

Chapter I

Introduction

An Introduction to Raja Rao and *Kanthapura*

This research attempts to study Raja Rao's novel *Kanthapura* as a representation of the impact of Gandhian politics. Gandhi's politics had become a social awakening instrument for the people of India. It tries to give the most graphic, vivid and realistic account of the Gandhian freedom struggles in 1920s and 1930s, and its impact on the masses of India.

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is about Indians uprising against the tyrannical British rule. The novel glorifies the Gandhian freedom movement in India. Especially, it is the text of the Civil Disobedience movement of the 1930s that takes its central concern in participation of a small village of South India in the national struggle called for by Mahatma Gandhi. Imbued with nationalism, the villagers sacrifice their material possessions in a triumph of the spirit, showing how in the Gandhian movement people discarded the narrow prejudices and united in the common cause of the non-violent civil resistance against the British Raj but they do not get success till the end of the novel; thus they face homelessness and confusion. In the novel, there are two main individual leaders: one is, Mahatma Gandhi who, very wisely chooses to remain out of the novel, and Moorthy, the main protagonist who enacts the functions of Gandhi as a representative.

Though the freedom movement has been shown as a tragic reality, it keeps many important messages which were generated by Gandhian freedom struggle that the novel deals with. Firstly, the role of the national struggle is changing the very framework under which Indian society traditionally functioned. Throughout the narrative, one sees the gradual blurring of caste lines. People are ready to demarcate

the caste lines in this period because they are now tied in the holistic will, i. e. liberating the nation; and for it, they are ready to sacrifice the ancient caste division. The village changes and becomes a strong unit in the face of crises; and most importantly, the changes in the village structure come not from the outside or due to the any external effort, but from the inside, due to the efforts put in by the villagers themselves. Moorthy, a model of Gandhi, plays a very important role for this part. Moorthy visits the city and turns to be a Gandhiman. He has become a spokesman for Gandhi. Though, Moorthy has never met Gandhi, he is taken as their 'own Gandhi' by the villagers. While joining the band of volunteers, he gets inspiration by a touch of Gandhi's hand. It enables Rao to turn to the historical moment into a visionary experience, and opens a space for the possibility of assumed politics. In order to allow an easy interchange between the world of man and the world of gods, between contemporaneity and antiquity, Rao thus equips his story with a protagonist whose role is to inspire the villagers for joining the political cause of India's struggle for freedom called for by the Mahatma. Moorthy preaches and practises *ahimsa* (non-violence), the hallmark of Gandhi's appeal to the public, and evokes an overwhelming response among the villagers who unite in common cause ready to break the British laws, picket toddy shops, and fight against social evils.

And secondly, while the novel does not explicitly question the then existing gender equations, it does tell us the rising importance of women in society. It criticizes stereotypical idea about women. Though the subjects like equality and husband-wife relations have not been questioned, they have been commented upon. Most importantly, it has been mentioned that the women of India played an active part for India's struggle for independence, and while men might not have viewed them as equals then, they were not treated with outright contempt either.

Raja Rao's Life and Education: An Overview

Raja Rao was born in respected Brahmin family in the village of Hassana, in the Mysore state, on 8 November 1908. His father was professor of Canarasse in Hyderabad. He learnt Hindu religion and philosophy from his grandfather at his early age. Rao was educated at Muslim schools. He studied at the Madara-i-Aliya, the most famous school in the state, where the aristocrats of Hyderabad sent their children and perhaps, he was the only Hindu boy in his class. After matriculating, he was sent to the Aligarh Muslim University for higher education. Aligarh proved to be a crucial shaping for Rao's intellectual growth, even as his literary sensibility was awakened there. In 1927, at the age of 19, Rao returned to Hyderabad to enrol as a student for B.A. at Nizam's College. Two years later, he graduated, having majored in English and History. In 1929, Rao won the Asiatic Scholarship of the government of Hyderabad for abroad studies. He went to France for the higher study in French literature.

He started studying at the University of Montpellier in France and on the same year, he married to Camille Mouly, who taught French at Montpellier but their married life could not last long and got divorced in 1939. Later, he studied at the Sorbonne where he explored the Indian influence on Irish literature under the supervision of Louis Cazamin.

In 1931, Rao's early Kannada writing began to appear in the journal *Jaya Karnataka*. In 1932, Rao was appointed to the editorial board of *Mercure de France* (Paris), a position he held until 1937. So while living in France he made a brief visit to India in 1933, and lived for a while in ashram. He visited Pandit Taranath's ashram in his quest for self-realization. In 1938, his masterpiece *Kanthapura*, although written earlier, was published from London.

Kanthapura is an enriching story of how the independence movement becomes a tragic reality in a tiny and secluded village of South India. It describes the daily life of Indian villages during the revolt against an overbearing plantation owner. Rao's commitment to Gandhian non-violence is clearly revealed in his description of the peasants' conversion to the principle of civil disobedience. The story takes the form of an oral tale narrated by Achakka, an old village woman. The novel grows out of distinct historical context of the 1920s and 1930s and is a parable of the politics of the Gandhian movement of passive resistance. The scene of the struggle is a village, since Gandhi locates his politics in villages where most of India's population live. The central character is Moorthy, "our own Gandhi", the leader of the non-violent movement in Kanthapura; and at the other end there are Bade Khan, the policeman, and the owner of the Skeffington Coffee Estate who are the symbols of colonial authority and oppression (*Kanthapura* 6). Gandhi marches with his selected band of followers to the saltpans at the coastal village of Dandi to break the salt laws. (Breaking the salt Act was trespassing on the colonial monopoly on sale and production of salt). Suddenly, the entire country is engaged in passive resistance of 'alien' authority. But at the end of the novel, the villagers are forced to move in other place due to their defeat in the fight against the British rule.

Rao returned to the theme of Gandhism in the short story collection *The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories* (1947). It is a collection of nine stories written about 1933-1944 in France which reveals at every step the writer's love of his motherland and the sociological concerns of the 1930s.

After a long silence, Rao reappeared in literary field with *The Serpent and the Rope* in 1960, where he revealed a connection with his roots in the modern rendering of *Mahabharata* legend of Satyanarayan and Savitri. The work also dramatizes the

relationship between Indian and Western culture, but this is highly autobiographical in spirit. It is a story of the search for spiritual truth in Europe and India. Ramaswamy, a young Brahmin studying in France, is married to a French college teacher, Madeleine, who sees her husband above all as a guru. As Ramaswamy struggles with commitments imposed on him by his Hindu family, his wife becomes a Buddhist in her spiritual quest and renounces worldly desires. She leaves her husband to find her own true self. So, this is the twisted representation of Rao's first married life. The serpent in the title refers to the illusion and the rope to the reality. The novel established him as one of the finest Indian stylists. One year later, Rao won the Sahitya Academy award in 1966 and the Padma Bhusan award in 1967.

In 1965, *Cat and Shakespeare* was published with its subtitle as "*A Tale of Modern India*." It was a metaphysical comedy that answered philosophical questions posed in the earlier novels. It introduces us to a picture of the early forties of India. It is a mixture of fantasy and realism. In the book, a cat symbolizes the Hindu notion of karma. The hero discovers in his attempts to rescue divine grace, that there is no dichotomy between himself and God. The subject of its probing is the problem of individual destiny, and the solution is conveyed through an odd analogy offered by a government clerk: "Learn the way of the kitten. Then you are saved. Allow the mother cat, sir, to carry you" (65). Rao here exploits "the Vedantic idea of the world being a play- Lila – of the Absolute, and the result is hilarious comedy that does not even spare Shakespeare and his language" (172).

In the same year, Rao married Katherine Jones, an American stage actress and started lecture on Indian philosophy at University of Texas, Austin. They have one son, Christopher Rama. But their married life did not last for a long period of time and divorced within a few decades.

Comrade Kirillov (1976) was written early in Rao's career and was first published in French. UR Anatha Murthy writes, "[i]n *Comrade Kirillov*, Raja Rao exposes communism as ideologically alien to the Indian tradition" (172). It means that the novel satirized communism as an ideological misunderstanding of man's ultimate aims, and argued that all foreign creeds gradually become Indianized. Rao did not "hide his preference for Gandhism that he considers to be the next political system of the world" (172).

In 1978, Rao published another collection of stories, *The Policeman and the Rose* after *The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories* in 1947.

Rao married his third wife, Susan in 1986 whom he met when she was a student at the University of Texas in 1970s. And after it, Rao published *The Chessmaster and His Moves* as a trilogy in 1988. This trilogy can be read as a students' exploration of the notion of an 'Indian science'" (142). In the publisher's note, it is written that *The Chessmaster and His Moves* functions, all at once, at different levels. At one level, it is the story of an impossible love between Sivarama Sastri, an Indian mathematician working in Paris and a married woman which can only end in sorrow and despair. To come to terms with its impossibility, the protagonists turn inward in their search for answers and meaning, transforming the book into a metaphysical exploration. Amidst this search, each and every act, big or seemingly small gets imbued with special meaning. Sastri's love for the French actress, Suzanne Chautereux, or her beguiling, effervescent compatriot Mireille, for instance, serves to underline the differences between the East and West; while the latter seeks happiness in the world, Sastri is looking for freedom from the world itself. The novel is peopled by characters from various cultures seeking their identities. Rao used the metaphor of the chess game to animate philosophical and psychological ideas.

On the Ganga Ghat was published in 1989 just one year after receiving the prestigious Neustadt International Prize for literature. This is a collection of eleven stories and marks Raja Rao's return to the short story after a gap of over a decade. It explores the play of life as it unfolds in Benaras, the cherished ultimate destination of millions of Indians, the holy city to die in. The prose is exquisite chiselled, sparse yet evocative and the result is mesmerizing.

Rao published the essay collection *The Meaning of India* in 1996. Rao writes that the meaning of India is not a country, it is a perspective. This book explores the perspective which he calls India – its metaphysics, the philosophical underpinning that sets India apart, uniquely distinguishes its civilization. Through fable and real-life encounters, description of journeys and events or in discussions with contemporaries, Rao's quest is unceasing and single-focused: how this perspective alone can give meaning to India.

After two years from the publication of *The Meaning of India*, Rao published biography of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi under the title of *The Great Indian Way: A Life of Mahatma Gandhi* in 1998.

His writing of a biography on Gandhi shows that Rao had the great preference for Gandhi and Gandhism. Thus, he carried the theme of Gandhism in his several texts like *Kanthapura*, *The Cow of the Barricades*, and accepting Gandhism as the next political system in the world, he satirizes communism in *Comrade Kirillov*.

Besides these texts, Rao wrote many essays and articles in many newspaper, journals, periodicals and magazines in various languages like English, French, Caranesse and so on. Rao spent much of his time in India, France and America. Upto his graduation, he stayed in India and then left for France; so while living in France he made a brief visit to India in 1933, and lived for a while in an ashram. He left France

in 1939 just before the outbreak of World War II but after the war, in 1948 Rao went again to France and spent much time there travelling throughout the world. He visited America in 1950 for the first time. Then after he spent some more time in ashrams he finally migrated to America where he started giving lectures at the University of Texas, Austin from 1965 to 1983 and spent his rest of his life in the same place.

Rao has shown his wide range of understanding of both Eastern and Western civilizations almost in all his works. He died of heart failure on 8 July, 2006. But it can be presumed that his level of understanding of both Eastern and Western civilizations may widen in his posthumously publishing books. As the completion of *The Chessmaster* trilogy, *The Daughter of the Mountain* is supposed to be published in October, 2006 and for the same trilogy, *A Myrobalan in the Palm of Your Hand* is going to be published in the late of this year 2007. So, it is hoped that these texts may prove more useful to understand Rao's knowledge of the world and literature. But throughout Rao's life 'literature' as such has been in the service of a deeper spiritual quest for truth where he spent all efforts of his life till the end.

Critical Viewpoints on *Kanthapura*

Raja Rao formally appeared in the literary field with the publication of the novel *Kanthapura* in 1938. The book has been considered by many to be the first classic modern Indian writing in English and is thought of as one of the best Gandhian novels in English. And the novel is recognized as a major landmark in Indian fiction as it paints to a definite stage in the formation of an Indian style of writing in English. But it has received serious and favourable critical responses from various critics and reviewers since its publication.

Raja Rao has been a prominent writer of the contemporary time. His writings give us a sense of Indian culture and nationalism. *Kanthapura* portrays the

participation of a small village of South India in the national struggle called for by Mahatma Gandhi. In the novel *Kanthapura* Gandhi is a legendary figure or a kind of god to the villagers. He became the subject for religious ceremonies and rituals. The novel exploits extensively Gandhian political principles, Gandhian perspectives of religion and even Gandhian myth. K. R. Srinivasa Lyenagar states, "*Kanthapura* is a veritable grammar of Gandhian myth- the myth that is but a poetic translation of the reality" (396). Throughout the novel, it can be seen that Hindu religion and politics merge into each other. Elleke Boehmer agrees "Hindu myths and traditional narrative techniques blend with contemporary history in such a way as to create a fabulistic tale of nationalistic struggle"(135).

R. Parthasarathy views *Kanthapura* as a "mine of information about the sociocultural life of peasant society in Southern India" (14). But Parthasarathy sees the novel *Kanthapura* as Gandhi's struggle for Independence:

Kanthapura is the story of how Gandhi's struggle for Independence from the British comes to an unknown village in South India. The struggle takes the form, on the onehand, of non-violent resistance to Pax Britannica and, on the other, of a social protest to reform Indian society. References to specific events in India in the late 1920s and the early 1930s suggest that the novel has grown out of a distinct historical context. (9)

UR Anantha Murthy writes that "E.M. Forster considered *Kanthapura* to be the best novel ever written in English by an Indian" (171). And assimilating with R. Parthasarathy, she states:

Not the least of its merits is the picture it gives of life in one of the innumerable villages that are the repositories of India's ancient but

living culture. In vivid detail Rao describes the daily activities, the religious observances and the social structure of the community, and he brings to life in his pages a dozen or more unforgettable individual villagers. The novel is political on a superficial level, in that it chronicles a revolt against an exploitative plantation manager and the police who support him. But more profoundly, it traces the origins of the activities of the Congress Party. (171)

Not only the theme of *Kanthapura* has caught the eyes of readers, even its linguistic tradition (*sthalapurana* as Rao said) affects much to the readers. Braj B. Kachru writes after the publication of *Kanthapura* that Rao explored "a new linguistic tradition, a new dimension of creativity in world Englishes began to develop in the 1940s" (67). Kachru views it as a distinct feature in English writing: "*Kanthapura* provides the first conceptualization of Rao's view of "Indian" English" (68). Rao makes a highly innovative use of English language to make it conform to the Kannada rhythm. In keeping with his theme in *Kanthapura* he experiments with language following the oral rhythms and narrative techniques of traditional models of writing. The emotional upheaval that shook *Kanthapura* is expressed by breaking the formal English syntax to suit the sudden change of mood and sharp contrast in tone.

C. D. Narasimhaiah has the similar view with Kachru concerning the language. He says that the novel consists "a distinctive Indian sensibility, a peasant sensibility, to be precise, expressed in the English language" (xvi). Thus, "the English that Raja Rao's characters speak in the novel, has its correspondence in the contours of thought, feeling and sensibility which could not fail to make an immediate impression on people" (55). Narasimhaiah further says that the political, the religious and the social, these three strands of experiences are woven inextricably into the one complex

story of *Kanthapura*. The entire novel bristles with action and all that action is centred round Moorthy. He represents the confluence of the three strands of experiences that go to make up the actions of the novel (xi).

Besides these three strands of experiences, Narasimhaiah says that Rao explores the human nature, "both the religions and the national movement have helped the novelist penetrate into the deeper layers of human nature and observes the pettiness, greed, jealousy and, in some cases, callousness, and inhumanity of the so-called spirituality-bent Indian" (xvi). Therefore, Narasimhaiah disagrees with those who view *Kanthapura* as a mere political novel. And he defends it comparing with Gandhi's politics and writes:

Kanthapura is no political novel any more than is Gandhi's movement a mere political movement. It pictures vividly, truthfully and touchingly the story of the resurgence of India under Gandhi's leadership; its religious character, its economic and social concerns, its political ideals precisely in the way Gandhi tried to spiritualize politics the capacity for sacrifice of a people in response to the call of one like Gandhi. (ix)

Harish Trivedi writes "*Kanthapura* begins with the unapologetic expectation on the part of the narrator that the reader would not have heard of her village" (115). He further adds "no one could have heard of a fictional village, of course, but the point being made is that the place is especially obscure and remote" (115). But in the novel one can see the organic community in which everyone knows everyone else. The community not only politicizes but also nationalizes itself and the village enacting the national tasks within its locality, without thinking as a piece of a larger unseen community. Thus, the notion of *Kanthapura* is not 'imagined' entity but a felt reality

which invades the village. Along with the thematic aspects of the novel, "its style and form too represent a deliberate and original innovation" (118). Rao makes a deliberate attempt to follow traditional Indian narrative technique and its Indian sensibility that informs *Kanthapura*. In fact both the spirit and the narrative technique of *Kanthapura* are primarily those of Indian *Puranas*, which may be described as a popular encyclopaedia of ancient and medieval Hinduism, religious, philosophical, historical and social. Rao at the outset describes his novel as a "*sthal-puranas* -legend of a place" (v). The "*puranas* are blend of narration, description, philosophical reflection, and religious teaching. The style is usually simple, flowing, and digressive" (Aryal, 7).

To sum up, in Harish Trivedi's tone "*Kanthapura* is such a rewarding text to read precisely because it is so dynamic" (118). He says "it embodies a sense of traditions that show continuity and communality (though by no means unanimity) while it also explores the imagined as well as the only too real ties which bind together diverse communities as a nation" (118). And all these have been possible by the awakening of Gandhi's political movement in India.

An Outline of the Dissertation

The present work has been divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, it presents the short introductory outline of the present study. It gives a bird's eye view of the entire work. It also tries to discuss about Raja Rao's historical background, his literary career, his literary texts in brief, and his family background. For this purpose, some of his texts are taken as supporting materials and critical viewpoints to justify how Gandhian politics has affected the actions of characters, and how the narrator observes the impact on them.

The second chapter tries to explain the theoretical modality that is discussed and applied in this research. It discusses the strengths and weaknesses of Gandhi. On the basis of theoretical modality outlined in the second chapter, the third chapter will analyze the text at considerate length with a critical summary. It will also sort out some extracts from the text as evidence to prove the hypothesis of the study representation of the impact of Gandhian politics in Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*." This part serves as the core of this research.

The fourth chapter is the conclusion of this research work. Based on the textual analysis in the third chapter, it will conclude the explanations and arguments put forward in the preceding chapters and shows that how the actions and characters are influenced by Gandhian politics. Thus, this research work will give a fair judgement on the basis of the study of his novel, *Kanthapura*.

To sum up, the villagers are highly influenced by Gandhian principles and they try to use them in their all activities. The impact is vividly shown and discussed as in reality. At micro level, it is seen that the villagers get affected only but if we consider it at macro level, it might be the actual representation of the political scenario of India during the 1920s and 1930s. These crucial issues are going to be addressed in the present study. So, the dissertation can be useful for the readers as well as the further researchers since many points are deliberately left open.

Chapter II

Positive and Negative Aspects of Gandhian Ideology

Positive Aspect of Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, widely known as Mahatma Gandhi, is honoured as the Father of the Nation, and is called an Apostle of non-violence. He was also a major political and spiritual leader of the prudence movement. His radically different political idiom that is religio-political idiom, inaugurated the moral, ethical, and spiritual core in the resistance against the British Raj in India. He was the pioneer of *Satyagraha* resistance through civil disobedience which has become one of the strongest philosophies in the world. He perplexed the world by using religious actions in political arena and defeated the great imperial power of Britain. His idea on non-violence and faith on Truth becomes the strongest weapon used against the British Raj. He is called Mahatma: "of Mahatma, the name given to him is 'the Great soul,' *maha*, great; *atma*, soul. The word goes back to the Upanishads, where it is used in speaking of the Supreme Being, and, through communion of knowledge and love" (Rolland V).

Mahatma Gandhi had become synonymous to non-violence; he had become an icon for many leaders all over the world. Gandhi began to influence European public life in the 1980s:

He was acknowledged by non-violent revolutionaries in Eastern Europe – Lech Walesa in Poland and Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia. In the 1990s the Dalai Lama began to invoke Gandhi in his non-violent effort to gain autonomy for Tibet. In the 1990s Nelson Mandela was in position publicly to acknowledge that 'the Gandhian influence dominated freedom struggles on the African continent right up to the

1990s'. At the close of 20th century, *Time* chose Gandhi along with Albert Einstein and Franklin Roosevelt as the three most influential persons of the century. (34)

Besides these leaders, Mahatma Gandhi has been icon for innumerable persons all over the world. Some of Gandhi's admirers go further than making him a mere icon and opined deliberately that "we should not be surprised if one day he were to prove as influential and be placed on the same footing as Jesus Christ and the Buddha." (Parekh 112).

Even the Father of Science, Albert Einstein flabbergasted by having known Gandhi's actions and success, said that "generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth" (Parekh 126). Later he wrote, "I believe that Gandhi's views were the most enlightened of all the political men of our time" (33). Then, Gandhi's image even moved from high culture to popular culture Bob Dylan, a pop singer, sang about Gandhi: "There was man named Mahatma Gandhi /He would not bow down, he would not fight/He knew the deal was down and dirty/ And nothing wrong could make it right way/But he knew his duty and the price he had to pay/ Just another holy man who tried to be friend /My God, they killed him" (Rudolph 33).

Gandhi has been a worldwide popular political figure now. He is revered from various perspectives. India has honoured him as the Father of the Nation and his birthday on 2 October is annually commemorated as *Gandhi Jayanti*, a national holiday. But yet, even five decades after his death opinions about his success and achievements remain deeply divided. Some of his critics view him as godlike, whereas some of them view him as a sectarian and communal. Whatever the opinions concerned about him, the present researcher tries to point out both – merits and

demerits, and merit and demerit- in this dissertation. As the day and night is inseparable – so the success and loopholes. That is why, the mortal Gandhi also cannot be an exception for this matter.

Gandhi's successes and loopholes are mentioned in the novel *Kanthapura*. Gandhian politics has developed the possibility of winning *swaraj* but at the end of the novel, it has been shown that characters face aimlessness.

Mahatma Gandhi was much renowned in South Africa before his arrival in India. With his arrival to India from South Africa in 1914, Gandhi entered the national political arena. His admirers had already started praising Gandhi and when he “returned to India, he had the prestige of a leader” (Rolland 15). Within some years, “the veteran Indian leader noticed in Gndhiji,” and people found on him, “an even more quality he has in him the marvelous spiritual power to turn ordinary men around him into heroes and martyrs” (Rolland 177).

But yet, he was new to India because he had recently come back from abroad; he had left India first for Britain and later for South Africa, and his almost all young days had been spent abroad. As advised by his ‘political guru,’ Gopal Krishna Gokhale, he traveled throughout the country with his ‘eyes open and mouth shut’ and basically found two important things which he considered in Indian politics. They are, first:

Violence was inherently evil, not a viable option for a people who had been discarded by the colonial rulers, and unlikely to build up moral courage, cultural self-confidence, and the capacity for concerted action among the masses. Gandhi thought that the method of *Satyagraha* that he had developed in South Africa was India's best hope. (Parekh 10)

And, second is reconstructive in its mode:

Gandhi worked out a comprehensive syllabus of a national regeneration, which he appropriately called the 'Constructive Programme.' Typically Gandhian in its content, it included both small and large items, covering different areas of life and some chosen largely for their symbolic value. It included such 'absolutely essential' proposals as Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability, a ban on alcohol, the use of *Khadi* (hand-spun cloth), the development of village industries and craft-based education. It also included equality for woman, health education, and use of indigenous language, economic equality, building up peasants' and workers' organizations, integration of the tribal people into mainstream political and economic life, a detailed code of conduct for students, helping lepers and beggars, and cultivating respect for animals. (Parekh 11)

Until 1919, however, Gandhi did not participate actively in the Indian nationalist movement. Hitherto, Gandhi had been interested in social reforms only, devoting particularly to the conditions of agricultural workers. When he stepped into the political field as leader of the opposition to the Rowlatt bills, he came forward with doctrine. Romain Rolland, a critic, opined: "To understand Gandhi's activity, it should be realized that his doctrine is like a huge edifice composed of two different floors or grades. Below is the solid groundwork, the basic foundation of religion. On this vast and unshakeable foundation is based the political and social campaign" (22).

Religion is not only the basic foundation for Gandhi; for him the Truth is also important for his politics. Again, Romain Rolland opines that "Gandhi feels that no matter how great his love for his country may be, his faith in his ideal, in Truth as

expressed in religion is greater still" [...] "if it came to the point he would always set truth first before liberty and even before his country" (21).

Thus, Gandhi's faith on religion and Truth became the fundamental tools for his political career. On the basis of religion, he awakened the people of India and in pursuit of Truth, he launched *satyagraha*, soul-force or truth-force. Gandhi is religious by nature, and his doctrine is essentially religious but he "believes in the religion of his people, in Hinduism" (Rolland 23). Gandhi was an extraordinary in adopting the religion. He was not a scholar of religion, attached to the punctilious interpretation of texts, nor is he a blind believer accepting unquestioningly all the traditions of his religion. His religion must satisfy his reason and correspond to the dictates of his conscience.

For Gandhi, God and Truth are synonymous. For a long time, Gandhi said, "'God is Truth' implying both that Truth was one of God's many properties and that the concept of God was logically prior to that of Truth" (Parekh 35). But during the course of his political activities, he learnt something new and said in Truth is God in 1926. He regarded this notion, "as one of his most important discoveries and thought that it crystallized his years of reflection" (Parekh 35).

Gandhi had a belief that every religion has a distinct moral and spiritual ethos and it is represented as a wonderful and irreplaceable spiritual composition. In the meantime, Gandhi sees truth in every religion and says, "[T]here was truth in each of them [religion] but that did not mean that they were all true, for they also contained falsehood" (Parekh 43). But one thing – what Gandhi believed that "religion was the basis of life and shaped all one's activities" (Parekh 44). Thus, his 'religion was concerned with how one lived, not what believed; with a lived and living faith and not the 'dead bones of dogmas' (Parekh 42). Gandhi had views of religion quite distinct:

"For him a religion was not an authoritative, exclusive, and monolithic structure of ideas and practices, but a resource from which one freely borrowed whatever one found persuasive. It was thus a collective human property and formed part of mankind's common heritage" (Parekh 45).

Religion for him "resource, a body of insights to be extracted, combined and interpreted in the way he thought proper" (Parekh 47). Therefore, Gandhi's approach to religion was "profoundly historical, uninhabited, anti- traditionalist and liberal, and did not involve understanding religious traditions in their own terms" (Parekh 48). Thus, Gandhi's view placed the individual at the centre of the religious search; he liberated religion from the stranglehold of traditionalism and literalism encouraged fresh reading of scriptures, and made space for an inter-religious dialogue.

Moreover, Gandhi took the concept of *ahimsa* (non-violence), a chief political tool to him, taken from the Buddhism and the Jainism. What Gandhi believed is that every conflict can be resolved by means of rational discussion or persuasion. For him the use of violence denies "the ontological facts that all human beings [have] souls, that they [are] capable of appreciating and pursuing good, and that no one was so degenerate that he [can] not be won over by appealing to his fellow- feeling and humanity" (Patrick 65).

For Gandhi, "a non-violent revolution is not a programme of seizure of power. It is a programme of transformation of relationships, ending in a peaceful transfer of power" (Parekh 67). Thus, he kept this non-violent revolution till the independence of India.

As non-violence is a means to get *swaraj* or self-rule for Gandhi, truth was the goal. After visiting many Indian places, Gandhi was in search of a new kind of method to resolve the problem. Such a method which should activate the soul,

mobilize the individual's latent moral energies, appeal to both the head and the heart, and create a climate conducive to peaceful resolution of conflict conducted in a spirit of mutual goodwill. And Gandhi thought all these requirements would be met in *satyagraha*. He first discovered and practised it during his campaigns against racial discrimination in South Africa. After considering these things Gandhi vowed: "*Swaraj* can only be attained by soul-force. This is India's real weapon the invincible weapon of love and truth" (43). This was *satyagraha*, soul-force or truth force for Gandhi.

Three fold energy of love, faith, and sacrifice is expressed in the word *satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* was a 'surgery of the soul', a way of activating 'soul-force'. For Gandhi 'suffering love' was the best way to do this, and formed the inspiring principle of his new method. And it "aimed to penetrate the barriers of prejudice, ill-will, dogmatism, self-righteousness, and selfishness, and to reach out to and activate the soul of the opponent" (Parekh 68).

Even confronting with an injustice, the *satyagrahi* sought dialogue with his opponent and if the dialogue was denied:

The *satyagrahi* took a principled stand on what he sincerely believed to be his just demands, and patiently and uncomplainingly suffered whatever violence was done to him. His opponent saw him as an enemy or a troublemaker. He refused to reciprocate, and saw him instead as a fellow human being whose temporarily eclipsed sense of humanity it was his duty to restore. (Bakshi 6)

Satyagrahi should take his stand on the fundamental moral truth and should keep channels of communication open with the opponent; and he should even love the opponent. *Satyagraha* aimed not just to resolve existing disagreements but also to build deeper moral and emotional bonds between enemies, and thus both give the

compromise reached a firmer foundation and make future conflicts less likely and less intractable. Similarly, a satyagrahi should presuppose a sense of decency on the part of opponent and an open society in which his brutality can be exposed, and a neutral body of opinion that can be mobilized against him.

It also presupposes that the parties involved are interdependent, as otherwise non-cooperation by the victims cannot affect the vital interests of their opponents, and that the victims have both sufficient self-confidence and a reasonably effective organization to fight against injustices. So to get its benefits, the *Satyagrahi* was required to take a pledge not to use violence or to resist arrest or confiscation of his property. Similarly rules were laid down for the *satyagrahi* prisoners, who were expected to be courteous, to ask for no special privilege, to do as he has ordered, and never to agitate for convenience and their deprivation should not hurt anyone. And when one follows all these terms s/he has been a true *satyagrahi*, then s/he can be the follower of non-violence. Gandhi said: "You could not see the affects made by this non-violence because, 'in violence there is nothing invisible'. Non-violence on the other hand, is three-fourths invisible, and it acted in such a silent and undemonstrative manner that its working always retained an air of mystery" (Parekh 71).

The idea of *satyagraha* had highly affected Martin Luther King Jr. He adopted Gandhi's methods of nonviolent civil disobedience in his leadership of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s in America. King had the great commitment to Gandhi, he said: "Gandhi was probably the first person in history to fight the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale [...]. The whole concept of '*Satyagraha*' was profoundly significant to me (Rudolph 34).

King had "shared Gandhi's belief in the power of suffering love, his abhorrence of violence, emphasis on both the head and heart [...] (Parekh 76). And his "civil rights movement showed both the universal relevance of Gandhi's *satyagraha* and the need for its creative adaptation and development " (Parekh 77).

With the help of these tools-- non-violence and *satyagraha* -- Gandhi continued his anti- imperialist movement. Gandhi's ultimatum of 31 January 1930 to Lord Irwin, stating the minimum demands in the form of 11 points, had been ignored, and there was only one way out: that was the programme of civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes.

Civil Disobedience movement had the real impact in the history of Indian Independence movement. Gandhi, along with a band of India was to march from his headquarters in Ahemdabad through the villages of Gujarat for 240 miles. On reaching the coast at Dandi, he would break the salt laws. Gandhi inaugurated the Civil Disobedience Movement and urged them:

Whenever possible civil disobedience of salt laws should be started [...]. Liquor and foreign cloth shops can be picketed. We can refuse to pay taxes if we have the requisite strength. The lawyers can give up practice. The public can boycott the courts by refraining from litigation. Government servants can resign their posts [...]. I prescribe only one condition, viz, let one pledge of truth and non-violence as the only means for the attainment of *swaraj* be faithfully kept. (Chandra 27)

And once the way was cleared by Gandhi's ritual beginning at Dandi, the defiance of salt laws started all over the country. They started picketing the salt factories, liquor shops, and toddy shops, and many people boycotted the foreign clothes, many left the

schools and colleges, civil services and many more. By doing this, there came many people's arrest including the great leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi and others.

The attendance of many Indian people in the movement compelled the government to call for the Congress for an agreement. Then, the fortnight- long discussions culminated on 5 March 1931 as a 'truce' or a 'provisional settlement'. The Pact was signed by Gandhi on behalf of Congress and by Lord Irwin on behalf of the government, a procedure that was hardly popular with officialdom as it placed the congress on an equal footing with the government. The truce that signed by Gandhi and Irwin included the following agreements: the immediate release of all political prisoners who were not convicted for violence, the remission of all fines which were not yet collected, the return of confiscated lands which were not yet sold to third parties, and the government should give lenient treatment for the resigned employees. The Government also conceded the right to make salt for consumption to villages along the coast. The Congress became ready to discontinue the significant Civil Disobedience Movement.

The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-31, then, marked a critically important stage in the progress of the anti-imperialist struggle and stretched Gandhi's political view even further.

Negative Aspect of Gandhian Ideology

Although, Gandhi had been venerated by many people and had been an icon for numerous non-violent followers, he had not been able to be an exception from being criticized. Many critics took him as a separatist and communal. Gandhi's religious practices in politics angered many Indians. By keeping the fancy of Hindu-Muslim unity, he tried to explore a bond between two different communities but in the course of time that became fatal and paid the compensation by dividing the

country. This division came by Gandhi's monopoly in the National Congress and his insistence in every decision. He did not possess only praise and success, "[O]n two central points, however Gandhi met with total failure: India paid for its independence with partition, and this process was the very opposite of non-violence" (Trivedi 109). Besides this, many critics viewed Gandhi's action with mixed legacy. According to Bhikhu Parekh views:

[Gandhi's] basically conservative, puritanical, pro-bourgeois, and pacifist thought hindered the development of radical political movements, harmed the long-term interests of the dalits (formerly untouchables), burdened the Indian psyche with a sense of guilt about economic development, hampered the emergence of strong and powerful state and perpetuated unrealistic and confused ideas about human sexuality. His introduction of religious language into politics alienated the Muslims and rendered the partition of the country unavoidable. And his flawed strategy of national regeneration failed to develop the conventional forms of institutional politics, especially the ideologically based political parties that independent India badly needed and in whose absence its political life suffered grave damage.

(111)

Gandhi had used non-violence as the strongest weapon in the freedom movement but even the non-violence was being criticized severely. Koenraad Elst gives criticisms on non-violence numerically:

The first is that absolute non-violence is a lofty ideal fit for saints but unfit for the average human being – still an endorsement of non-violence as a moral principle. The second is that non-violence is

sometimes morally wrong, viz., when considerations of self defense and honour force us to face a determined enemy in battle i.e. when he forces the violent option upon us as the only remaining way to ensure survival and justice. The third is that Gandhi himself broke his own principle of non-violence on a number of occasions, e.g. when he took noncombatant service in the British war effort against the Boers and Zulus, or when he recruited Indian young men for the British Army in World War I in the vain hope of earning gratitude and political concessions. (41)

And the fourth criticism, he views as "the paradox that non-violence applied in a blind and injudicious manner leads to violence in extra large amount" (Elst 41-42).

Some of the critics discussed on Gandhi's practice of non-violence, "[It] is to endure or put up with the blows of the aggressor without showing any resistance either by weapon or by physical force" (Elst 122). His conception of non-violence, "drifted to the point of advocating surrender and death for victim, and an open field of victims for the aggressor" (Elst 122). By his advocacy of dying rather than fighting back proved that it was his lack of political rationale, "[W]hat is the use of non-violence if it simply means surrendering to the killers" (Elst 121).

It has to be considered that even the common sense of "almost every human being would claim the right to use force in self-defence, and the laws of most countries recognize this right" (Elst 122-23). But Gandhi never accepted this reality. Thus, on the issue of non-violence Gandhi was fanatic. He was also the paradoxical of his own policy because when he released from the jail in 1944, the release of other leaders also followed but on the condition that the government had to be assured also by the Congress leaders of their help in the war against Japan. At this proposal Gandhi

"not only did not oppose this but actually supported the government proposal" (Elst 124). That is why; this notion of non-violence of Gandhi had become only an imaginary to put forward in resistance. Many critics opine that non-violence could neither achieve anything nor defend. It has become only a tool to be killed by opponents. Sri Aurobindo, a Hindu critic, viewed Gandhi's non-violence in the same manner and said "non-violence can't defend. One can only die by it" (Elst 130).

Nathuram Godse viewed Gandhi's leadership as an autocratic and whimsical, and "[Godse's] criticism of Gandhi's autocratic and whimsical leadership was voiced by many inside the Congress movement" (Elst 129). By his autocratic nature in action, Gandhi became able to subdue other's voices in Congress and monopolized his policies during 1920s and 1930s. He was very much whimsical so that he had "the lack of strategic consistency in his policies" (103); this could be proved by:

A glaring example of Gandhi's whimsical policy shifts in his changing the course of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1929-31. The agreed aim of this mass agitation was complete independence, nothing less. Yet Gandhi threw the Movement into disarray by suddenly formulating far more modest demands. These were mostly conceded and included in an entirely individual pact between [Gandhi] himself and Viceroy Lord Irwin [in March 1931] promise of future parleys on constitutional reform, release of prisoners, restoring confiscated property and so on. (Elst 103)

Gandhi's autocratic nature was noticed by much more Godse than the other critic so that he expressed his bitter disagreement about Gandhi's nature in reference to the Civil Disobedience Movement in the following way:

He alone was the judge of every one and everything. He was the master brain guiding the Civil Disobedience Movement; nobody else knew the technique of that movement; he alone knew when to begin it and when to withdraw it. The movement may succeed or fail; it may bring untold disasters and political reverses but that could make no difference to the Mahatma's infallibility. 'A *satyagrahi* can never fail' was his formula for declaring his own infallibility and nobody except himself knew who a *Satyagrahi* was. Thus, Gandhiji became the judge and the counsel in his own case. [...]. No one single political victory can be claimed to his credit during 33 years for his political predominance [...]." (Elst 109)

Gandhi had firm belief that *Satyagraha* (soul-force) can achieve *Swaraj* and it never fails. But it was "wrong to argue that *satyagraha* never failed and that it was effective under all conditions"(Parekh 74). Even *Satyagraha* had its limitations as; like others and "[Gandhi] was wrong to claim 'sovereign efficacy' for it, it is a powerful, novel, and predominantly moral method of social change" (Parekh 75). But it could not be panacea and omnipotent. And though "he [Gandhi] was right to stress the unity of reason and morality or the head and heart as he called it, he was wrong to think that all or even most social conflicts could be resolved by touching the opponent's heart" (Parekh 73). In many circumstances we can see that even Gandhi's "*satyagrahis* were not always purely spiritual in nature" (71).

By such nature of the followers of Gandhism in the later years it was said that Gandhism had been murdered. And Jawaharlal Nehru, political heir of Gandhi became the convict for the death of Gandhism at first then Gandhi himself was too

responsible for it. Ram Gopal who criticized Gandhi from a Gandhian angle claimed the murder of Gandhism:

Jawaharlal has performed the last rites not only of Gandhi but of Gandhism as well. This has become the common place view: Nehru buried Gandhism, for by his anti-religious outlook, his policy of speedy industrialization, and his maintenance (in spite of pacifist posturing) of a sizable standing army, he went against Gandhian principles, and put India as a whole on an entirely no Gandhian course. (Elst 141)

Ram Gopal viewed that even Gandhi had not obeyed his own principles; "[A]n objective analysis of the political events from 1919 to 1947 reveals that Gandhi himself had discarded Gandhism during his lifetime" (Elst 141). The sharpest criticism of Gandhi nowadays comes from the so-called *Dalit* movement. In *Dalit Voice*, a mouthpiece of Dalits, M. M. Kothari, philosopher of Jodhpur University, puts Gandhi's Hinduism in the following way:

Hinduism in its most perverted form was preached and practised by Gandhi. He tried to obliterate the distinction between the life of a monk and the life of a householder by making ordinary people behave like monks. He wanted India to have a monkish economy, a monkish politics, a monkish foreign policy and a monkish defence policy. Consequently, under the leadership of Gandhi, India acquired a great heart but lost its head. (Elst 107)

Gandhi tried to purify everything with the use of religion. He found religion as a base of all activities whether it was political or economical or so on. He attached the

religious principles in every aspect of the activities that is why some of the people took him also as a saint.

Dalit leader Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar condemned Gandhi's terming the untouchable community as *Harijans*. Ambedkar and his allies also felt that Gandhi was undermining *Dalits'* political rights. Ambedkar was known that Gandhi had checked to acquire *Dalit* political rights so "his bitter dislike of Gandhi became even more intense [...]" (Elst 137). Ambedkar said that he was forced by Gandhi through the means of a five-day "fast unto death" to abandon the separate electorates in favour of a compromise known as the Poona pact of 1932, announcing mainly to representatives for untouchables in parliamentary seats and job recruitment (Elst 137).

Like Nathuram Godse, Dr, B.R. Ambedkar condemned Gandhi for "Muslim appeasement" (Elst 137). According to him, "Gandhi was unrealistic and foolhardy in his pursuit of Muslim support at the expense of Hindu lives and interests" (Elst 137). Many critics got the points to prove Gandhi as pro-Muslim, a separatist and communal when Gandhi's fantasy of Hindu-Muslim unity failed and resulted in lethal consequences - the partition of the country. The severest criticism came forward showing the greatest fault that ever done by Gandhi. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a Hindu activist, and his allies condemned Gandhi, accusing him of politically appeasing Muslims while turning a blind eye to their atrocities against Hindus, and for allowing the creation of Pakistan (despite having publicly declared that "before partitioning India, my body will have to be cut into pieces" (Aikant 8). Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar gawked by knowing the futility of Hindu- Muslim unity. He said "Hindu-Muslim unity up to now was at least in sight although it was like a mirage. Today it is out of sight and out of mind" (Elst 138). Gandhi's hope for Hindu-Muslim unity became only a fantasy that never came as true rather that created communal battle and

deserted many people's houses and lives on both sides- Hindu and Muslim. To bring the solidarity between two different communities, Gandhi became much loyal to Muslim but it nourished the Muslim leader to be bolder and kept on insisting the demand for Pakistan which later could not be stopped by Gandhi and the National Congress. It proved that after partition of country, Gandhi was a failure headed for the dustbin of history and enraged many nationalists.

Godse felt intolerable after the partition of India. He said "Gandhiji did undergo suffering for the sake of nation [...], [H]e also did nothing for personal gain [...], but I do maintain that even this servant of the country had no right to vivisect the country [...]" (Elst 127). So he advocated that "the accumulating provocation of 32 years culminating in [Gandhi's] last pro-Muslim fast goaded me to the conclusion that the existence of Gandhiji should be brought to an end immediately" (Elst 102).

Thus, having kept indignation in the mind, Godse fired the shots to Gandhi in 30 January 1948 and put the full stop on Gandhi's political activities then and there. Then, from the day of his arrest to the day of his execution, Godse defended himself and showed so many misdeeds of Gandhi, which compelled him to assassinate. On the basis of Godse's sayings on his trail, Koenraad Elst had summed up criticisms on Gandhi's character in seven points. They are as follow:

[Firstly] Gandhi's non-violent agitation had but a limited action radius: he only used it on people with whom he shared a number of cultural and moral premises, viz. Hindus and liberal Britons.

[Secondly] the political success of Gandhi's non-violent action was much more limited that is generally assumed (though more important that Godse was willing to admit), for other internal and external factors have decisively contributed to India's independence.

[Thirdly] in his policy on non-violence, Gandhi was erratic, and like a gentle surgeon he made some stinking wounds which demand a high toll in human lives.

[Fourthly] Gandhi made all sorts of appeasement gestures to please the Muslim League and the Muslim lobby inside the Congress [...].

[Fifthly] Gandhi flattered the Muslims and their religion endlessly.

With that, he did not convey the opinion of his Hindu constituents, and it was a strategic mistake in that it made the Muslim leaders more arrogant and less willing to compromise.

[Sixthly] Gandhi resolutely refused to learn anything from the feedback which political reality was providing [...].

[Finally] Gandhi was a dictator who used people as guinea-pigs for his "experiments with truth": his family (e.g. by refusing his sons the benefits of a formal education); his activist followers including the inmates of his ashram; and the Hindus in Muslim-dominated territories. (165-66)

By such activities, Gandhi had been proved as a cruel and arrogant man. His 30 years' political achievement and popularity culminated in the vivisection of India. It had proved that Gandhi got nothing except a complete failure in his life.

Besides these accusations, there is more which the present research has not mentioned here but at the same time there is much more admiration than the accusation itself. Whatever the fault did Gandhi have, that was overshadowed by his only one action that is liberating the country from the clutch of the British. Everyone can have weakness and strength at their back but which one is greater in terms of his action has to be considered. Decolonization was the most important task in reference

to other success and failure. He led the movement more than 30 years without having any covet for his personal benefit. He agreed the partition of the country at last to avoid the possibility of civil war in the country by taking the advice of his co-workers. For this researcher, Gandhi was the man of both thought and action. He was a man of thought because he saw the world through the madness of modernity and offered an alternative to it that combined the best insights of both the pre-modern and modern world views; he opposed the self indulgent individualism and moral complacency. As a man of thought, he also discovered a unique moral method of political change in the form of *satyagraha* and provided an effective alternative to violence and amazed the whole world. And as a man of action, he led the anti colonial struggle for more than 30 years in history, through the various means he encourage a humane and liberal form of patriotism, showed how to lead a successful political life without compromising one's integrity, and offered a rare example of morally responsible leadership.

However, Gandhi did nothing to change the view of his opponents. He objected the action of his own followers than followers of opposition; he criticized his own Hindu religion than others like Muslim and Christianity. Thus, he made his followers' voice less audible to the opponent's voice. But it would be a mistake to say that because of this nature of Gandhi, the country got the vivisection.

Whatever Gandhi had as merits and demerits but if we say truly, as a mortal human being Gandhi had weaknesses and strengths in his each role but no one could deny that he was certainly creative thinker, political leader, social reformer, and deeply religious person.

Chapter III

Textual Analysis

Impact of Gandhian Politics in *Kanthapura*

Kanthapura shows Gandhian influence on the nationalist movement. From the very beginning the novel treats the fight for the independence of India as a sacred event. It also shows how Gandhi's urge made Kanthapurians aware to fight against the British government in India, and describes the conflict between them. The Gandhians strive to fight against the Raj as much possible as non-violently whereas the British government tries to subdue their uprising through all kinds of means whether violently or non-violently. Being the prodigal child of Gandhian era the novelist Raja Rao responds very sensibly to the impact of politically divine revolution of Gandhi. He does it by mixing fact and fiction, myth and reality. He states "You remember how Krishna, when he was but a babe of four, had begun to fight against demons and had killed serpent Kali. So too our Mohandas began to fight against the enemies of the country" (*Kanthapura* 16).

Raja Rao is an exponential literary figure who shows the centrality of Gandhi in the creation of a national identity for India. In *Kanthapura* he highly represents how the impact of Gandhian politics came into a small village of Southern India. Rao, more truly has metamorphosed Gandhi into Moorthy, the protagonist of the novel. Rao is very positive towards Gandhi; he takes him even as god and portrays him sometimes as Shiva, Krishna, and Rama during the course of events but he disapproves an uncritical worshipping of the Mahatma. Thus, the entire novel speaks for how a creative writer assimilates and transcends a contemporary political reality into the cultural consciousness of a tradition, race and people.

Kanthapura is a picture gallery of living village folk. The village itself is microcosm of all Indian villages. It is in the state of Mysore, in the Valley of Himavathy River "curled up like a child on its mother's lap" (190). Right in the centre of the village is the temple Kenchamma, which is the focal point of all religious and social activities. In the village, Kanthapura, there is Moorthy, a Brahmin bachelor who has recently come back to the village from the city. Once he went to city for further study but when he came to learn the Gandhian ways, he has become the true follower of Gandhi. He starts spreading the Mahatma's message among the villagers. He has come back by the urge of Gandhi and now he is uniting people for the resistance against the British rule as accordance with the Gandhi's instructions and notions. To do this, he finds a *linga* (a phallic symbol, representing the god Shiva); he washes and consecrates then puts in the old temple where he starts singing *bhajans* (hymns), and reciting *harikathas* (11). This unusual *Harikatha* dramatizes Mahatma Gandhi's birth as a reincarnation of Krishna, sent by Brahma's daughter, India, and he is sent to fight against the enslavement of the British. As Gandhi had the basic foundation on religion and so have the village and the novel. The novel *Kanthapura* begins with the praying of goddess Kenchamma and consecrating a half-sunk *linga* (a phallic symbol of god Shiva) in the temple. The activities that take place in the novel are intertwined with religion. And even the end of the story is in the worshipping of the god and goddess in a temple. But at the mean time, the novel records the Gandhian impact on a typical Indian village, which is brought by the intimate narration of an elderly widow, Achakka.

Men and women are drawn from all sectors of the village and the coffee estate. There are Brahmin Street, Pariah Street, Potter's Street, and Weaver's Street in the village. The villagers scare to go to the Pariah Street except Moorthy, who is the

one who behaves all castes and classes equally. Moorthy gets support from Rangamma, a kind old widow, Ratna, a hot young widow, and Patel Range Gowda, a man. The freedom movement brings the Brahmins and the Sudras, the Potters and the Weavers, and the Pariahs together. The leader of the movement in Kanthapura and the inspirer of all social and political ideals is Moorthy who goes through life as "a noble cow, quite, generous, serene, deferent and Brahminic, a very prince" (6). Moorthy is a true Gandhian who inspires the villagers to practise all the ideals of the Mahatma. C. D. Narasimhaiah says, it was "Gandhi's greatness that he produced hundreds of little Gandhis throughout the country" (x). And Corner-House Moorthy is one of them who is called 'our Moorthy' and 'our Gandhi' by the villagers. Moorthy is one who tries to unite all in the thread of humanity eroding all the hierarchy and bias of caste division. The villagers talk: "We said to ourselves, he is one of these Gandhimen, who say there is neither caste nor clan nor family, and yet they pray like us and they like us. Only they say, too, one should not marry early, one should allow widows to take husbands and a Brahmin might marry a pariah and a pariah a Brahmin" (13).

As the village gains momentum in the dynamics of the struggle for independence under the stewardship of Moorthy, these distinctions at once disappear, and we see pariah Rachanna holding discussion in the Brahmin quarter, and Moorthy addressing the issues in the Potters' community. He preaches the Gandhi's sayings; he urges to sing *bhajans* (hymns) in the temple and he arranges all religious ceremonies. In the mean time, he persuades them to be a *satyagrahi*, and to follow the path of Mahatma Gandhi because they are revolting against the unjust rule of British Raj.

Kanthapura contains mainly the events that take place during 1920s and early 1930s of India. The non-cooperation movement of 1920 included within its ambit the surrender of titles and honours. Boycott of government affiliated schools, college and

universities, law courts, foreign cloth, and could be extended to include resignation from the government service and mass civil disobedience including the non payment of taxes. National schools and colleges were to be set up, *panchayats* were to be established for setting disputes, hand-spinning and weaving was to be encouraged and people were asked to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity, give up untouchability and observe strict non-violence. And all these recourses are practised by the villagers in Kanthapura. When Moorthy heard the speech of Gandhi," he came back to the college that evening, he threw his foreign clothes and his foreign books into the bonfire, and walked out, a Gandhi's man" (49). Likewise, Dore, 'the University graduate', "had given up his books and hat and suit and had taken to *dhoti* and *khadi*, and it was said he had even given up his city habit of smoking" (6). Not only these two even Kittu and Srinivas and Puttu and Rama and Chandra and Seenu obeyed the principles of non-co-operation movement," threw their foreign clothes and became Gandhi's men" (18). By this, it can be seen that gradually Kanthapurians convert themselves into Gandhi's men. But it is true that this back-of- beyond village slumbering for centuries suddenly comes to life when the non-violent non-cooperation movement of Gandhi comes into effect in the twenties. It is in the handling of this theme that the novelist quickens it to activity and thus gives us an insight into the appalling social conditions of India's villages as also the values that have preserved its people against flood, fire, famine and exploitation from within and without – and more than all, that incomparable manner in which Gandhi tapped the deeply religious and spiritual resources of people living in the remotest parts of India and built up a national movement in a life time.

Similarly, Gandhi's programme of Civil Disobedience Movement is highly highlighted in the novel. Gandhi's protest by making Salt at Dandi beach; and

picketing liquor and foreign cloth are deliberately explained in the novel. But the villagers are not always successful while following the principles of Gandhi in national movement. The presence of the police, Bade Khan, and the owner of Skeffington Coffee Estate, are representing the British government in Kanthapura. The villagers (except few) are called the followers of Gandhi and non-violence and they are *satyagrahis* (follower of Truth or soul-force). But their notion of *Satyagraha* gets failure by being violent time and again. When Moorthy, a *satyagrahi* goes to teach for the Skeffington Coffee Estate coolies, Bade Khan, a police, stops him at the entrance. But Moorthy wants to enter the Coffee Estate but at the mean time "Bade Khan swings round and – Bang! – his *lathi* has hit Moorthy and his hands are on Moorthy's tuft" (85). By seeing their leader has been beaten "they all fall on Bade Khan and tearing away the *lathi*, bang it on his head" (85). Moorthy's non-violent notion of fighting against the government culminates in violence. Eventually two Brahmin, Gandhian clerks who work at the Estate manage to calm down the crowd. So he is unable to enter the Estate and goes "away down to Kanthapura and spends the night there" (85). But because of it, Rachanna, a member of Congress Committee, has to face his migration from the Estate in the following day.

Gandhi sought to achieve personal purity and spirituality in his own life through various traditional Hindu modes of renunciation: by wearing only a loin-cloth; by abstaining from sex; having recourse to long fast. Moorthy, a protagonist also follows the same way, he refuses to marry and when the violence occurs he fasts. But it is Gandhi's spirituality that led to his being popularly called Mahatma (etymologically 'one with great soul', and idiomatically 'a holy man'). '*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!*' (Victory to Mahatma Gandhi) became a national slogan quite as much as '*Vande Mataram*' (I salute to Motherland); both are heard to resound equally

throughout *Kanthapura*. Whenever ceremony occurs whether it is Kartik lighting ceremony or *Satyanarayan Puja* or *Sankara Jayanti*, they shout the slogans *Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!* or *Vande Mataram!* or sometimes even *Inquilab Zindabad!* (Long live the Revolution). But being the follower of non-violence and Gandhi, the villagers turn violent time and again. Gandhi halted Non-cooperation Movement when the killing of policemen at Chauri Chaura happened in 1922 because his followers were violent at that time. But in contrast to it, in the novel violence occurs but they do not take pause in the movement. The violence occurs again when the villagers were lighting the lights in Kartik. Moorthy, a leader address "brothers, in the name of the Mahatma, let there be peace and love and order ... we hurt none [...]. And if these gentlemen [police were there] want to arrest us, let them. Give yourself up to them [...]" (120). But his urge goes in vain when the battle begins between *satyagrahis* and the policemen. Range Gowda "rushes down and, stick in hand, gives one bang on the head of policeman, and the policeman sinks down [...]" (122). This incident shows that as in reality Gandhi's men did not obey the principles of Gandhi truly, and so does the case happen in the novel during the leading of Moorthy.

Gandhi kept on believing that the success of free-India movement and the development of India would only be materialized when the village communities are uplifted. So he first sought to develop every village whether by spinning or weaving or by establishing Congress Committee. When Moorthy went to see the Karwar Congress Committee, he brought the spinning wheels and he "went to the Sudra quarters and the Potters' quarters and the Weavers' quarters" (23). He even went to the Brahmin street and requested to Nose-Scratching Nanjamma, "Sister, the congress is giving away free spinning-wheels" (23). Further he said:

Will you spin, sister? You see, you have nothing to do in the afternoons after the vessels are washed and the water drawn, and if you spin just one hour a day, you can have a bodice-cloth of any color or breadth you like, one bodice-cloth per month, and a sari every six months. And during the first month, the cotton is given free. (23)

After it, he even says to the villagers that millions of yards of foreign cloth come to this country which makes them poor and polluted. He further says that it is sacred to wear cloth spun and woven with their own God-given hands. What he says that if they do not need such cloth, they can give to the poor. Mahatma had said "our country is being bled to death by foreigners, we have to protect our Mother" (24). Moorthy becomes able to distribute the spinning wheels in every quarter. He offers free spinning wheels to all Kanthapurians, including the Pariahs, saying that India is being bled to death by foreigners, and that any unwanted cloth made with one's own hands, as the Mahatma urges it be made, should be given to the poor.

Gandhi is almost universally acknowledged as one of the iconic great men of the modern age. One of his greatest achievements was that the radically different political idiom he inaugurated had a moral, an ethical and even a spiritual core to it, as embodied especially in the practice of non-violent resistance. Rao presents this non-violent resistance in *Kanthapura* vividly. Moorthy addresses acts of Gandhi and congress: "There is a huge panchayat of all India called the Congress, and that Congress belongs to Mahatma, and Mahatma says every village in this country must have a Panchayat like that, and everybody who will become a member of that Panchayat will spin and practice ahimsa and speak the truth" (103).

Moorthy tells the Kanthapurians in the temple assemblage that they have to establish a parallel government in Kanthapura, whose first act would be to reappoint

Range Gowda to the inherited post of *patel* from which the government had removed him in order to install puppet. Then, Moorthy with the help of Range Gowda, Rngamma, Rachanna and Seenu forms the Panchayat Committee of Kanthapura. After two days enlisting twenty-three members' names along with five rupees and twelve annas he sends it to the provincial Congress Committee. The close association of Gandhi's disciple Moorthy with the untouchable Pariahs that involves him in serious conflict, first with Brahmins fearful of 'pollution,' then with the government, anxious over his Gandhian political influence on the Pariahs. Despite the warning of other Brahmins, Moorthy continues to go into the house of the so-called untouchables; and at last, he is said to be excommunicated for the generations when he carries the dead body of the Pariah while putting into the pyre. He is outcasted by the help of Bhatta who goes to the city and brings the message of excommunication from the bribe-taking Swami. This outcaste becomes intolerable to Moorthy's mother then she kills herself in the bank of Himavathy River. This religiously bent society could not change by Gandhi's politics. Though Mooorthy is hateful to Bhatta, Waterfall Venkamma and for few others, he is lovable to Rnagamma, Ratna, Seenu and others especially for the Pariah members. Moorthy, back in the village following his mother's death, lives at the house of a cultivated Brahmin widow, Rnagamma – the house having become an informal Congress headquarter.

The novel vividly depicts the atrocities that are done by the British government in India. The Whiteman who owns the Skeffington Coffee Estate is a symbol of the imperialist rulers of India who exploits Indians in various ways. As a supporter of the Estate owner, there comes Bade Khan, a police. The British government employs agents like Bhatta and the Swami to oppose the freedom movement. Bhatta takes an active part to oppose the freedom movement in

Kanthapura. He is the one who takes the message of the pollution of Brahmin caste after Moorthy put the dead body of pariah in the pyre. He brings the message of Moorthy's excommunication from the bribe-taking Swami. Bhatta lends money at the reasonable interest but when he comes to know that a Panchayat Committee is formed in Kanthapura he becomes angry. Then he increases the rate of interest to the members of the Congress. He says "every squirrel has his day and now for every Congress member the interest will go up to 18 and 20 per cent" (110). Bhatta starts thinking about his allies who would support to oppose the freedom movement. Meanwhile, he remembers Venkamma who is in need of a groom for her daughter, and he says if he becomes able to find a groom for her daughter she will come to support him. Similarly, he remembers others whom he thinks as they are in his favour. They are Temple Rangappa, Patwari Nanjundia, schoolmaster Devaraya, Rama Chetty, and Subba Chetty.

Swami stays in the city and he arranges programme of the priests. He is for the sake of preserving religion. But with his constant opposition of the freedom movement, he is rewarded by the British government with the gift of fertile lands.

The real fight takes place soon as Moorthy says "we are out for action" (169). When Gandhiji, along with a band of seventy eight members of the Sabarmati ashram was to march from his headquarters in Ahmedabad through the villages of Gujarat for 240 miles, on reaching the coast at Dandi, he would break the salt laws by collecting salt from the beach. This event creates great anxiety among the villagers. Moorthy states, "[D]o you know, brothers and sisters, the Mahatma has left Sabarmati on a long pilgrimage" (169). He says that the Mahatma has gone to Dandi beach to manufacture salt, so they too have to wait for his success and "when the real fight begins" they "shall follow in the wake of Master" (169).

Here, it is seen that the name of Gandhi acts like a charm in every part of India and the people in remote and far away Kanthapura wait and bait breath and observe a fast in order to show their solidarity with Mahatma as he set out on his historic Dandi March. On the day of the manufacturing of salt, the followers of Gandhi of Kanthapura go for ablution in the river and whenever they dip into, at that time they shout "*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai!*" (173). They celebrate it as a religious ceremony, for the midday meal they give their "*men Paysam and Chitranna* as though it were Gauri's Festival, and the men [are] happy" (173). The next day, they come to know from the papers that Mahatma had taken a handful of salt and broke the salt laws of the British government in India. These actions of Gandhi arouse hope for many people and they are willing for the march but when the villagers come to know the arrest of Mahatma, they are lost in confusion. Thomas Weber says "the authorities had hoped that with Gandhi's arrest the idea of raids on the salt works would cease and so elaborate plans for dealing with the raids had not been worked out" (433). But things did not happen so; somehow it affected the villagers of Kanthapura because their hope for march dwindled slowly.

When Rangamma establishes a Sevika Sangh of women, she gets criticized by many and even some of the members of Sangh get beaten by their husbands. C.D. Narasimhaiah says "both the religious *bhajans* and the nationalist movement have helped the novelist penetrate into the deeper layers of human nature and observe the pettiness, greed, jealousy and, in some cases, callousness and inhumanity of the so-called spiritually bent Indians" (xvi). The first arrest of Moorthy has created fear in the heart of villagers and the inclusion of their wives in Sevika Sangh has much more affected to them thus, they say, "Our lands will go uncultivated, and there will be neither child nor women to pull the weeds or direct the canal water" (154). So they

have become impatient with the hope of Gandhi's Ramrajya and express, "We cannot hope for Ramrajya in these days; we live in Kaliyuga [...] (154). Gandhi had deployed symbols and practices that belonged to popular Hinduism to appeal to the masses. Gandhi had said *swaraj* would ideally be like Ramrajya, the rule of Lord Rama, the divine hero of the epic scripture, *Ramayana*.

But later this trope has been seen as indicative that Gandhi conceived of independence in communal, sectarian Hindu terms. Gandhi had seen god as synonymous to Truth and Truth with Freedom. Gandhi had said that for him truth is the sovereign principle, the Absolute, the Essential Principle and at least that is God and he worshipped God as Truth only. This belief of Gandhi's finds resonance in *Kanthapura* in the worship of the abstract *Satyanarayana* – that is, God as Truth. Thus, Moorthy, as a true *satyagrahi* also keeps firm belief in Truth. When he was arrested, many people suggest him to take an advocate on behalf of him but he said "Between Truth and me none shall come," and "if Truth is one, all men are one before it" (123). As Moorthy has firm belief in truth so does have an advocate, Sankar. He is a city-dweller. Sankar presents ideals of patriotism and national integration in the novel. Sankar's professional attitude reflects that of Mahatma Gandhi of the days when he worked as a lawyer in South Africa. He never takes up a false case, and he either gives up a case or makes the client confess the crime, if he later finds out that his case is false. Once he took the case of Subba Chetty but later he found that the claim of Subba Chetty was false. He made him confessed in front of the magistrate. From that day, people say "Take care when you go to Sankar; he will never take a false case" (141).

Sankar does not wear clothes that are manufactured in foreign countries. He wears *khadi* coat and rough yarn turban therefore, people laugh at him saying "look

there, there goes the Ascetic Advocate" (138). But he does not leave to follow the principles of the Mahatma.

In spite of being South Indian, Sankar had a firm belief that Hindi "would be the national language of India" (141). He says "though Kannada is good enough for our province, Hindi must become the national tongue [...]" (141). And it is not just a theoretical belief with him but something that he has actually practised in his life. He starts speaking Hindi with his mother who understands "not a word of it [Hindi]," and he also talks Hindi with his daughter (141). By chance if he uses an English word as they do in the city, he drops a coin in the little closed pot. And if any of his friends utters an English word he requests them to drop the coin. But if anyone refuses to drop the coin he drops one coin himself.

He is very devoted to follow the ideology of Gandhi. If he is called into the marriage party, he says "everyone must be in khadi" and there should not be alcoholic drinks otherwise he will not go. (141). By such incidents, it shows that Gandhian ideology is not only carried in the mind rather some of the persons have also practised in real life.

Gandhi is reverentially regarded by most villagers in *Kanthapura*, but he remains a distant and even somewhat blurred presence. In the novel, Gandhi never appears but he becomes able to move the villagers with his activities through Moorthy. The villagers take Moorthy as their own Gandhi. Whatever Moorthy says and does that becomes the acts of the Mahatma for the villagers. Not many of the illiterate villagers really understand the details and nuances of Gandhi's political philosophy, but they nevertheless act out faithfully and bravely his essential message, which is that the oppressive British rule, must be opposed non-violently. Though some of them become impatient and turn into violence but as much as possible they

are obeying Gandhi's principles. On the day of launching Civil Disobedience, Gandhi said "Whenever possible, civil disobedience of salt laws should be started [...].

Liquor and foreign cloth shops can be picketed. We can refuse taxes if we have the requisite strength. The lawyers can give up practice [...]. I prescribe only one condition, viz., let our pledge of truth and non-violence as the only means for the attainment of *Swaraj* be faithfully kept" (271).

The villagers of Kanthapura make a plan to picket at first Boranna's toddy grove then his toddy booth. Moorthy leads the picketing movement and the followers come behind him. Carried on the wave of emotion evoked by Moorthy's speech, all over a hundred men, women, and children, soon joined by a group of Pariahs from the Skeffington Coffee Estate, begin a march behind Moorthy and other *Panchayat* leaders, toward a grove of toddy trees. They said "We [Kanthapurians] were a hundred and thirty-nine in all, and we marched out to Boranna's toddy grove" (181). But there were also men come from Tippur and Subbur, Kanthur for their aid. Stopped by a police inspector who announces that the march is forbidden, Moorthy thanks him but calmly says he would follow the Congress's instructions. But the Police Inspector insists to check them at the toddy grove, and then the chaotic situation rises. The villagers try to picket the toddy grove with the shouting of '*Vande Mataram!*' and '*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!*' But finally policemen catch them and took into Karwar police station. A few days after that essentially symbolic civil disobedience action at the toddy grove, Moorthy leads the Gandhians in picketing a toddy booth, where Skeffington Coffee Estate coolies buy temporary oblivion of their misery. And for the toddy booth also the same thing was repeated as in the toddy grove. While picketing Boranna's toddy grove and booth, the *satyagrahis* do not give up themselves to the police when the police desired, as Gandhi had said. The police

have to labour hard to arrest them. They, except few, are released in the same night dispersing at different places.

As *satyagrahi*, they also determine not to pay taxes to the government. When the collector comes there "only these one, two, three, four, five, six, seven families that pay the Revenue dues" (208). Because of it, the British government launches new taxes among them and told that "if the revenues were not paid and the laws not obeyed, everyman, woman and child above six in Kanthapura, would pay one rupee and three pice, one rupee and three pice as punitive tax, [...]. The Government would rule the country and the troublesome ones, one after another, would be sent to prison" (208-9).

But they do not obey the order, and then the next time, their land is going to be auctioned and they are going to be arrested. As the Kanthapurian civil disobedience campaign reaches its apogee- a mass refusal, with the exception of a few inhabitants, including Bhatta- to pay tax bills, the government makes plan for its intention to crack down. Suddenly, Moorthy, after having gone from house to house the night before along with Rangamma and her young niece Ratna, to keep up people's courage, and to promise to help them if their dwellings were entered by government agents or the police. Many others have also been arrested during the night; and now, as the police use an elephant to batter down the door of Rangamma's house and the whole village seems to be a battlefield. Ratna, after narrowly avoiding rape by a policeman, assumes leadership of the Gandhian women. She leads them to refuge in the temple, where to her dismay Achakka and the others express joy at the sudden sight of a fire roaring up at Bhatta's house who is supposed to be their enemy. Many vans and buses come to their land and more policemen come to Kanthapura village and start ravaging the village. They try to protest but police disperse and chase them everywhere. While

ravaging, Puttamma, a *satyagrahi* is raped by police, and all men and women, escape from their houses. When they rush from one place to another there come shrieks and moans "from the Brahmin Street and the Weavers' Street and the cattle begin to moo and moan and flap-flap of whips is still heard from the mango grove beyond the Promontory [...]. We think neither of Puttamma nor Seethamma nor Moorthy nor Mahatma, but the whole world seems a jungle in battle [...]" (214). So during the fight they only think for themselves and forget the notion of *satyagrahis* - even love your enemies - when Rachanna's grandson and Moorthy are arrested; they shouted "butchers, butchers, and dung-eating curs!" and escape from there (112). Their houses are broken into, their belongings destroyed, their lands confiscated but they still have strength, enthusiasm and vigor for further protest.

After their strife of picketing toddy grove and toddy booth, the presence of police increases more. Moorthy is arrested, so he is no longer there. But for their aid, the city boys come. A few days after Moorthy's arrest, it becomes clear that the government has auctioned all of the tax-refusers' lands. Nevertheless, even after a public announcement names the attached fields, one of the young Gandhian volunteers from the city over-confidently assures the villagers that no land will actually be sold. He asserts that congress is receiving money from the sale of salt by the Mahatma's followers; furthermore, government courts are closed in Karwar, and everywhere new Indian courts are being set-up.

The villagers "have decided to hold a *Satyanarayan Puja* on Saturday, a market day. And when the city boys arrive, they convey their success in different parts of the country. As they are preparing for *puja*, at the meantime the advocate Sankar arrives from the city with some of his friends. The villagers 'feel a holy

presence' among them. But in the village more cars and buses are coming and finally their land is auctioned.

Now, in the absence of Moorthy, Ratna, a young widow takes the part of Moorthy, and leads the procession. At first, Seenu blows the conch but later Ratna herself blows and all shout "*Satyanarayn Maharaj Ki Jai!*" when the police see the crowd, they become alert and come nearer. At first, the police take it as a political demonstration but when the villagers shout the praising of *satyanarayana*, they know it is a religious procession. The crowd is moving forward to the Skeffington Coffee Estate along Bebbur Mound and it arises doubt to the police Inspector and asks to Ratna where they are heading, but he does not get the right answer.

And as they begin to march, it is not '*Satyanarayan Maharaj Ki Jai!*' come to their throats but '*Vande Mataram*' they shout out "*Vande Mataram – Mataram Vnade!*" And "*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!*" then the police are so infuriated that they rush to beat "this side and that, and from this courtyard and that garden from behind this door and that byre [...]" (236). The greatest battle has begun that had never taken place in Kanthapura.

The first scene of fight at this time is presented in quite different way; Achakka says "the Mahatma will speak of love to all men says '*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!*' '*Inquilab Zindabad!, Inquilab Zindabad!*' – and the police *lathis* shower on us" (238). As the fight lasts longer, the police become more furious, the coolies of Skeffington Coffee Estate are rolling down for the help of *satyagrahis*. The police order them not to demonstrate there because that place is forbidden but the demonstrators do not obey then; the havoc is created. Men and women are running here and there. Finally, the police can not handle the mob properly and start firing at last. They fire in air firstly then to the crowd. Some of the demonstrators get injured.

And as they come closer, the police rush forward with their steel-tipped *lathis* and set upon the non-resisting *satyagrahis* till they fall down. But even after it, the police can not stop the crowd's movement. Rao writes:

[T]he crowd below feels so furious that, shouting '*Inquilab Zindabad*' they run forward, and the police can stop them no more, and they jump over field-bunds and tumble against gas-lights and fall over rocks and sheaf, sickles and scythes, three thousand men in all and from the top of the Mound Soldiers open fire. (244)

Many people including women and children shriek, cry, and moan, Vedamma 'gets a bullet in the left leg' and 'a fleeing man near by is shot in the chest and he falls'. The injured would be carried away by their comrades on make-shift stretcher and another column would take their place, be beaten to pulp, and carried away. In this time, city-boys as they come for aid help to carry the injured and somehow they also lead the procession.

The *satyagrahis* demonstrate effectively that non-violent resistance was no meek affair. When the 'white man shouts a command and all the soldiers open fire' and all the soldiers charge, they come rushing towards the demonstrators, their turbans trembling and their bayonets shinning and the bright moon, and the demonstrators lie flat on the fields, the city boys and the women, and the soldiers dash upon them and trampled over them and bang heavily their rifle-butts against the demonstrators heads. After it, "there seems to be not a beating pulse in all Kanthapura" (247).

But the attack begins again and at this time the soldiers become fiercer. They cannot tolerate the shouting of "*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!*" and they rush towards the demonstrating coolies. The coolies also attack the soldiers. Because of this fight many

persons get killed, many injured and three thousand men run "shrieking and slaying weeping, wounding, groaning, crawling, swooning, vomiting, bellowing, moaning, raving, gasping [...]" (251). And as the flames of light rise, there are shots again. Rachanna's wife, Rachi could 'bear the sight no more' and she says, "in the name of goddess, I'll burn this village [...] if the rice is to be lost let it be lost in the ashes" (252). Then, she sets a fire into a thatch, that fire catches every thatch and house of Kanthapura. And they start their journey into the unknown destination. They have to cross many places for their safety and relief. So after their departure there remains "neither man nor mosquito in Kanthapura" (259).

The desertification of this village is a failure in terms of Gandhi's policy. Gandhi said "A *satyagrahi* whether free or incarcerated, is ever victorious. He is vanquished only when he forsakes truth and non-violence and turns a deaf ear to the Inner Voice" (132-33). Yet, for all their devout Gandhism, even the villagers of Kanthapura are shown by Rao not by any triumph but by a crushing defeat and flight.

Though, the *satyagrahis* are still all for the Mahatma; it turns out that their leader Moorthy, their own Gandhi, is no longer. As Gandhi and Viceroy Irwin signed a Pact in a truce, many prisoners came out. Ratna comes out after it and told everything. She informs that Moorthy has been already got released already and informs that he is now in Nehru camp where he has gone to learn many things. He has changed his icon now; he says on coming out of prison:

[T]hings must change [...] Jawaharlal [Nehru] will change it. You know. Jawaharlal is like a Bharata [younger brother] to the Mahatma [considered as Rama], and he, too is for non-violence and he, too, is Satyagrahi, but he says in *swaraj* there shall be neither the rich nor the

poor. And he calls himself an equal-distributionist; and I am with him
[Nehru] and his men. (257-58)

When the narrator tries to worship in the temple in Kashipura, a child comes and informs that someone; who is tall has arrived to meet her. At first, she gets scared but when she looks outside it's Rnage Gowda, who is also a Gandhi man and *patel*. He informs that their village has been a desert. It has been destroyed, forsaken and vacant. At last, Achakka, the narrator, reveals that Ratna has gone to Bombay, evidently to join Moorthy in a non-violent struggle for both Indian independence and more justice for India's people. But, when the narrator tells all these things, she says that her heart beats like a drum.

So Gandhi's politics could not gain success at the last stage of the events in the novel. It gave impetus to the villagers to move forward against the oppressive British Raj but their will of being free from the clutch of alien, is culminated in homelessness and migration. But yet the vast mass of the people undoubtedly impress that the mighty British Government has to take their movement and their leader as an equal and sign a pact with him. They, not all, saw the truce as recognition of their own strength, and as their victory over the government. The thousands who flocked out of the jails as a result of the pact are treated as soldiers returning from a victorious battle and not as prisoners of war returning from a humiliating defeat. They know that a truce is not a surrender, and that battle can be joined again, if the enemy so wanted. The novelist talks only this time of twenties and thirties, thus there is not real victory, only defeat and failure of Gandhian ideology. The novel deals with all Gandhi's political ideas directly and indirectly. Besides these events the researcher has discussed above here, there are so many references that were impacted by Gandhian politics, such as resigning from the government posts by government servants,

boycotting the courts by public, giving up practice by lawyers, speaking of Hindi as a national language, active participation of women in the movement, such as Rangamma, Ratna, Rachi, and so on. And all these are the outcome of Gandhi's politics.

Gandhi's determination of winning of *satyagrahi* is lost in *Kanthapura* and the villagers of *Kanthapura* have to migrate from their own place. Thus, it is seen that Gandhi's politics has also some loopholes but as a whole if we consider it is true that Gandhian politics has impacted in each and every act of the villagers and in every part of the country to change the then existing notions and practices and more than all these, it has created a hope for defeating the British Government in the near future.

It is the text of 1920s and early 1930s that is why, there is no sight of winning against the British but in reality Gandhi succeeded to achieve Independence of the country in 1947 only after 17 years after of his Civil Disobedience Movement.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

In *Kanthapura*, Raja Rao presents the vivid sceneries of Free- India Movement of twenties and thirties, inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. The novel also presents Gandhi's faith on religion especially on Hinduism, non-violence, and truth and it also presents how his politics left the positive and negative impacts upon them. For thousands of India's illiterate peasants Gandhi came to stand for a religious avatar or 'incarnation' of a god, and even for many of the more-city dwellers regarded him a prophet as well as a Savior. Gandhi's name acts like a charm in every part of the country and people tried to show their solidarity with Gandhi by fasting many times when Gandhi walked out for his historic Dandi March.

Kanthapura works at two closely connected levels. It is told in the form of transcribed or 'literary' oral tale about the Indian Independence Movement as experienced in a single village. At the same time, the story of that community's efforts to withstand the exploitation of workers on the nearby Skeffington Coffee Estate can be read as a parable about Gandhian passive resistance politics. Rao naturalizes the return to traditional ways and, as result, legitimizes the more radical or less traditional aspects of Gandhian politics. As opposition to the British, Rao presents the destruction of Ravana by Rama and slaying of the serpent Kali by Krishna.

Moorthy is a typical example of the thousands of young men who are filled with patriotic zeal by Gandhi's inspiration and under his programme, leave schools, colleges and universities, or resign from their jobs, and make a bonfire of their costly imported clothes. Rangamma and Ratna represent the women's side of the movement while Range Gowda and Rachanna show how even the people of lower castes picked up courage, or curbed their natural instinct for retaliation and accepted the voluntary

restraint of non-violence. Peasants refuse to pay revenue and other taxes to the government, with the result that many of them were evict from their lands and lose all means of earning a livelihood.

Rao reminds us that the Gandhian political system was based on a vision of India as a vast network of villages. He presents Kanthapura as a typical village which reflects the Gandhian ways as much as possible. In Kanthapura, we may have seen to have a positive example of a traditional village and organic community in which everyone is acquainted to everyone. The community then undergoes a process through which it not only politicizes but also 'nationalizes' itself. The village may seem secluded but the various modes of connection and communication between the village and the wider world are seen in the novel to be tenuous and yet real. Gandhian influence perlocates into a village through interaction with the down and through the 'Blue paper' that some of the villagers get and read.

Along with the village and Moorthy, Gandhian way has affected a *khadi*-clad lawyer Sankar in city also. Sankar presents ideals of patriotism and national integration in this novel. Sankar's professional attitude reflects that of Mahatma Gandhi of the days when he worked as a lawyer in South Africa. He never takes up a false case, and he either gives up a case or makes the client confess the crime, if he later finds out that his case is false. In spite of being South Indian, Sankar had a firm belief that Hindi would one day become the national language of India. And it was not just a theoretical belief with him but something that he actually practised in his life.

Rao also vividly depicts the laws and ways of the British government in India. The white man who owns the Skeffington Coffee Estate is a symbol of the imperialist rulers of India, who exploited Indians in various ways and as a supportive comes Bade Khan, a policeman. They employ agents like Bhatta and the Swami to oppose

the freedom movement. There are reference to the atrocities done by the authority in other parts of India, for example, the massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh in Amritsar. But at the meantime, one can also get a glimpse of possibility of the act of Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur.

The villagers' prominence in the novel aptly reflects historical fact: a new development which marked the Civil Disobedience Movement of Gandhi in 1930-32 was that 'women were a further new and unexpected source of supports' as Gandhi said. Rangamma and Ratna come at front in this matter. Women, like Ratna are beaten up and dishonoured by the police but their spirit is not crushed. Shouts of '*Gandhi Mahatma Ki Jai!*' and '*Inquilab Zindabad!*' resound the same for them and boost the morale of the people. There are *dharnas*, pickettings, and *satyagrahas* on the basis of religion and Gandhian principles; people even children and women, are injured and wounded. Large number of people are arrested and sent to jail. And as the authority's activities rose, a new radicalism entered into Indian Nationalist politics.

Gandhi's emphasis on education and avoiding alcoholic drinks has both moral and an economic aim. Similarly, the boycott of foreign goods is meant to cripple the efforts of foreign manufacturers to exploit and impoverish India, and the insistence on spinning teaches the dignity to labour as well as self-reliance. Moorthy teaches pariahs and coolies that the poor coolies who are grossly exploited by the owners of the plantations learn to read and write, they become better acquainted with their rights, Moorthy teaches pariahs and the coolies. The picketing of the toddy grove and toddy booth has the immediate effect of making coolies realize how evil toddy-drinking is, they think that drink is the greatest enemy of the poor because it never allows a person to spend his income on essential items. So these all events and ideas are originated not by any outsource rather by the practice of Gandhian politics. But at

the meantime, the villagers turned violent somehow while picketing and marching and they can not succeed for achieving independence then and there; they has to migrate even from their own place and their leader also changes his icon later. By such incidents Rao has also tried to focus on the loopholes of Gandhian faith. He takes Gandhi as God at one level thus compares him with God Siva, Krishna and Rama but at another level, he does not agree the uncritical worshipping of the Mahatma.

The events of the novel, *Kanthapura* move around the effect of Gandhian non-violence. This novel has become such document which is presented as a mirror of Gandhi's activities. Thus, it represents Gandhi's both- positive and negative impact on the villagers' behavior and also portrays how the villagers adopted, appreciated and faced challenges during the revolt against the British Raj in India.

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