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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The period between 1885 to 1919 is a very important political phase in the history of India as during their period, we saw the emergence of Indian National Congress and great leaders like, B.G. Tilak, G.K. Gokhale, and Mr. Annie Besant. They tried to awaken Indian people to the reality that India was ruled by a foreign bureaucracy with no public accountability. Though the British response <sup>was</sup> slow and limited, it did take the cognisance of growing politicisation of the Indian people and grudgingly granted some political rights to Indians. The different reform acts of 1892, 1909 and 1919 are the indicate that the British rules wanted a very limited involvement of the Indian people. During this period the Indian leaders develop their own political ideology and to express this ideology, they invented different political terms. Swaraj was one of the most popular terms used by different Indian political leaders to expouse their political ideology.

Swaraj is a samskrit word and its literd meaning is self-government or self-rule. This term was first time used in the vedic literature and it is the opinion of Dr. K.P. Jayswal that it was a form of state in ancient India. But we do not have exact meaning of the term. The Aitereya Brahmana (VIII 14) refer to Swaraja and Vairajya and it is the opinion

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of Dr. R.S. Sharma that they were self ruled states<sup>1</sup>. According to Dr. Jajyaswal it was a peculiar type of republican government which according to Aitareya Brahmana (VIII 14) prevailed in Western India, and the president of such a republican state used to be called a Svarat.<sup>2</sup>

Sayana criticised Aitareya Brahmana's meaning of 'Svarajya' (VIII 14). According to him svarajya means independence A.B. Keith used the term in same context as 'Sovereignty'.<sup>3</sup>

It is argued by some historians that in the 'Swarajya' form of government the king was elected from the members who were having equal status.

The word was remembered because of its democratic meaning. The word had a special meaning in Maharashtra because Maharashtra state the great Shivaji used it to name his independent. He termed<sup>m</sup> his state as 'Hindavi Swarajya' meaning the self government of the Indians especially of Maharashtra people. Tilak popularised the word when he decided to celebrate

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NOTE:- 1) Sharma R.S. - some aspects of ancient Indian Political and institution, Motilal Banarasidan, Patana 1968.

2) Chaudhuri, P.K. Political concepts on Ancient India. P. 183.

3) Ibid. P. 184.

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Shivaji birth anniversaryes. Thus it was the political genius of Shivaji who resuscitated the almost dead Vedic word and loaded it with positive political meaning . Though Swami Dayanand also used the word 'Swarajya' to mean independent state but he derived the word from Vedas.and it could not assume sharp anti-foreign rule stance as Shivaji's concept could achieves it because the parallel was un~~m~~istakable. Like Shivaji, Tilak and his followers also wanted to establish Hindavi Swarajya free from the foreign-rule and domination.

But the term caught imagination of the people and it was used by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1893 to demand self Government within the British empire. The term was used by both moderates and extremists and it was so popular that Gandhi also used it in 1904 while writing his one of the political documents. 'Hind Swaraj'. The word became very popular during the Home-Rule league movement as Tilak used it as eq~~u~~ivalent to Home-rule . After the death of Tilak, it was used by different people. The most significant fact is that after the end of non-co-operation movement. Some congressmen led by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das wanted to enter the councils and work Montague-chelmsford reforms. For that purpose they established a political party. Their party was named as Swaraj Party.

Thus the word Swaraj has a very peculiar history in modern Indian political thought and in Indian freedom movement as it became a vehicle to carry forward. The political aspirations of the Indian people . Therefore, its meaning was

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subject to constant changes but unmistakably it was more and more identified with the Home-Rule or demand of self-government within the British empire.

The purpose of the present study is to understand the real meaning of Swaraj in the light of development of political aspirations and agitations in India from 1885<sup>to</sup>/1919. It also makes an attempt to analyse differing interpretations of the concept of Swaraj given by its different advocater. The study tries to understand and analyse the nature and meaning of the concept of Swarajya in the context of different political reforms introduced by the British government, different agitations and movements launched by the Indians including Home-rule league movement and conflict and differences between moderates and extremists about the real meaning of Swaraja. The study ~~is~~ discusses in detail the Home-rule league movement because during this movement, the Indian leaders like Tilak and Mrs. Besant come closer to defining Swaraj as Home-rule. But for Tilak home-rule within the British empire was a temporary phase and his Swaraj was a sovereign independent self governing India with democratic federal set up. It also studies different interpretations of Montague-chelmsford reforms and points out the fact that though reforms failed to satisfy political aspirations of the Indian people, they deeply stirred Indian public opinion.

The present dissertation is based on the primary and secondary sources available on the political history of Modern India from 1885 to 1919. Therefore, it was library research

project and the method of study was content-analysis of different resolutions passed by the Indian National Congress and speeches and writings of different Indian leaders like Tilak, Gokhale and Mrs. Annie Besant. The attempt is also made to use historical method to put the persons and ideas in proper historical perspective as the main theme of the work is to see the development of the concept of Swaraj in modern India.

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