Alwaye: Pontifical Institute Publications (1993), p. 144.

⁸⁸ PRABHATH, S. V., *Gandhi Today*, p. 155.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁰ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), *Gandhian Alternative to Contemporary Problems*, Delhi: Abhijeet Publications (2004) p. 55.

to carry out the will of the people. He was for the prevention of exploitation of any kind of the rural people. «Exploiting of villages is itself is organized violence. If we want *Swarāj* to be built on non-violence, we shall have to give villages their proper place,»⁹¹ he said. Gandhi was very strict on directing the path of development to the villages. The normal tendency of the government was to ignore the villages altogether; the villages, which provide for the nourishment of the big cities. Neglecting a group of people or village is a sign of negligence of freedom and therefore, restoration of the nation through the villages has got relevance to the theme of liberty.

Gandhi stressed the importance of the small-scale village industries and co-operative farming of the land, and also the villages should have the self-governing system of *Panchayat* so that each village will be politically and economically a self-governed and self-sufficient units respectively. When Gandhi gave importance to the villages it was an attempt to give importance to the freedom and development of millions of Indians who were totally ignored by the government for a long time.

To achieve *Poorna Swarāj* Gandhi wanted the village to be the basic economic unit. Centrality of the village and the environment in Gandhi's thinking is revealed in these affirmations. As late as 1830 a British Governor in India, Sir Charles Metcalfe, described the village communities as follows:

The village communities are little republics having nearly everything they want within themselves and almost independent of foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little State in itself... is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence.⁹²

In Village *Swarāj*, the village being the decentralized small political unit endowed with fullest powers, every individual will have a direct voice in the government. The individual is the architect of his own government. The government of the village will be conducted by a *Panchayat* of five persons annually elected by adult villagers possessing minimum prescribed qualifications.⁹³

⁹¹ *Ibidem*.

⁹² M.K.G., *Village Swarāj*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House (1962), p. 8.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

Gandhi enunciated certain basic principles⁹⁴ of village *Swarāj*. They are: Trusteeship, *Swadēshi*, Full employment, Bread labour, Self-sufficiency, Decentralization, Cooperation in doing good, Equality, Basic Education, Moral Freedom of the individual.

1.17. *Swarāj and Machinery*

Gandhi stated that concentration of wealth should not be in the hands of few but in the hands of all. «Today machinery helps a few to ride at the back of millions.»⁹⁵ He was not in favour of mass production but production for the masses and that too with instruments that masses could afford to possess and repair. He was not against machinery but against the enslavement of machinery. «Any mechanism may be misused, but if it is, the moral evil is in man who misuses it, not in the mechanism.»⁹⁶ The introduction of machinery sometimes makes a worker a mere cog by robbing him/ her creativity and subservient to the human-made machines. Mechanism is to be opposed if it leads to dehumanisation and exploitation. The undue elevation of technological production in huge economic enterprises has created millions of manual workers unemployed and human labour is made an accessory to the machine at grave risk to life and health.

1.18. *Swarāj and Sarvodaya*

The ideal of *sarvodaya* is implied in the word itself: *sarva* and *udaya*. *Sarva* means ‘all’ and *udaya* means ‘uplift.’ And therefore, *sarvodaya* means ‘uplift and welfare of all’⁹⁷; it is all-inclusive; no one is excluded here; and it carries with it the real sign of freedom. The key to this uplift, for Gandhi, is dedicated service to humanity. And who can enter into such a service? Only those who are really free from within, only those who have dedicated their lives for the cause of Truth in a nonviolent way, can enter into such a service. As he says:

⁹⁴ MANI, M. P. & BHARATHI, K.S., *Foundations of Gandhian Thought*, pp. 123-127.

⁹⁵ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), *Gandhian Alternative to Contemporary Problems*, Delhi: Abhijeet Publications (2004), p. 49.

⁹⁶ MISHRA, A. D.; SINGH, R. K. & TIWARI, S. K. (eds.), p. 49.

⁹⁷ SUNDARAM, I. & MAHESHWARI, R., *Gandhian Thought and Philosophy*, p. 39.

«I claim to be a humble servant of India and humanity and would like to die in the discharge of such service...»⁹⁸ He even says that the success of *abimsā* is pre-conditioned by the «right livelihood.» It means those who are greedy cannot be nonviolent. Not individual gain but service of one's fellows «as a means of self-transcendence» must be the «essential motive of all activities.»⁹⁹ *Sarvodaya* as a vision and movement is Gandhi's in its origin; dynamic in outlook, it is solidly based on a philosophy of praxis that demands the commitment of its follower to the care and the uplift of humanity, especially of the last and the least in any society.¹⁰⁰ As T. S. Devadoss observes,

The word *sarvodaya* epitomises his (Gandhi's) whole social philosophy, which aims at the attainment of mental prosperity (*Abhyudaya*) and spiritual realization (*Nishreyasa*).¹⁰¹

Early in his life and career, Gandhi coined this new term, *sarvodaya*, in order to articulate his vision of Indian society and the way he wanted to transform it in accordance with his vision and imagination.

Sarvodaya is nothing but a nonviolent socialism. Accordingly all members of society are equal – none low, none high. In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. To Gandhi such a horizontal structure is a necessary condition for self-realization in liberating both exploiter and exploited from the shackles of an exploitative structure. It applies at all levels: between individuals, between villages, and between larger units. Gandhi, for instance, wanted to purify the caste system by abolishing the vertical component or the hierarchical structure out of it. He wanted to retain the division of labour implicit in the *Varna*, but he wanted that no caste, no occupation should rank above any other caste or occupation. Gandhi was not opposed to the caste system altogether; instead he maintained that the four divisions of caste as complementary to one another, and none inferior or superior to any other. The caste system should be horizontal, and Gandhi claimed that this was the original system, that what had developed later was an aberration.

⁹⁸ *Harijan* (February 1946).

⁹⁹ MUKHERJEE, S. & RAMASWAMY, S. (eds.), *Facets of Mahātmā Gandhi: Nonviolence and Satyāgraha*, New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications (1994), p. 137.

¹⁰⁰ VETTIKKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p. 7.

¹⁰¹ VETTIKKAL, T., p. 18.

1.19. *Swarāj and the Concept of Rights and Duties*

In fact, the word ‘duty’ means what is due i.e., what one is bound or under an obligation to do towards one’s self and others. In other words, a duty means what we ought to perform ‘as moral beings.’¹⁰² He cannot think of civilization apart from moral duty and defines civilization as that mode of conduct which points out to the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions.¹⁰³

Only those who lead a moral life by fulfilling the obligations towards others are capable of *Swarāj*. So *Swarāj* primarily, speaks of duty towards oneself and others. And Plato says that the concept of justice is the basis of the concept of duty. And for Plato, justice is nothing but righteousness, which includes within it the whole duty of man.¹⁰⁴

To do good to others with the expectation of getting something in return is no morality since it is done not with the intention of doing good to others for its own sake but for advancing or promoting one’s own interest. This is the crux of Gandhian Moral Imperative. This is similar to that of the moral imperative of Immanuel Kant¹⁰⁵ and the doing the duty without expecting the fruits of action narrated in *Bhagavad Gīta*. *Gīta* admonishes «Better to die discharging one’s duty; desertion destroys the man.»¹⁰⁶ An action prompted by the motive of material gain, comfort, or personal happiness in another world is non-moral. Morality requires rising above self-interest.

The fundamental problem of present day democracy was that it arose out of too much concern for rights without a proper measure of significance for duties. Gandhi’s moral criterion would look upon rights and duties as complementary to each other like the two faces of the same coin. Such a conception

¹⁰² BHANDARI & LATHA, *Concept of Duty: A Study in Indian and Western Philosophy*, in «Darshana International,» vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (January 1996), p. 44.

¹⁰³ Ashutosh Pandey, *Relevance of Gandhi in 21st Century*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁴ BHANDARI & LATHA, *Concept of Duty: A Study in Indian and Western Philosophy*, in «Darshana International,» vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (January 1996), pp. 44-5.

¹⁰⁵ Kant asserts that to have moral worth an action must be done from duty and it derives its moral worth not from the end which is to be attained by it but from the maxim, from which it is done. Cfr. BHANDARI & LATHA, *Concept of Duty: A Study in Indian and Western Philosophy*, in «Darshana International,» vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (January 1996), p. 45.

¹⁰⁶ BHANDARI & LATHA, *Concept of Duty: A Study in Indian and Western Philosophy*, in «Darshana International,» vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (January 1996), p. 47.

of rights and duties arose out of his ideas on *Dharma*. *Dharma* involved the unfettered performance of one's duties which can go a long way in securing one's interest and harmonising such interests with the interest of other individuals in the society. Gandhi was never tired of saying that duty came before rights. He was willing to defend rights only on this supposition: «Real rights are a result of performance of duty.»¹⁰⁷ «No one will have any right but what are inherent in the willing performance of one's duties.»¹⁰⁸

«All rights to be deserved and preserved come from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be a usurpation hardly worth fighting for.»¹⁰⁹ Gandhi claimed that the assertion of rights without due regard for corresponding duties would in the long run turn liberty into license. And we know that Mill does not explicitly speak of duties. «Liberty cannot be secured merely by proclaiming it. An atmosphere of liberty must be created within. Liberty is one thing, and license is another. Many a time we confuse license for liberty and lose the latter. License leads one to selfishness whereas liberty guides one to supreme good. License destroys society, liberty gives it life. In license propriety is sacrificed; in liberty it is fully cherished.»¹¹⁰

1.20. Swarāj and Trusteeship

The concept of trusteeship is not first coined by Gandhi. It is in practice on the land of India since time immemorial. But Gandhi's genius lies in digesting the spirit of trusteeship from our ancient people and trying to apply it as an alternative to capitalism and communism, which are riddled with harmful philosophies to the growth of humanity.¹¹¹ Gandhi was of the firm opinion

¹⁰⁷ M.K.G., *Hind Swarāj and Other Writings*, p. 82.

¹⁰⁸ *CWMG*, 73: 89.

¹⁰⁹ *CWMG*, 88: 100.

¹¹⁰ PAREL, A. J., *Gandhi: Freedom and Self-Rule*, p. 10.

¹¹¹ SURINENI I., *Gandhian Doctrine of Trusteeship*, New Delhi: Discovery Publishing House (1991), p. 35.

that political democracy without economic democracy was meaningless and was akin to a ship without a rudder. He considered economic equality the «master-key» to nonviolent independence.¹¹² The ethico-economic theory of trusteeship is the surest method to evolve a new order of life of universal benefit in the place of the present one where each one lives for himself without regard to what happens to his neighbour.¹¹³ As a trustee the individual's ownership of wealth ceased since all the wealth was held in trust for the benefit of all. Trusteeship therefore was a very novel and dynamic theory of economic transformation into Gandhian democracy. He suggested that the means of production and distribution should be controlled by the capitalist, but he should hold the wealth as a trustee of the society. He says that the moneyed men must regard themselves, even as the Japanese nobles did, as trustees holding their wealth for the good of their wards, the ryots.¹¹⁴ And R.B. Upadhyaya gives a detailed account of the qualities of a trustee.¹¹⁵

1.21. *Swarāj and Tyranny*

Just like Mill Gandhi always stood against exploitation and tyranny of any kind. When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of law-givers. Actually what is it that is to be opposed? It is the tyrannical system that is to be opposed; we suffer and do not submit to such systems. If men will only realise that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave them. A tyrant can never control the man of self-rule, or man of freedom, or a civilized man.¹¹⁶ This is the key to self-rule or home-rule.

God demands nothing less than complete self-surrender as the price for the only real freedom that is worth having. And when a man thus loses himself he immediately finds himself in the service of all that lives. Submission to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission therefore to a state law wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty.¹¹⁷

¹¹² VETTIKKAL, T., *Gandhian Sarvodaya: Realising a Realistic Utopia*, p. 14.

¹¹³ M.K.G., *India of My Dreams*, p. 67; *Harijan* (22 February 1942).

¹¹⁴ M.K.G., *Tillers of the Soil*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» vol. XV, No. 21 (May 18, 1969), p. 49.

¹¹⁵ SURINENI, I., *Gandhian Doctrine of Trusteeship*, pp. 90-100.

¹¹⁶ ASHUTOSH, P., *Relevance of Gandhi in 21st Century*, p. 30.

¹¹⁷ BALDOON, D., *Gandhi and Permanent Revolution*, in «The Aryan Path,» (November 1969), p. 2.

The outward freedom we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment. Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the great thing in the world. The theme of tyranny is very relevant even today especially in the case of India, since the people of India give themselves into the hands of their rulers to be tyrannised. Many of its subjects who are eligible for voting are denied of their fundamental right; but still the people wished to be remaining under the tyranny than opposing it in a nonviolent and truthful way.

1.22. *Swarāj and Tolerance*

Gandhi repeatedly tells us that a human being cannot fully realize Truth as the absolute ideal. He himself confesses that he has only had occasional glimpses of Truth. Human beings can at the most approximate the absolute ideal through their understanding of their relative, imperfect, historically and culturally conditioned truth. For example, Gandhi distinguishes between some absolute, ideal concept of Religion, corresponding to his concept of Truth, and relative religion, including his own Hinduism. It is through his particular, historical religion that Gandhi has had some insights or glimpses into Religion. Since no religion can claim to embody fully the absolute Truth or perfect Religion, religion must practice tolerance, respect and nonviolence toward other religions.¹¹⁸ Here we have to keep also in mind the principle of the many-sidedness of reality, which he learnt from Jainism.

In a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru Gandhi writes, «If there is any difference of opinion between us, let the world know of it. I do not desire anyone to suppress his own opinions.» He too writes: «I have always allowed even my wife to exercise her freedom of thought and action. No one need consider himself to be under my discipline. Everyone is free to follow the dictates of his own conscience.»¹¹⁹ Gandhi is like Socrates who gave prime importance to his conscience above all other things. According to Socrates conscience is the seat of divine command, and as such the source of duty, morality and jus-

¹¹⁸ DOUGLAS, A., *Gandhi's Philosophy: The Struggle Over Many Contradictory Philosophies*, in «Social Theory and Practice,» vol. 19, No. 3 (Fall 1993), p. 294-5.

¹¹⁹ SHUKLA, Ch., *Gandhi and Marx*, in «Bhavan's Journal» vol. XVII, No. 14 (February 7, 1971), p. 38.

tice.¹²⁰ Gandhi writes: «I do not consider my opponents to be fools. I credit them with keen intelligence.»¹²¹ While speaking about religion he says, «Cultivation of tolerance for other faiths will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.»¹²² It is to be noted that tolerance does not obviously disturb the distinction between right and wrong or good and evil.

2. GANDHI, THE SYNCHRONIZER

In the teachings of Gandhi we could find the synthesis of Western and Indian traditions. Gandhi's basic approach was this: «I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to live in other people's house as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.»¹²³ Though Gandhi called himself a *Sanatana Hindu*¹²⁴, his neo-Hinduism includes a synthetic unity of other world religions. He wrote, «My Hinduism is not sectarian. It includes all that I know to be best in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism.» He further said: «My young mind tried to unify the teachings of *Gita*, *the Light of Asia* and *Sermon on the Mount*...I read the chapter on the Hero as a prophet (Mohammed) and learnt of the prophet's greatness and bravery and austere living.»¹²⁵ We note that Thoreau, who made an impact on Gandhi's political thinking, was influenced by Emerson who, in turn, was inspired by Hindu religious traditions. This was what made Frederick B. Fisher make this observation on the interrelation between Thoreau and Gandhi: «A curious friendship, this of ancient India for young America, still in its national swaddling clothes in the family of ages! Yet, the Indian peaceful revolution has taken many of its weapons from the minds and lips of Americans. In a very real sense, the seeds of the Indian revolution were planned in America.»¹²⁶

¹²⁰ DIXIT, R.D., *Socrates on Civil Disobedience*, in «Indian Philosophical Quarterly,» vol. VIII, No. 1 (October 1980), p. 91.

¹²¹ SHUKLA, Ch., *Gandhi and Marx*, in «Bhavan's Journal» vol. XVII, No. 14 (February 7, 1971), p. 39.

¹²² M.K.G., *Sarva Dharma Samanantva*, in «Bhavan's Journal,» vol. XVI, No. 18 (November 16, 1969), p. 42.

¹²³ HARPINDER, K., *Gandhi's Concept of Civil Disobedience: A Study with Special Reference to Thoreau's Influence on Gandhi*, p. 7.

¹²⁴ *Young India* (October 1939).

¹²⁵ *Hrijan* (April and November 1938).

¹²⁶ HARPINDER, p. 8.

CONCLUSION

Liberty is quintessential to the individual development. The misuse of freedom is nothing but the misuse of individuality; and when freedom is misused there is always harm inherent in it. The first chapter of the project comes with the conclusion that the proper upbringing of a child contributes to the proper living of liberty in an authentic manner. The second chapter comes with the conclusion that while enjoying the freedom one shall not harm the freedom or interest of the other and the government can legitimately interfere with the acts of an individual when they are pertaining to the other-regarding ones. The third chapter concludes that an integral liberation is based on the triple principles of truth, *ahimsā* and morality. The fourth chapter concludes that the liberty to be real must be duty-oriented, wherein the concentration is not so much on the rights but on the obligation from the part of an individual. And the fifth and the final chapter comes with the conclusion that a synthesis of the ideas of liberty propagated by Mill and Gandhi provides an integral approach to human liberty, wherein no one claims the monopoly over the other. The most essential conclusion is that education and character formation contribute to the authentic living of liberty by every individual.

Gandhi opts for the term *samskara* in place of civilization: a) The apt term for civilization in Gujarati is *Samskāra*, which means ‘being good’ to all, which we cannot see in the material wellbeing propagated by Mill, who was good only to his people. b) The term also signifies a ‘rites of passage,’ or ‘burial,’ of course, the burial of that which is not suited to a good life, avoidance of that which is immoral and harmful, which means we need to bury what is not worthwhile for a harmonious living, c) It also means the act of preserving, of course, that which is good for you and the entire humanity, viz. *ahimsā*, truth and morality, d) It denotes the act of chiselling one’s own rough nature and smoothening it and thereby possessing a refined character, which supposes a purification and option for the higher aspiration of life and keeping away from inordinate passions, e) it also means ‘accomplishing well,’ ‘the putting together,’ ‘making something perfect,’ which calls for fulfilling of the purpose for which human beings are called into being, f) it also indicates ‘the impression of the mind,’ (but the impression of the mind must depend upon the kind of education that we have received and the experienced that we have accumulated, and g) it also signifies ‘formation,’ of the entire personality

which is meant for the welfare of the entire humanity. The above mentioned aspects of civilization are achieved through education.

According to Henry R. West, Mill's conception of liberty is not entirely negative. Mill also advocates a positive atmosphere, requiring freedom of thought and expression, and liberty of action in choosing and exploring ways of living. West maintains that Mill is an indirect utilitarian. His version of utilitarianism does not require applying the principle of utility case by case in order to ensure that utility is maximized in each case.

Mill's discussion of responsibility in *A System of Logic* («Of Liberty and Necessity») suggests that he thinks that humans are responsible agents and that this is what marks us as progressive beings. There he claims that capacities for practical deliberation are necessary for responsibility. In particular, he claims that moral responsibility involves a kind of self-mastery or self-governance in which one can distinguish between the strength of one's desires and their suitability or authority and in which one's actions reflect one's deliberations about what is suitable or right to do.¹²⁷

The reason why Mill did address this issue of Liberty is this: Although we have republican governments today, individual liberty is cut short of in order to acquire their share in the administration. The right to play an active role in republican government came at a price: citizens had to be ready to «sacrifice their private independence to preserve their political importance and their share in the administration of the state.»¹²⁸

Gandhi also combines freedom with responsibility. And that was why he was more concerned with obligation than with rights. Gandhi too speaks about the application of the principle of liberty in day-to-day life. He said that even in democracy there is corruption and prophesied that the Indians would exploit Indians. Just like Mill, Gandhi was of the opinion that individual's freedom was at risk in the democratic age. Was Gandhi a utopian? Gandhi's example has inspired many globally revered figures, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama, and Aung San Suu Kyi. And many nations have copied his economic theories Swadēshi, self-sufficiency, trusteeship and his theories of nonviolence. And we can say that if his theories were

¹²⁷ *A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive* (1843; 8th edn. 1871), vols. vii-viii of CW, ed. J.M. Robson, introduction by R. F. McRae (Toronto: University of Toronto Press; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), vol. viii, pp. 839-42 (Bk. VI, iii, 3).

¹²⁸ SCARRE, G., *Mill's On Liberty: A Reader's Guide*, p. 21.

a utopia, none of these nations and persons would have imitated them. He wanted freedom not only from imperial rule but also from modern industrial society, whose ways Western imperialists had spread to the remotest corners of the globe. Gandhi's advocacy of small-scale village industry and environmentally sustainable life styles was disregarded by his own disciple and political heir, Jawaharlal Nehru, who, as Prime Minister, made India conform to a conventional pattern of nation-building: rapid industrialization and urbanization, the prelude to India's ongoing, wholly un-Gandhian, and unsustainable attempt to transform 1.2 billion people into Western-style consumers. So, the problem was not with Gandhi or with his theories, but with the 'so-called' followers of Gandhi, who were in a blind imitation of the West in consumerism, industrialisation etc.

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