CHAPTER-1

A BROADER PERCEPTION OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The basic idea through the chapter is to better understand Mahatma Gandhi from his own writings right from his young phase to a phase in which he emerged as a leader in South Africa and subsequently to his formative phase in India. The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi is an extensive collection of Gandhi’s viewpoint right from 1884 to 1948. It is a phase of life when every individual is full of hopes and high spirits. However, only few individuals sense their aspirations and contemplate to accomplish. Gandhi is among few individuals who sensed his aspirations and contemplated aloud to accomplish them.

I hope that some of you will follow in my footsteps and after you return from England you will work whole heartedly for big reforms in India.

11 The chapter is primarily based on the primary source material, The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. Works of Erik Erikson, Judith M Brown, Rajiv Lochan and B.R. Nanda on Gandhi inspires to understand a broader perception of Mahatma Gandhi.

A brief view of Gandhi’s Young Phase

The above report gives an idea of Young Gandhi’s selfless aspirations, resolve and a level of understanding for the society. One can contemplate ‘Big Reforms’ only with a sense of social consciousness. A socially aware person can gather strength to ignore rigid caste norms and silently resist the elders of the extended family for moving to a foreign land. It indicates his strength of mind to move beyond the caste rigidities but what were those reasons which enforced him to sense so acutely at such a young age. Regardless of required financial support his inquisitiveness to visit a foreign land as well as aspirations made his way to London. ‘I must write that had it been some other man in the same position which I was in, I dare say he would not have been able to see England. The difficulties which I had to with stand have made England dearer to me than she would have been.’13 Through the London Diary he shared his shortcomings while his first speech made at a farewell function in his honor before leaving. ‘I was given an address by my school fellows. I was quiet uneasy when I rose up to answer the address. When I spoke half of what I have to speak, I began to shake. I hope I will not do it again when I return to India.’14 It indicates as he was trying to overcome his flaws while learning new ways for his survival in London. Being strongly linked with the traditional moral values he started contemplating different ways to adapt the modern culture and which led him to join organizations like London Vegetarian Society and London Theosophical Society. While being involved with these societies he was more thoughtful and for the clarity of his own thoughts he engaged himself in reading literature concerning different cultures and religions.

Your knowledge of the vegetarian literature will enable you to remain firm in your principles in a land where you

14 CWMG 01:10
are exposed to so many temptations, which have in very many cases proved irresistible.\textsuperscript{15}

He was surprised to meet English men who value vegetarianism while coming in contact with the Vegetarian Movement in London. Whereas, after being a part of the movement he discovered that they accepted vegetarianism on the basis of health and not merely on the moral grounds. ‘An Indian Vegetarian is quite different from an English one. The former simply abstinence from anything that involves the destroying of a life or a would-be life and he goes no further.’\textsuperscript{16} He started sharing his understanding of the Indian vegetarianism, food culture and even tried to clear some mistaken ideas of the Europeans against the bodily weakness of the Indians through his articles on Vegetarianism. He made some candid confessions to one of the representative of the vegetarian society. ‘You will, perhaps, astonished to hear that I am married (The marriage took place at the age of twelve).’\textsuperscript{17} He also shared some of his awareness regarding the Indian marriage institution. ‘It must at the outset be admitted that the Hindus as a rule are notoriously weak; but an unbiased person- superficially will tell you that there are many other causes incessantly at work to account for the proverbial weakness. One of the most important reasons, if not the most important one, is the wretched custom of infant marriages and its attendant evils’.\textsuperscript{18} He was open to discuss the imperfections prevailing in his society too. ‘I cannot help digressing to explain the family system that prevails in India.’\textsuperscript{19}

He was facing challenges while having wider experiences of the society. Initially he struggled hard to coexist with his traditional beliefs and the modern culture. However, gradually he confronted the challenges in a

\textsuperscript{15} The Vegetarian, 28-4-1894, CWMG 01:88.

\textsuperscript{16} The Foods of India, The Vegetarian Messenger, 1-6-81, CWMG 01:46.

\textsuperscript{17} Why he went to England, The Vegetarian, 20-6-1891, CWMG 01:57.

\textsuperscript{18} Indian Vegetarians, The Vegetarian, 20-2-1891, CWMG 01:30.

\textsuperscript{19} Why he went to England, The Vegetarian, 13-6-1891, CWMG 01:55.
thoughtful way which led him to compare and understand both the cultures on the basis of reason. Even though he desired to experience much more through his London journey but returned back home with a new perspective for both the cultures.

In conclusion, I am bound to say that, during my nearly three year’s stay in England, I have left many things undone and have done many things which perhaps I might better have left undone, Yet I carry one great consolation with me that I shall go back without having taken meat or wine and that I know from personal experience that there are so many vegetarians in England.20

Before leaving London he made a promise with his associates of the movement to spread the message of vegetarianism. He was keen to share his new experiences and which supported him to educate his family members by way of education, dressing and food habits. After coming back he did experimenting with the vital food too. Being professionally unsettled he was not able to do anything further and consequently his financial requirements took him to Durban in Sep, 1893.

Emergence of a Leader in South Africa
With a perspective of young Gandhi’s aspirations and new experiences while England journey I am trying to identify him during his prolonged struggle in South Africa. Basically what interests me is to know as how Gandhi with his strength of mind faced the challenges on a new land and availed the opportunities which evidently marked him as a model satyagrahi across the globe. Society with the custom of racial discrimination was new to Gandhi. He was surprised to see the immoral attitude and which made him to assert for his rights and made efforts to educate others too. Shortly he realized that few voices will not make any difference. He started convincing men around him to organize and resist against the immoral practices and policies which had been forced on the Indians in South Africa in the form of Franchise Amendment Bill, Indian

20 Why he went to England, The Vegetarian, 20-6-1891, CWMG 01:63.
Immigration Law Amendment Bill, Vagrancy Law, etc. Subsequently he took a courageous initiative by organizing ‘Natal Indian Congress’ in Aug 1894. With a hope in the power of ‘words’ he placed the grievances of South African Indians by way of petitions to the Natal Government. Numbers of mass petitions, deputations, open letters, letter to the editors of the newspapers, articles in the newspapers were written again and again by him. He was constantly trying to educate the Indians in South Africa to claim their rights as well as their obligations for the other community. His endeavors were selfless and not for making money which gives an idea of his determination to sensitize the society. The Government was disregarding all these initiatives but somewhere he was trying to understand that if all these conscious efforts are not working than the state of affairs are not as simple as seen on the surface. He thoughtfully calculated it to be a matter of extreme misunderstandings between the two great communities i.e. the East and West. Consequently, he started his initiatives so to lessen the growing misunderstandings between the two. He started sharing his thoughtful experiences by placing examples so to educate both the communities for the intensity of the problem and the consequences with which their brethrens are struggling in South Africa.

Should we then repudiate such men as Lala Lajpat Rai? That too, is not possible. In our view, the men of Punjab and the others who carry on the agitation are brave men. They are patriots and endure hardships for the sake of the country. To that extent they command our respect. However, they appear to be in error in so far as they want to eliminate British rule. In pursuit of this end, they appear determined to suffer any punishment the law may inflict on them. We have nothing to blame them for. For, their sufferings will lead to India’s happiness. They oppose British rule because of its drawbacks. Because of that rule, India is becoming poorer. To some extent, British rule is an important cause of even the plague in India. It adds to
the ill-will between Hindus and Muslims. It is also because of that rule that we have been reduced to such a low state and live like cowards. Exasperated by these evils, some Indian leaders find fault with the entire British nation. Their revolt will probably remove these drawbacks to some extent. Moreover since they are our own fellow-countrymen, we ought not to nurse ill-feeling against them. Rather we ought to admire their heroism. The fault, in fact, lies with us. If we remove the fault, British rule, which is the cause of misery today, can become a source of happiness. Public spirit is not likely to grow among us without western education and contacts with the west. If that spirit grows, the British may grant our demands even without a fight, and may leave India if we want them to do so. The British colonies are what they are, not because the people there are white, but because they are brave and would take offence if their rights were not granted. That is why they are regarded as members of one family.\(^\text{21}\)

At his individual level he started correspondence with the fair minded people of both the communities. Through his correspondence he made conscious efforts to put across the inspiring thoughts and ideals of great Indians like Akbar and many more. Moreover he was interested in the opinion of the people who have broader understanding of both the cultures. He was utilizing these opinions in his petitions, writings and for formulating influence on the Home Government. One thing which is important to share is his skill to place his argument with proper facts, opinion of the prominent men like Max Muller, C. Trevelyan, adding testimonials and the required data so to appeal the conscious of the reader.

I may state our position a little more clearly. We are aware that the insults and the indignities that we are subjected to

\(^{21}\) Unrest in India, Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907, 1962, CWMG 07:6-7.
at the hands of populace cannot be directly removed by the intervention of the Home Government. We do not appeal to it for any such intervention. We bring them to the notice of the public so that the fair-minded of all the communities and the Press may, by expressing their disapproval, materially reduce their rigor and, possibly, eradicate them ultimately. But we certainly do appeal, we hope not vainly, to the Home Government for protection against reproduction of such ill-feeling in legislation. We certainly beseech the Home Government to disallow all the Acts of the Legislative bodies of the colonies restricting our freedom in any shape or form.22

He never missed any opportunity to work selflessly for others which he generally did by way of collecting Funds for the needy. During Boer War he got an opportunity to work selflessly for the other community. He was consciously making efforts to do away with some misunderstandings and which he initially did by way of expressing loyalty in their difficult times. He consciously linked with the organizations like Theosophical Society and made use of their understanding and links for removing misconceptions between the two communities. He was also keen to enhance his understanding of different cultures and religions which he was doing by way of reading. He was in correspondence with Raychandbhai a religious Jain thinker and even with some Christian friends. He was influenced with ‘The Esoteric Christian Union’ which led him to become an agent for selling its literature. However, through his introspectiveness he was getting firm for his basic moral beliefs.

The system represented by the Union establishes the unity and common source of all the great religions of the world, and points out, as the books advertised will amply show, the utter inadequacy of materialism which boasts of having given the world a civilization which was never;

22 Address in Madras, 26-10-1896, 1959, CWMG 02:117-18.
witnessed before, which is alleged to have done the
greatest good to humanity, all the while conveniently
forgetting that its greatest achievements are the invention
of the most terrible weapons of destruction, the awful
growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes between
capital and labour, and the wanton and diabolical cruelty
inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of
science, “falsely so called.”

He continued to spread the message of vegetarianism for reforming food
culture in South Africa too. Before spreading the message of
vegetarianism in South Africa, he first gathered information about the
climate, soil, choices of the people. He even visited Trappist Monastery
to know their views on the issue of vegetarianism and discovered that
they value vegetarianism from spiritual point of view which greatly
impressed him. It indicates that he was aware of the fact that it is
important to understand the society and its people before making some
kind of appeal.

Such are our Vegetarians in Natal. Though they do not
make of vegetarianism a creed, though they base it simply
on the ground that a vegetarian diet helps them to crucify
the flesh better, and though, perhaps, they are not even
aware of the existence of the vegetarian societies, and
would not even care to read any vegetarian literature,
where is the vegetarian who would not be proud of this
noble band, even a casual intercourse with whom fills one
with a spirit of love, charity and self-sacrifice, and who
are a living testimony to the triumph of vegetarianism
from a spiritual point of view? I know from personnel
experience that a visit to a farm is worth a voyage from
London to Natal. It cannot but produce a lasting holy
impression on the mind. No matter whether one is a

Protestant, a Christian or a Buddhist or what not, one cannot help exclaiming, after a visit to the farm, “If this is Roman Catholicism, everything said against it is a lie.” It proves conclusively, to my mind, that a religion appears divine or devilish, according as its professors choose to make it appear.24

Still there was no encouraging progress regarding the immediate problem but with all his initial initiatives he appealed the Government, Press and the masses to pause and think on the basis of morality. Even though his faith in British Justice was firm but one can easily notice that his hopes in the British justice were not blind. He persistently analyzed the laws in other colonies of British, speeches of the Home Government and tried to differentiate the law on the basis of theory and practice. All this provided him with deep understanding of the British Constitution and which always helped him in placing his arguments rationally.

This much should be remembered, that the British Government’s intentions are fair and it desires to do justice. The rule is British and hence it is incumbent upon us to understand British politics. As we study British statecraft and its rules and regulations, we shall understand in what manner we should present our demands; and if we understand that, it is not very difficult to realize our aspirations. It takes time, but in the end the thing intended comes to pass (if it is reasonable).25

Gandhi’s liberal attitude for the West was due to his broader understanding for both the cultures. ‘I am aware that, as every shield has two sides, so has the Englishman’s way of life. It should not be our business to examine the reverse side. Just as a swan, as the saying goes, separates milk from water and drinks only the former, so must we learn

to recognize our ruler’s virtues, which alone should follow.’ He emphasized that one should not blindly imitate the western attributes. Thus one should make conscious efforts to emulate their intrinsic worth instead of searching their drawbacks. He was open in acknowledging their positive outlook in such a manner.

In South Africa, we are engaged in a struggle for existence with a race that is intensely active and rich, and which does not brook a defeat. A corresponding activity continually is required on our part, and success is ultimately bound to come. Several leaders in conversation with me have given way to despair. I must confess I do not share any such feeling, though, certainly, the position is very difficult, and any false move may retard success. It is only to justify such sanguine attitude that I mention the fact that in several matters the Europeans in South have been unsuccessful in carrying their point.

Gandhi disagreed with the misleading axioms ‘might is right’ and the ‘survival of the fittest’. With strong conviction in great ideas he was always trying to convince the youth of India to understand the greatness of their ancient civilization and try not to accept the wave of modern civilization blindly. With every little example he was trying hard to make them understand the futility of imaginary ideas inspired by the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, Russian methods and others. At times he also accused these young revolutionaries for being coward and for doing impairment to the foundations laid by the great noble leaders of India. He was also linked with many societies and persons in India, England and South Africa who were concerned with the common problem of Hindu – Muslim unity. He was more thoughtful with each passing moment of the struggle which in turn was leading him towards his higher degree of


responsibilities. Gradually he was encouraged with the response which supported him to carry out his next initiative in the form of *Indian Opinion* (June 1903). The objectives of the *Indian Opinion* were similar to his own which is reflective through the columns.

Still the paper continued, octopus-like, to devour all it received and wanted more. The situation all it received and wanted more. The situation could only be saved by heroic measures. Patchwork was useless. Palliatives were dangerous. There remained then an appeal to the devoted workers and friends in favour of adopting a novel and revolutionary project. They were to look not to the project. They were to look not to the present but to the future; not to their pockets but to the paper first. And why not? The object of the *Indian Opinion* was to bring the European and the Indian subjects of King Edward close together. It was to educate public opinion, to remove causes for misunderstandings; to put before the Indians their own blemishes; and to show them the path of duty while they insisted on securing their rights. This was an imperial and pure ideal, towards the fruition of which anyone could work unselfishly.28

It was a supportive endeavor as many correspondents from certain places were assisting him with the news of the ongoing struggle. His optimistic attitude is noticeable with the progression of his writings. Gradually with his experiences he was modifying his line of action which is reflected through his writings in the *Indian Opinion*. Men who were keen to bestow their knowledge or wealth like Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Cadbury and Tata brothers, were inspiring him. However, he was being inspired with the thoughts of great men across the globe but his inquisitiveness progressively shifted towards the ideas of great men like Abraham Lincoln, Count Tolstoy and others who alone astonished the

world with their deeds. The ideas of great men like Ruskin and Tolstoy encouraged him to develop a community based on his ideals in the form of Phoenix Settlement. ‘Living under such conditions and amid the beautiful surroundings which have given Natal the name of the Garden Colony, the workers could live a more simple and natural life, and his ideas of Ruskin and Tolstoy [be] combined with strict business principles.’ He explained the working of his next venture in the following manner.

The incentive would be threefold to all: an ideal to work for in the shape of Indian Opinion; perfectly healthy surroundings to live in, and an immediate prospect of owing a piece of piece of land on the most advantageous terms; and a direct tangible interest and participation in the scheme. Such in outline was the argument. It has been translated into action. The printing works have been removed to a large piece of ground near Phoenix station, on the North Coast line. There are already Englishmen and Indians working here under the scheme. It is yet too early to forecast the result. It is a bold experiment and fraught with momentous consequences.

His progressive steps forced him to place their petition directly to the Home Government by way of deputation. He utilized all his links with the fair minded people of both the communities but then too response of the Home Government was disagreeable. Gandhi strongly believed in Professor Max Muller’s idea of persistent endeavors to spread the message based on truth among the masses.

A little more patience, a little more time, and perfect equanimity on the part of the British Indian will, we doubt not, do the rest. Unwearied reiteration is, as the late

29 CWMG 04:320.

30 CWMG 04:320.
Professor Max Muller used to say, the only remedy for driving a new truth home, and for enabling people to remove preconceived notions. Our duty is therefore, plain. We should continue in season and out of season, to show that the case for the Indians is invulnerable, and that the Indian has never asked for anything that could not reasonably be granted, consistently with the interest of the white traders and white predominance.\(^3\)

Consequently, he became more firm and took a pledge on April 30, 1907 for his subsequent action, if new law come into force. ‘The colonists would therefore, see that no exception could be taken to Indians making use of this force in order to obtain a redress of their grievances. Nor could such a weapon, if used by the Natives, do the slightest harm. On the contrary, if the Natives could rise so high as to understand and utilize this force, there would probably be no native question left to be solved. The one condition of a successful use of this force was recognition of the existence of the soul as apart from the body, and its permanent superior nature. And this recognition must amount to a living faith and not a mere intellectual grasp.\(^2\)’ In spite of showing their aggravation with their firm standpoint Colonial Government passed the new law. Subsequently he planned to approach the masses at large. His ‘much to do yet’ expression during this phase of struggle has deep meanings and which was reflective through his series of articles on ethics.

Sometimes it is said that truthfulness and other virtues having nothing to do with the other person and are entirely personal. But we must admit that by telling the truth we prevent harm to another just as by telling a lie and deceiving a person we do him an injury. In the same way, when a man disapproves of certain laws or customs and

\(^3\) A Rift in the Lute, *Indian Opinion*, 5-11-04, CWMG 04:292.

withdraws from society, even then his acts affect society. Such a man lives in a world of ideals. He does not worry that the world of his ideals is not yet born. For him the mere thought that prevailing standard is not yet born. For him the mere thought that the prevailing standard is not good enough is sufficient to impel him to resist it. He will constantly try to change other people’s way of life to his own. This is how prophets have caused the world’s wheels to change their course. So long as man remains selfish and does not care for the happiness of others, he is no better than an animal and perhaps worse. His superiority to the animal is seen only when he find him caring for his family. He is still more human, that is, much higher than the animal, when he extends his concept of the family to include his country or community as well.\textsuperscript{33}

It seems as if he was trying to show his vision through the ethical culture. He tried to explain the unconditional powers and the broad limits of the ethical culture. At the same time he clarified that for accomplishing this vision a combined constructive effort is required by the fair minded people of all the different cultures.

It is necessary that the civilization should come in contact with that of the west, it is necessary that the civilization should be quickened with the western spirit. Immediately that fact is accomplished, I have no doubt also that the eastern civilization will become predominant, it has a goal. I think you will see easily that a civilization or a condition in which all the forces fly away from the centre must necessarily be without a goal, where as those which converge to a point have always a goal. It is then necessary for these two civilizations to meet and we shall have a different force altogether, by no means of

menacing force, by no means a force that disunites, but a force that unites. The two forces are undoubtedly opposing forces, but perhaps in the economy of nature both are necessary. Only we, as intelligent human beings with heart and soul, have to see what those forces are, and have to use them, not blindly but intelligently, not anyhow and haphazard, but a goal in view. Immediately that is done, there is no difficulty whatsoever in the two civilizations meeting and meeting for good purpose.\textsuperscript{34}

It is interesting to notice his skill to place his state of mind and to convince the masses at large. He placed his vision with the approval of science so as to appeal through reason. ‘Darwin shows that the altruistic instinct is present, to some extent, even in animals: timid birds display strength in defending their young. This shows that, if there had been no selflessness among animals, we should have in the world scarcely any life other than grass and poisonous flora. The main distinction between man and another animals is that man is more selfless than the animals. He has sacrificed his life for others in proportion to his strength, that is, for his offspring, for his family, his community and his country. Darwin clearly shows that moral strength is supreme. The ancient Greeks had greater intelligence than the Europeans of today, but when the former gave up morality, their intelligence became their enemy, and no trace of them remains today. Nations are sustained neither by wealth nor by armies, but by righteousness alone. It is the duty of man to bear this truth in mind and practice altruism, which is the highest form of morality.’\textsuperscript{35}

He linked ethics with an individual state of mind so to place his thoughts to common people. ‘In fact, we find in the east examples of greater cruelty than in the west. The only lesson to be learnt is that East and West are no more than names. Human beings are the same everywhere. He who wants to will conduct himself with decency. There is no people

\textsuperscript{34} Speech at Y.M.C.A., 18-5-1908, 1962, CWMG 08:244-45.

\textsuperscript{35} Ethical Religion- VI, \textit{Indian Opinion}, 9-2-1907, CWMG 06:318.
to whom moral life is a special mission. Everything depends on the individual himself. One can pursue the principles of morality at any place, in any environment or condition of life.' He also explained the close relationship between religion and ethics so as to appeal millions who are strongly linked with their religion.

We see also that moral laws are immutable. Opinions change, but not morality. When our eyes are open, we see the sun; when they are closed, it is not seen. The change here has been in our sense of sight, not in the fact of Sun’s existence. The same holds true for moral laws. Moral culture is still in its mere infancy; it is as science was before the birth of a Bacon or a Darwin. Men were eager to know what the truth was. Instead of inquiring into morality, they have been hitherto engaged in discovering laws of nature- the laws of earth’s motion, etc. where do we find the disinterested student of morality, patient and painstakingly, who, setting aside his earlier superstitious notions, devotes his life to seeking only the ideal good? When men become as eager to explore the world of moral ideas as they are now to explore the realms of nature, we shall be able to bring together the various conceptions of morality. It is unlikely that, on ideas of morality, there will be the same divergence of opinion as exists among men on matters of science. However, we may not for a time arrive at unanimity of opinion regarding moral laws. This does not, however, mean that it is impossible to distinguish between right and wrong.37

With a new hope in the power of ‘Moral Deeds’ he preferred to do something significant so to prove the genuineness of their cause. Through

36 Johannesburg Letter, Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908, CWMG 08:211.
37 Ethical Religion-IV, Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907, CWMG 06: 299.
‘Indian Opinion’ he affirmed that the ‘The Dye Has Set’ to incite the feelings of the masses in support of the peaceful struggle. He diverted all his wits towards his new endeavour for the Passive Resistance. ‘We have sent petitions; made speeches; and we shall continue to do so. But we shall gain our object only if we have the kind of strength we have spoken of. People do not have much faith in articles and speeches. Anyone can do that, they call for no courage. Deeds after all are better than words. All other things are unavailing, and no one is afraid of them. The only way therefore is to sacrifice oneself and take the plunge. We have much to do yet, no doubt of that.’ He preferred to define it more clearly with his Gujarati expression as ‘satyagraha’ which signifies firmness in truth. He also clarified the differentiation between physical force and the soul force with fine examples of noble men.

The idea was more completely and better expressed by the term ‘soul force’. As such, it was as old as the human race. Active resistance was better expressed by the term ‘body force’. Jesus Christ, Daniel and Socrates represented the purest form of passive resistance or soul force. All these teachers counted their bodies as nothing in comparison to their souls. Tolstoy was the best and brightest exponent of the doctrine. He not only expounded it, but lived according to it. In India, the doctrine was understood and commonly practiced long before it came into vogue in Europe.

Gandhi accompanied the satyagrahis in the Johannesburg Gaol. He tried to sustain his courage and did his share of duties sincerely and was firm to ask for his share of rights from the authorities inside the Gaol. ‘In other words he has recognized what Thoreau has said, that we should be

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38 The Dye has Set, Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908, CWMG 08:4-5.
39 Deeds are better than words, Indian Opinion, 24-11-1906, CWMG 06:30.
40 Speech at Germiston, Indian Opinion, 12-6-1909, CWMG 09:243.
men before we are subjects, and that there is no obligation imposed upon us by our conscience to give blind submission to any law, no matter what force or majority backs it. Government was surprised to see the firmness of the satyagrahis and therefore acknowledged their demands by discussing the basis of their demands with Gandhi.

We have done good spade-work, namely, the clearing of the ground and the digging for the foundations. It remains to be seen what kind of super structure we can build. The government has placed in our hands the key to the repeal of law. We shall have achieved complete success when we use that key and when the law has in fact been repealed. It is only now that we are faced with really difficult work. It will call for strenuous effort. There will be need for greater patience and the utmost honesty. Let us see whether or not we are capable of these.

Through this minor move he sensed the efficacy of his experiment and his organizing skills. ‘Those who became satyagrahis, and have remained so, will reap the benefits of satyagraha in any part of the world where they may go. If, moreover, we look closely into the result of satyagraha, we shall find that it is always the same, that it is invariably good. If on any occasion we fail to discover such a result, it will not be because of any imperfection in satyagraha as such, but because people might not have been steadfast in their satyagraha.’ He was open in confirming the efficacy of his technique as well as the naivété of the masses. He was all set to educate the masses with the nitty-gritty’s of his new technique. ‘Satyagraha is both easy and difficult. I think it should be easy by now for everyone to see that every grievance can be remedied if we make it a point to follow nothing but the truth. It is difficult to observe truth-to

41 On the Duty of Civil Disobedience, Indian Opinion, 7-09-1907, CWMG 07:211.
42 Why not in Golden Letters, Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908, CWMG 08:64.
43 Real Education, Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908, CWMG 09:84.
suffer in order to put an end to suffering. And yet, the more I think, the more I see that there is no other way than that of satyagraha for us to fight our ills and those of others. I even feel that the world has no other really effective remedy to offer. Be that as it may, we at least have realized that it is better to win through satyagraha. Consequently, I am hopeful that if all the Indians preserve and carry through what they have begun, we shall have earned afresh the title of ‘brave pioneers.’

Consequently he was keen to clarify the responsibilities of the leaders while negotiating. He also explained his logic of truce as he expects a way out by an honorable compromise so to eliminate the element of compulsion and to win respect from the opposite side.

You will agree moreover that those who are accepted as leaders must have a certain freedom (of action) in crises. We do not admit having availed ourselves of any such freedom in arriving at this compromise but on an occasion like this we would be justified in saying a few words on people’s duty to the leaders. Great care should be exercised in choosing leaders. But once they are chosen, it may prove harmful if on occasion they are not allowed any freedom of action. If they are required to consult the others every now and again, that will suggest lack of confidence in them. In the absence of such confidence work will suffer. Confidence in the leaders is a sign of unity, of generosity and of an unflagging spirit among the people. No people can progress if its leaders are not honest and if they are not trusted. Leaders do sometimes make honest mistakes. They are not to be blamed on that account. There is only one test—that of sincerity. And the best way is that those who are sincere should be trusted.

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44 To Satyagrahis and other Indians, Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908, CWMG 09:96-97.
45 A Dialogue on the compromise, Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908, CWMG 08:85.
His ‘Golden Letters’ in the *Indian Opinion* indicates the kind of popular response to his satyagraha technique and thus moved forward to explain its significance. ‘In 1906 the Indian community did not realize its own latent strength. This time the whole world knows about it.’46 He was keen to share the experiences of great men who achieved excellent outcomes after its use.

These views are mine, and yet not mine. They are mine because I hope to act according to them. They are almost a part of my being. But, yet, they are not mine, because I lay no claim on originality. They have been formed after reading several books. The views I venture to place before the reader are, needless to say, held by many Indians not touched by what is known as Civilization, but I ask the reader to believe me when I tell him that they are also held by thousands of Europeans. Those who wish to dive deep, and have time, may read certain books themselves. 47

According to Gandhi a satyagrahi has to reform himself so to prove the efficacy of the stayagraha or to overcome any struggle throughout his life. Thus he was trying hard to encourage the satyagrahis to firstly reform themselves. ‘If this is a victory for truth, it is also a victory for satyagraha. Every Indian should by now be convinced that satyagraha, or passive resistance, is an infallible remedy. It can cure the most dangerous of ailments. Our success should lead at least to one result, namely, that we make full use of satyagraha. Only it should be used on proper occasions, and the people should remain united. It must also be realized that there are evils to which satyagraha cannot be applied. It can be effective only in the situations where we are required to act positively. That is, if we are required to do anything which violates our religion or insults our manhood, we can administer the invaluable physic

46 Deputations Voyage [-1], 23-6-1909, CWMG 09:269.
of satyagraha. There is one condition, however, to be observed, if the remedy is to be effective: we should be prepared collectively to accept hardships. He tried to explain the mind and mettle of a satyagrahi through the lives of men like Socrates, John Ruskin, Galileo, Thoreau, Columbus etc. who according to him acted in a spirit of a true satyagrahi and proved themselves. He cited some examples as of Johan Bunyan and Tilak who too proved their strength inside the gaol.

A satyagrahi enjoys a degree of freedom not possible for others, for he becomes a truly fearless person. Once his mind is rid of fear, he will never agree to be another’s slave. Having achieved this state of mind, he will never submit to any arbitrary action. Such satyagraha can be, ought to be practiced not only against a government but against a society as well (if need be). It can often happen that a society is as wrong as a government. It becomes one’s duty then to use satyagraha against society as well [if need be]. It can often happen that society is as wrong as a Government. It becomes one’s duty then to use satyagraha against society. The late Mr. Thoreau, whose book we have already summarized, thought that his countrymen did wrong in carrying on slave trade. He therefore ranged himself against his people. The great Luther defied his people single-handed and it is thanks to him that Germany enjoys freedom today.

While keeping a close vigil on each passing event across the globe he was not only seeing the extreme misunderstandings between the East and West culture but contemplating beyond. ‘I do not hold for one moment that East and West cannot combine. I think the day is coming when East must meet West, or West meet East, but I think the social evolution of

48 Triumph of Truth, Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908, CWMG 08:61-62.
the West today lies in one channel, and that of the Indian in another channel. The Indians have no wish today to encroach on the social institutions of the European in South Africa.\textsuperscript{50} It indicates as he was now trying to observe the civilizations through the moral fiber.

If he had believed in Kipling’s doctrine, he would never had lived there. There had been individual instances of English and Indian people living together under the same rule without a jarring note, and what was true of individuals could be made true of nations. To a certain extent it was true that there was no melting place between civilizations. The barriers between the Japanese and the Europeans were daily vanishing, because the Japanese assimilated Western civilization. It seemed to him that the chief characteristic of modern civilization (was that it) worshipped the body more than the spirit, and gave everything for the glorifying of the body. Their railways, telegraphs and telephones did they tend to help them forward to a moral elevation? When he cast his eyes upon India, what was represented there today under British rule? Modern civilization ruled India.\textsuperscript{51}

He discovered the roots of the truth through John Ruskin’s ‘Unto This Last’ and shared with the people in the form of Universal Dawn ‘sarvodaya’. ‘During the days of my education I had read practically nothing outside text books and I after I launched into active life I had very little time for reading. I cannot therefore claim much book knowledge. I believe I have not lost much because of this enforced restraint. On the contrary the limited reading may be said to have enabled me thoroughly to digest what I did read of these books, the one that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation, in my life


\textsuperscript{51} Speech at Hampstead, India, 22-10-1909, CWMG 09: 476.
was Unto This Last. I translated it into Gujarati, entitling it Sarvodaya (the welfare of all)\textsuperscript{52} In this phase he defined his idea of integrity in the form of ‘Hind Swaraj’ or ‘Indian Home Rule’. All though his ideas were proscribed in India and at the same time criticized in South Africa. However, he had faith in his convictions and was prepared to initiate another great effort in India.

We have much to struggle for, not only in South Africa but in India as well. Only when we succeed in these (tasks) can India be rid of many afflictions. We must learn to live and die like Socrates. He was, moreover, a great satyagrahi. He adopted satyagraha against his own people. As a result the Greeks became a great people. If, through cowardice or fear of dishonor or death, we fail to realize or examine our shortcomings and fail to draw the people’s attention to them, we shall do no good to India’s cause, notwithstanding the number of external remedies we may adopt, notwithstanding the congress sessions (we may hold), not even by becoming extremists. India’s good does not lie along that direction. When the disease is diagnosed and its true nature revealed in public, and when, through suitable remedies, the body (politic) of India is cured and cleansed both within and without, it will become immune to the germs of the disease, that is, to the oppression by the British and the others. If however, the body itself is in a state of decay, and then if we destroy one kind of germs, it will be attacked by another, and this will ruin the body (Politic) India herself.\textsuperscript{53}

Deputation to India and England were sent to give an idea of their persistent endeavors and adoption of new device to confront the ongoing

\textsuperscript{52} M. K. Gandhi, \textit{An Autobiography or The story of my experiments with truth}, Navajivan, 1927, p. 220.

\textsuperscript{53} Story of a Soldier of Truth,-[I], \textit{Indian Opinion}, 4-4-1908, CWMG 08:173-74.
struggle. He even tried to elucidate as how simple actions like compromise, sacrifice can make much difference in life. Gandhi was not only sharing his knowledge through Indian Opinion but he was also sharing his whole earnings selflessly so as to educate others. However, his earnings were not enough for the smooth working of the Press. Due to economic reasons he had to make another bold experiment in the shape of Tolstoy Farm. His model institutes were his ideal laboratory’s for training the satyagrahis and experimenting his ideals practically in day to day life. People like Ratanji Jamshedji Tata (Indian Industrialist) and Kallenbach (German Architecture) got inspired with his ideas and supported him in the times of need. Nevertheless he refined himself to epitomize his strong convictions. Gradually he was insensitive to family bonding and even gelled himself with the poor. During the internment he did not felt ashamed to do the menial labor and convinced others to confront the consequences after being a satyagrahi. Inside the gaol some satyagrahis were treated terribly by the authorities so to crush their endurance power.

On one occasion, several passive resisters went on a fast to register a strong protest against such treatment. At the end of four days of complete fasting, the boy referred to above was forcibly fed while he kept shrieking in protest all the time. Even the prison doctor in charge is reported to have condemned this display of barbarism and stated that he did not accept responsibility for the forcible feeding. The fact that the prisoner was a vegetarian was ignored: the milk which was fed to him was mixed with eggs.54

He realized that the satyagrahis are not prepared to confront the challenges due to lack of general knowledge concerning health. According to Gandhi, a satyagrahi not only requires a healthy body but also a healthy mind and soul. Being linked with the Vegetarian Society

Gandhi was always inquisitive to experiment with his diet which was helping him inside the gaol and to share his knowledge regarding the importance of eating habits, air, water, earth. He was not only sharing his experiences through his writings. He even convinced his 20 year old son to get his real education by experiencing the realities of the struggle inside the gaol. His idea of satyagraha assisted him in acquiring wider support from the public. Subsequently a new phase of struggle was started and was continued for six years. While he was grappling to advance an essay ‘On the Duty of Civil Disobedience’ by Henry David Thoreau inspired him. With the help of this essay he was able to clarify his own thoughts and explain the right meaning of the civil disobedience to the masses too.

We are accustomed to say that the mass of men are unprepared; but improvement is slow because the few who desire it do not have enough courage. It is not so important that many should be as good as you as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump. There are thousands who in opinion are opposed to slavery, but act contrary to their view. They esteeming themselves children of Washington, sit down with their hands in their pockets and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing. At the most they give lectures and send petitions. There are nine hundred and ninety nine persons who profess virtue to one virtuous man. Yet he who acts virtuously, though he be the only one, is of far greater worth than those who only profess it. I do not say that it is a man’s duty, as a matter of course, to eradicate a wrong wherever he finds it; but it is his duty to, at least, not to give it practically his support.55

As an organizer of the satyagraha technique he was careful in channelizing the ignorance of the masses. He was conscious of the fact...

that masses if not channelized carefully can impede the spirit of the struggle. Moreover he shared his deep thoughts and asked others to assist him in the progression of his ideals. He was aware of the fact that all these changes within the society will took time and thus he was patient while educating the masses. ‘They will remember that the last struggle was, as it were, the third chapter in the story of satyagraha. When the first chapter came to a close, we, at any rate I, had thought that it was definitely the last. When the time came for the second chapter to open, many friends said to me: Now who will fight? The community cannot be expected to put forth so much strength every time’. I laughed when I heard this. My faith in truth was unshakeable and I replied, ‘The people, having tasted once the joy of struggle, will fight now with even greater zeal’. And that was precisely what happened.’

With his faith in the technique he lastly triumphed as a ‘leader of the masses’ by achieving a change in the attitude of Government policy. It is interesting to observe that through his struggle in South Africa he simply asked for the elementary rights of humanity and ordinary justice and not the social change or social equality. Gandhi also indicates that to prove the efficacy of satyagraha technique it is essential to advance carefully with the expertise of the leader.

Potent, however, though passive resistance was an instrument for winning reforms- perhaps the mightiest instrument on earth –it could not have achieved success had the Indian community not moderated their demands to what was reasonable and practical. This, again, was not possible until some of them were able to see the question of Indian rights from the European standpoint.

Formative Phase in India
The foregoing exercise acquaints with Gandhi’s ideas, skillful leadership and organizational skills. It primarily gives an idea as how Gandhi’s way

56 The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience, 23-7-1914, CWMG 12:509.

of working went through different stages and how it helped him to emerge as a leader of the masses. Once he was successful with his unique way of working he took no time to move his attention towards his aspirations for India. Gandhi as a skilled leader stepped his motherland in 1915 with a definite mission and a squad of satyagrahis. Initially he took time to organize the essentials so to place the working of his satyagraha technique to the masses at large. Through the following passages the idea is to understand as how his way of working helped him in confronting the challenges during the formative phase? How he created a space for himself amidst the established leaders of the Indian masses and what exactly he did before getting a supportive support from the Indian leaders as well as the masses. To understand Gandhi at all these levels, I am simply trying to trace his initial moves in India.

Satyagrahis were warmly welcomed by the Indians who were already in link with Gandhi. 'I had written to Mr. Andrews asking him to thank you for the trouble you took looking after my children and for the affection you showered on them.' Amongst them, Mahatma Munshiram was kind enough to take care of the boy’s in his Gurukul at the time when Gandhi was in search of a place to settle in India. To begin with, Gandhi visited the families of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives and placed their significant role in the success of the South African struggle.

I have declared myself his disciple in the political field and I have him as my Rajya Guru; and this I claim on the behalf of the Indian people. It was in 1896 that I made this declaration, and I do not regret having made the choice.59

Though he was keen to prove the efficacy of his new technique but G.K. Gokhale, being his political guru assessed his impatience. Accordingly, he suggested him to maintain silence and carefully analyze the state of affairs of India for at least a year. However journalist’s were inquisitive

to know the reason behind his silence and thus were asking him query’s in such a manner, ‘Was this period of probation imposed on you by Mr. Gokhle because you had been away from India for so many years? Yes, that was his great argument; because I was away from India for nearly 28 years all my ideas were formed outside India, and, therefore, a corrective in the shape of personal contact with present-day conditions was, in his opinion, absolutely necessary.’60 As a loyal disciple, he took his advice by being merely an observer.

With a reformer’s zeal he stepped into his initial course of action while touring different parts of the country. He specifically studied the existing state of Ancient institutions while his tours in different states. He exchanged his views with the individuals who had belief in the ideals of Ancient culture and were already working in their own way capacity. ‘Following out the swadeshi spirit, I observe the indigenous institutions and the village panchayats hold me. India is really a republican country, and it is because it is that that it has survived every shock hitherto delivered.’61 Gandhi exchanged his views with learned academicians, influential local leaders, editors of the local newspapers and economist. He was keen to meet social workers who were working for women group and the depressed classes and supporting the science of ayurveda. He exchanged his views with the individuals who were inspired with the western culture and took an initiative to convince them on the basis of reason. Individuals who were convinced with his basic ideas and reasoning assured their support in achieving his ideals.

The Hindu social structure has endured, I believe, on the foundation of the caste system. Sir William Hunter says in his History of India that, thanks to the continuing existence of the institution of caste, there has been no need for any law for the poor (pauper law) in India. This seems

to me a sound view. The caste system contains within it the seed of swaraj. The different castes are so many divisions of an army. The general does not know the soldiers individually but gets them to work through the respective captains. In like manner, we can carry out social reform with ease through the agency of the caste system and order through it our religious, practical and moral affairs as we choose.62

Gandhi maintained his links by being in touch with these individuals through correspondence and was acquiring much information of the different localities too. His initial moves in India give an idea as how he was trying to maintain links with the individuals who had faith in his ideals. At the same time, he was also working on the constitution of his model institute which was entirely based on his ideals. He prepared the draft of the constitution so to explain its idea to the people in general and especially for those who were interested in being a part of it. After careful thought he established his model institute in Kochrab village, Ahmadabad and named it as ‘Satyagraha Ashram’. After some time there was an outbreak of plague in the village due to which the institute was shifted to a place which has been distinguished as Sabarmati Ashram. ‘Let us hope that, by being watchful about rats and maintaining cleanliness, we shall prevent the plague from spreading to the Ashram.’63

While his tours, he observed the plight of the Indian society due to the rigid caste system and the ruined condition of the indigenous industry. ‘The caste system is a perfectly natural institution. In our country, it has been invested with a religious meaning; elsewhere, its utility was not


fully realized and so it remained a mere form, with the result that the countries concerned did not derive much benefit from it. These being my views, I am opposed to the movements which are being carried on for the destruction of the system. Consequently, he took an initiative for setting an example before the society and his own inmates of the Ashram. He supported a couple who belong to the low caste by allowing them to stay in his ashram. ‘The step is momentous because it so links me with the suppressed classes mission that I might have at no distant time to carry out the idea of shifting to some Dhed quarters and sharing their life with the Dheds. It would mean much even for my staunchest co-workers. I have now given you the outline of the story. There is nothing grand about it. It is of importance to me because it enables me to demonstrate the efficacy of passive resistance in social questions and when I take the final step, it will embrace swaraj, etc.’ He also started training in hand weaving and spinning in the ashram and sought to explain the practical working of the swadeshi ideal to the Indian masses too.

I am convinced that petitioning the Government is not the royal road for correcting all the foregoing deficiencies. The government cannot change things radically in a day. It is for leaders of the people to take the initiative in such ventures. The British Constitution leaves particular scope for such initiative. If we think that anything can be done only if the Government moves, we are not likely to realize our aims of ages. As they do in England, we must take first make experiments and show results before asking the Government to adopt new measures. Whoever finds a deficiency in any field can try to correct it by his own efforts and, after he has succeeded, can move the Government for the desired improvement. For such

pioneering ventures, it is necessary to establish a number of special educational bodies. 66

Gandhi was making his moves carefully and confronting the challenges more cautiously. While his tours he was faced with the communication problem due to the use of different languages throughout the country. He shortly sensed that without a common language it will be very difficult for him to reach the masses at the earliest. To deal with the language issue, he firstly examined the status of the languages in different parts of the country and then after a careful thought shared his views with the people who were also concerned to have a common National Language. For him Hindi was the shortest possible means to reach the masses.

There is almost an unbridgeable gulf between the Dravidians and all the other Indians. The shortest and the most effective bridge is undoubtedly the Hindi Language. English can never take its place. When Hindi becomes the common language among the cultured classes the Hindi vocabulary will soon filter down the masses. 67

After getting support on the issue he thought of spreading the message. He analyzed that the Northern people are well versed in Hindi and so his activities concerning education were focused in the others parts of India. ‘In the North, Hindi is certainly making good progress. But a persistent effort to use it as the medium of instruction has been made only by the Arya Smajajists in the gurukulas.’ 68 He sent the Hindi missionaries to South so to propagate the language at those places where it was lesser known. He placed the importance of National Language issue through his broader definition of swadeshi. He persistently made efforts to encourage men for Hindi language who came in his contact while his tours. ‘If a language spoken by such large numbers of our countrymen can be taught

66 Speech at Second Gujarat Educational Conference, 20-10-1917, CWMG 14:34.
[to the rest], they would all find it easy to understand the meaning of various political movements. I am convinced that, in India, Hindi alone can occupy the position of a national language." It seems as it was his step to confront the prevailing complexities emerged due to Macaulay’s Minute and to filter down his own ideals on the similar line.

Macaulay’s motive in introducing English education was sincere. He despised our literature. His contempt infected us, too, and we also lost our balance. Indeed, we have left our masters, the English, far behind us in this matter. Macaulay wanted us to become propagandists of Western civilization among our masses. His idea was that English education would help us to develop strength of character and then some of us would disseminate new ideas among the people. It would be irrelevant here to consider whether or not those ideas were good enough to be spread among the people. We have only to consider the question of medium of instruction. We saw in English Education an opportunity to earn money and, therefore, gave importance to the use of English. Some learn patriotism from it. Thus the original idea became secondary and we suffered much harm from the use of English which extended beyond Macaulay’s original intention.  

After being settled he focused his attention to Gujarat. Being politically backward state, he found ample scope to explain the wider meaning of his ideals to the people who were still to be awakened. He began his course of action by organizing educational conferences in Gujarat. By means of these conferences he provided a platform to all the individuals who had belief in his ideals. Being not satisfied with the prevalent education foundations in India, he exchanged his views with the men

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69 Scheme for National Education, Gujarati, 21-10-1917, CWMG 14:40.
present during these conferences for thinking aloud. He took another determined initiative by opening a National school at his level which was no doubt started at a small scale but was entirely in accordance to his ideals. ‘But the best petition to the Government will be an actual demonstration by us and this will also be the easiest way of cultivating public opinion. It has accordingly been decided, in consultation with some educated gentlemen, to start a national school.’71 Individuals who were supporting his ideals did assist him in its execution too.

From the very beginning he maintained his independent identity by simply being a part and not an active member of any of the existing political organizations. He was averse with the approach of the ongoing political movements. The existing set of political ideologies whether moderate or extremist was not consistent to his line of action.

Still I am in a position to say that I seem to be at war with my leaders. Whatever they do or whatever they say does not somehow or other appeal to me. The major part of what they say does not seem to be appealing to me. I find here words of welcome in English language. I find in the Congress programme a Resolution on Swadeshi. If you hold that you are Swadeshi and yet print these in English, then I am not Swadeshi. To me it seems inconsistent.72

For that reason he did not make any alliance with the established political organizations. On the other side some of the organizations were also reluctant to accept him with all his ideals. ‘What do you think of swaraj resolution passed by the Congress and the way it is going to be implemented? It may be good or it may be bad, but I do not have any

71 Scheme for National Education, 21-10-1917, CWMG 14:38.
72 Speech at Reception Mayavaram, 1-5-1915, CWMG 13:70.
high opinion of it. He did not even accept the Congress proposal to exercise passive resistance for the Swaraj scheme.

A heated discussion took place ... M. K. Gandhi, on being asked, stated that the campaign of passive resistance could not be carried on by an institution like the congress. Passive resistance could be described merely as a matter of conscience or force of soul, when it was useless to go to lawyers.

Though he was firm for not making any compromise with his way of working and his ideals and at the same was keen to analyze the working of the existing political parties. 'He had no mental desire for listening to the speeches or to his own voice but he had felt it is his duty as an aspirant for national service to study all the institutions he could and hence it was that he found himself at the Belgaum Conference. He was open to admit that he could join a movement or any of the political organizations only if they have some common goal to achieve.

I naturally support a movement which will secure the best type of Parliamentary Government and replace the present bastardism which is neither the one nor the other. What is more, I take part in the movement only to the extent that I can enforce and popularize principles which, I know, must permeate all systems if they are to be of any use.

He acknowledged the great efforts of the leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Annie Besant and Ali Brothers. He was aware of the fact that still there are millions who have been left from the ambit of Home Rule

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73 Interview at Lucknow, 29/31-12-1916, CWMG 13:324.
74 Speech at Bombay Provincial Congress Committee Meeting, 2-9-1917, CWMG 13:516.
Leaguers. 'I cannot conceive the existence of an Indian who is not Home Ruler; but there are millions like myself who are not Home Rule Leaguers. Although I am not a member of any Home Rule League, I wish to pay on this auspicious day my humble tribute to numerous Home Rule Leaguers whose association I have ever sought in my work and which has been extended to me ungrudgingly.' Therefore, he focused his wits to educate those millions who were still not in the ambit of the existing political leaders of India. He contacted the masses during his tours and made an effort to introduce them with their special role in achieving his ideal state of swaraj.

I don’t think I can at present persuade this class which has embraced their policy to accept anything from me, do what I will. Let them adopt- and they will- whatever they can indirectly from my work, my writings and my speeches. If I come forward to give anything, they will reject it, as they well might. The policy of Mrs. Besant and Tilak Maharaj is mistaken, very much so indeed, but their achievement has been simply heroic. Their services it is impossible to measure. It is from them that the young got the message of patriotism. How can they, all so suddenly, disown these gurus? I would never ask them to do so, either.

For being independent he always played safe by confronting his critics. He was bold enough to notify the Government authorities before making his moves. He even maintained links with the editors who were open minded and due to which he was able to express himself freely through the columns of the Indian newspapers in the times when he was not running his own paper. He persistently explained the wider meaning of the terms swaraj, swadeshi and satyagraha so to demarcate the basis of


his ideals from others. ‘We can, however, solve some of our difficulties by considering what they have done about it in the other provinces. At the time of Bengal partition, when the spirit of swadeshi was at its height, an effort was made there to impart education through Bengali. A national school was also started. Money poured forth in plenty. But the experiment failed. In my humble opinion, the sponsors of the movement had no faith in their experiment. The teachers were in the same pitiable condition. In Bengal, the educated classes are blindly in love with English.’ In short he created a reasonable space for him to spread his message among the masses at large.

In offering these views I have assumed the propriety of the current trend of thought. To me, however, it does not appear to be tending altogether in the right direction. Our agitation is based on the Western model. The swaraj we desire is of a western type. As a result of it, India will have to enter into competition with the Western nations. Many believe that there is no escape from this. I do not think so.

During these years, he got opportunities to assist local leaders while their struggle. He got the first opportunity in Champaran (Bihar, 1917) which was a struggle between the raiyats and the wealthy planters; the second opportunity while Ahmedabad mill hand strike (1918) which was against the mill owners of Ahmedabad whose current chief was Ambalal Sarabhai; the third opportunity in Kheda (Gujarat, 1918 between raiyats and the Government authorities. As a reformer, he was always keen to join people in their difficult times. But as a skilled leader, he was careful enough in his way of working. His working was based on faith of sincere volunteers; personal dialogue with both the parties; independent inquiry

80 Speech at Gujarat Political Conference-I, 3-11-1917, CWMG 14:53.
to trace the whole truth; written material to appeal through reason and
lastly if required satyagraha.

Cannot the Government secure that freedom? This is a
natural exclamation. My answer is that they cannot, in
cases like this, without such assistance as is afforded to
them by my mission. The Government machinery is
designedly slow. It moves, must move, along the line of
least resistance. Reformers like myself, who have no other
axe to grind but that of a reform they are handling for the
time being, specialize and create a force which the
Government must reckon with. Reformers may go wrong
by being over-zealous, indiscreet or indolent and ignorant.
The government may go wrong by being impatient of
them or over-confident of their ability to do without them.
I hope, in this case neither catastrophe will take place and
the grievances, which I have already submitted which are
mostly admitted, will be effectively redressed.81

Even after resolving their grievances he was active in educating the
masses by encouraging them to open school, helping the weavers to
resume their occupations, welfare activities concerning health and
hygiene. 'My experience in Kheda and Champaran teaches me this one
lesson, that, if the leaders move among the people, live with them, eat
and drink with them, a momentous change will come about in two
years.'82 Indeed, he was trying to place the practical working of his ideals
and his own way of working in the areas where he worked. Through his
way of working, he tried to illustrate the importance of expertise of a
leader of the masses.

I know how difficult the thing is. And yet without our
penetration into the villages our Home Rule schemes are

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82 Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay, 23-4-1918, CWMG 14:371.
of little value. With the people really at our back, we should make our march to our goal irresistibly. That we do not see such a simple truth is the saddest part of the tragedy being enacted in front of us.\textsuperscript{83}

No doubt, he was able to solve the grievances by his way of working but at the same time his move of satyagraha in resolving the local grievances was severely criticized by many established leaders and the masses as well. At times he was apprehensive for not convincing the people concerning his satyagraha technique. Yet, he was trying to explain the deeper meanings of the term satyagraha at a wider level. Firstly, he tried to convince the Home Rule Leaguers for the national level protest against Annie Besant’s internment and then to the Muslim leaders for Ali Brother’s release but was not able to convince as the existing leaders were still not ready to accept his line of action.

If she is not released, however, before his arrival, it will be our duty to resort to satyagraha. We do not want to provoke the Government or put difficulties in its way. By resorting to Satyagraha, we reveal the intensity of our injured feelings and thereby serve the Government.\textsuperscript{84}

But before any political leader could assess his organizational skills it was the Government who acknowledged by giving the responsibility of the recruitment campaign during the war and by ignoring the potential of established leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and Annie Besant.

I feel that I should not speak to the resolution. I hope therefore that His Excellency will excuse me. I observe that my name is included in the man-power committee. I note that men like Mr. Tilak are not included. I fear that

\textsuperscript{83} Letter To C. S. Ranga Iyer, 4-7-1918, CWMG 14:471.

\textsuperscript{84} Letter to Shankarlal on ‘Ideas about Sayagraha’, 2-9-1917, CWMG 13:520.
my usefulness will be materially curtailed if I could not have the benefit of his co-operation and that of other Home Rulers of his caliber. It is hopeless to expect a truly national response and a national army, unless the Government are prepared to trust them to do their duty. I should gladly serve on the man-power committee if these leaders are invited to join it.\footnote{Letter to L. Robertson, 9-7-1918, CWMG 14:422.}

Although, Gandhi was hesitant to take the responsibility as he knew that his move could go against his own ideals but he took the opportunity seeing the importance of the Government’s move. However after a careful thought, he accepted the Government proposal but at the same time tried to convince the Government and the leaders to work together during such a crucial issue. ‘I only cling to England because I believe her to be sound at heart and because I believe that India can never deliver her mission to the world better through England.’\footnote{Letter to Prof. Jevons, 11-8-1919, CWMG 15:16.} He accepted the proposal with his broader intentions which is indicated through his justification in a following manner.

I do, at the same time, believe that we should declare our opinion about the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme in unequivocal terms, we should fix the minimum of our demands and seek to enforce them at all costs. I consider the scheme to be good in its conception. It requires modifications. I implicitly believed that if we were to devote our attention exclusively to recruiting, we should gain full responsible government in a year’s time, if not sooner. And instead of allowing our utterly ignorant country-men to enlist \textit{nolens volens}, we should get an army of Home Rulers who could be willing soldiers with
the knowledge that they will be soldiering for the sake of the country. 87

Conclusion
The above exercise gives an idea of Gandhi’s selfless aspirations, social consciousness and resolve to take bold initiatives. Being strongly linked with the traditional moral values he started contemplating different ways to adapt the modern culture and which led him to join organizations like London Vegetarian Society and London Theosophical Society. While being involved with these societies he was more thoughtful. He was facing challenges while having wider experiences of the society. Initially he struggled hard to coexist with his traditional beliefs and the modern culture. However, gradually he confronted the challenges in a thoughtful way which led him to compare and understand both the cultures on the basis of reason. Even though he desired to experience much more through his London journey but returned back home with a new perspective for both the cultures. He was keen to share his new experiences and which supported him to educate his family. Being professionally unsettled he was not able to do anything further and his financial requirements took him to Durban. With a perspective of young Gandhi’s aspirations and new experiences while England journey I tried to understand him during his prolonged struggle in South Africa. It is interesting to figure out that Gandhi was not only concerned with the immediate problem of South Africa but was working for the progression of the society at large. Society with the custom of racial discrimination was new to Gandhi. He was surprised to see the immoral attitude and which made him to assert for his rights. He started convincing men around him to organize and resist against the immoral practices and policies which had been forced on the Indians in South Africa. Subsequently he took a courageous initiative by organizing ‘Natal Indian Congress’. With a hope in the power of ‘words’ he placed the grievances of South African Indians by way of petitions to the Natal Government.

87 Letter to Sir Surendranath Banerjea, 10-8-1918, CWMG 15:15.
His endeavors were selfless and not for making money which gives an idea of his level of determination to sensitize the society. The Government was disregarding all these initiatives but somewhere he was trying to understand that if all these conscious efforts are not working than the state of affairs are not as simple as seen on the surface. He thoughtfully calculated it to be a matter of extreme misunderstandings between the two great communities i.e. the East and West. Consequently he started his initiatives so to lessen the growing misunderstandings between the two. He started sharing his thoughtful experiences by placing examples so to educate both the communities for the intensity of the problem and the consequences with which their brethrens are struggling in South Africa. At his individual level he started correspondence with the fair minded people of both the communities. Moreover he was interested in the opinion of the people who have broader understanding of both the cultures. He was utilizing these opinions in his petitions, writings and for formulating influence on the Home Government. One thing which is important to share is his skill to place his argument with proper facts, opinion of the prominent men, adding testimonials and the required data so to appeal the conscious of the reader. He consciously linked with the organizations like Theosophical Society and made use of their understanding and links for removing misapprehensions. However, through his introspectiveness he was getting firm for his basic moral beliefs. He even visited Trappist Monastery to know their views on the issue of vegetarianism and discovered that they value vegetarianism from spiritual point of view which greatly impressed him. Still there was no encouraging progress regarding the immediate problem but with all his initial initiatives he appealed the Government, Press and the masses to pause and think on the basis of morality. Even though his faith in British Justice was firm but not blind. In a similar manner he emphasized that one should not blindly imitate the western attributes and make conscious efforts to emulate their intrinsic worth instead of searching their drawbacks. He was open in acknowledging their positive outlook in such a manner. He was more thoughtful with each passing moment of the struggle which in turn was
leading him towards his higher degree of responsibilities. Gradually he was encouraged with the response which supported him to carry out his next initiative in the form of *Indian Opinion*. The objectives of the *Indian Opinion* were similar to his own which is reflective through the columns. His optimistic attitude is noticeable with the progression of his writings. Gradually with his experiences he was modifying his line of action which is reflected through his writings in the *Indian Opinion*. However, he was being inspired with the thoughts of great men across the globe but his inquisitiveness progressively shifted towards the ideas of great men who alone astonished the world with their deeds. The ideas of great men like Ruskin and Tolstoy encouraged him to develop a community based on his ideals in the form of Phoenix Settlement. He utilized all his links with the fair minded people of both the communities but then too response of the Home Government was objectionable. Gandhi strongly believed in Professor Max Muller’s idea of persistent endeavors to spread the message based on truth among the masses. Consequently he became more firm and took a pledge for his subsequent action, if new law come into force. In spite of showing their aggravation with their firm standpoint Colonial Government passed the new law. Subsequently he planned to approach the masses at large through his series of articles on ethics. It seems as if he was trying to show his vision through the ethical culture. He tried to explain the unconditional powers and the broad limits of the ethical culture. At the same time he clarified that for accomplishing this vision a combined constructivie effort is required by the fair minded people of all the different cultures. It is interesting to notice his skill to place his state of mind tc convince the masses at large. He placed his vision with the approval of science so as to appeal through reason. He linked ethics with an individual state of mind so to place his thoughts to common people. He also explained the close relationship between religion and ethics so as to appeal millions who are strongly linked with their religion. With an intense hope in the power of Moral Deeds he preferred to do something significant so to prove the genuineness of their cause. He diverted all his wits towards his new endeavor for the Passive Resistance. He preferred to define it more
clearly with his Gujarati expression as satyagraha which signifies firmness in truth. Government was surprised to see the firmness of the satyagrahis and therefore acknowledged their demands by discussing the basis of their demands with Gandhi. Through this minor move he sensed the efficacy of his experiment and his organizing skill. He was open in confirming the efficacy of his technique as well as the naivety of the masses. He was all set to educate the masses with the nitty-gritty’s of his new technique. Consequently he was keen to clarify the responsibilities of the leaders while negotiating. He also explained his logic of truce as he expects a way out by an honorable compromise so to eliminate the element of compulsion so to win respect from the opposite side. He was keen to share the experiences of great men who achieved excellent outcomes after its use. In this phase he defined his idea of integrity in the form of ‘Hind Swaraj’ or ‘Indian Home Rule’. Gandhi was not only sharing his knowledge through Indian Opinion but he was also sharing his whole earnings selflessly so as to educate others. Due to economic reasons he had to make another bold experiment in the shape of Tolstoy Farm. His model institutes were his ideal laboratory’s for training the satyagrahis and experimenting with the ideals in day to day life. Nevertheless he refined himself to epitomize his convictions. Gradually, he was insensitive to family bonding and even gelled himself with the poor. His idea of satyagraha assisted him in acquiring wider support from the public. Subsequently a new phase of struggle was started and was continued for six long years. While he was grappling an essay ‘On the Duty of Civil Disobedience’ by Thoreau inspired him. With the help of this essay he was able to clarify his own thoughts and explain the right meaning of the civil disobedience to the masses. As an organizer of the satyagraha technique he was careful in channelizing the ignorance of the masses. Moreover he shared his deep thoughts and asked others to assist him in the advancement of his ideals. He was aware of the fact that all these changes within the society will took time and thus he was patient while educating the masses. With his faith in the technique he lastly triumphed as a ‘leader of the masses’ by achieving a change in the attitude of Government policy. It is interesting to observe that through his
struggle in South Africa he simply asked for the elementary rights of humanity and ordinary justice and not the social change or social equality. Gandhi also indicates that to prove the efficacy of satyagraha technique it is essential to advance carefully with the expertise of the leader.

The above understanding acquaints with Gandhi’s ideas, skillful leadership and organizational skills. It primarily gives an idea of his way of working which went through different stages. Once he was successful with his unique way of working he was more curious to accomplish his aspirations for India. Initially, he took time to organize the essentials so to place the working of his satyagraha technique to the masses at large. With a reformer’s zeal he stepped into his initial course of action while touring different parts of the country. He specifically studied the existing state of ancient institutions while his tours in different states. Gandhi exchanged his views with learned academicians, influential local leaders, editors of the local newspapers and economist. Individuals who were convinced with his basic ideas and reasoning assured their support in achieving his ideals. Gandhi maintained his links by being in touch with these individuals through correspondence and was acquiring much information of the different localities too. After careful thought he established his model institute Satyagraha Ashram. He also started training in hand weaving and spinning in the ashram and sought to explain the practical working of his ideal of swadeshi to the Indian masses too. Gandhi was making his moves carefully and confronting the challenges more cautiously. While his tours he was faced with the communication problem due to the use of different languages throughout the country. He shortly sensed that without a common language it will be very difficult for him to reach the masses at the earliest. For him Hindi was the shortest possible means to reach the masses. After getting support on the issue he thought of spreading the message. He placed the importance of national language issue through his broader definition of swadeshi. It seems as it was
complexities emerged due to Macaulay’s Minute and to filter down his own ideals on the similar line. After being settled he focused his attention to Gujarat. He began his course of action by organizing educational conferences in Gujarat. By means of these conferences he provided a platform to all the individuals who had belief in his ideals. Being not satisfied with the prevalent education foundations in India, he exchanged his views with the individuals during these conferences for thinking aloud. Individuals who were supporting his ideals did assist him in its execution too. From the very beginning he maintained his independent identity by simply being a part and not an active member of any of the existing political organizations. The existing set of political ideologies whether moderate or extremist was not consistent to his line of action. However, he was firm with his way of working and his ideals. He was open to admit that he could join a movement or any of the political organizations only if they have some common goal to achieve. He was aware of the fact that still there are millions who have been left from the ambit of Home Rule Leaguers. Therefore, he focused his wits to educate those millions who were still not in the ambit of the existing political leaders of India. He contacted the masses during his tours and made an effort to introduce them with their special role in achieving the ideal state of Swaraj. He even maintained links with the editors who were open minded and due to which he was able to express himself freely through the columns of the Indian newspapers in the times when he was not running his own paper. He persistently explained the wider meaning of his terms swaraj, swadeshi and satyagraha so to demarcate the basis of his ideals from the others. In short he created a reasonable space for him to spread his message among the masses at large. During these years, he got an opportunity to assist local leaders while their struggle. As a reformer, he was always keen to join people in their difficult times. But as a skilled leader, he was careful enough in his way of working. His working was based on faith of sincere volunteers; personal dialogue with both the parties; independent inquiry to trace the whole truth; written material to appeal through reason and lastly if required satyagraha. Through his way of working, he tried to illustrate the importance of
expertise of a leader of the masses. No doubt, he was able to solve the grievances by his way of working but at the same time his move of satyagraha in resolving the local grievances was severely criticized by many established leaders and the masses as well. At times he was apprehensive for not convincing the people concerning satyagraha. Yet, he was trying to explain the deeper meanings of the term satyagraha at a wider level. Firstly, he tried to convince the Home Rule Leaguers for the national level protest against Annie Besant’s internment and then for the Muslim leaders for Ali Brother’s release but was not able to convince as the existing leaders were still not ready to accept his line of action. But before any political leader could assess his organizational skills it was the Government who acknowledged by giving the responsibility of the recruitment campaign during the war. Although, Gandhi was hesitant to take the responsibility as he knew that his move could go against his own ideals but he took the opportunity seeing the significance of the Government’s move. He accepted the proposal with the broader intentions to place his way of working and the organizational skills at a wider level.

Young Gandhi’s aspirations and thoughtfulness gave way to his inquisitiveness to observe the human race from new perspectives. His experiences while England journey helped him to formulate the intensity of the problem in South Africa. As according to him there were extreme misunderstandings between the communities of the East and West. To do away with these misunderstandings he started correspondence with the people who had broad understanding between the two cultures. While being in contact he explored them to be compatible and which made him more curious to search the likeminded people across the globe. No doubt he found such people but after careful study of their lives he revealed that there is much beyond the power of words and that is the power of moral deeds. His progressive awareness was supporting him to formulate bold experiments. His intensity to orchestrate his actions and thoughts led him to emerge as a leader in South Africa. In his formative phase he took preliminary steps to place the practical working of his ideals so to explain
the basis of his ideals. His organizational skills helped him to capture the opportunities which were coming in his way as well as to link with the masses at large.