Chapter Two

Morality of a Movement
1920 was the year in India when Mohandas Gandhi launched his signature politics with Non-Co-operation Movement against India's British regime. The call was motivated by India's recent and troubled past of military atrocity in Punjab, allies' betrayal of Islamic Khalifa, and the promulgation of legislations to stifle a rising India into submission. The crux of the call, Gandhi said, was directed inwardly; it aimed at self-purification and penance. It was necessitated with a view to break India's complicity in her own subjugation. 'The English', in Gandhi's ideological assumption, as he had put down in Hind Swaraj, 'have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them.'

The call received its energy from contemporary politics. But it had its roots that extended to time when the British had begun Indian expedition proclaiming 'trade and not territory' as their goal. It seemed long ago and yet it was so near that debris of its impact was all visible, in the destruction of Indian industry, in the pauperization of Indian people and in the faminisation of Indian economy. If anything that most succinctly defined the British rule, it was its role in the destruction of the hand-spinning. It was this that drove Gandhi's politics and that made his criticism of the British rule harsh. He saw the pernicious impact caused by a Satanic Empire that, in Indian metaphor, was the Ravan Raj.

A year later in 1921, Gandhi gave an inspired twist to his campaign against the British rule. At the height of his campaign, Gandhi called for the actual destruction of foreign clothes as a mark of self-respect. The foreign clothes, Gandhi averred, were contaminated with gory blood of Indians of yore. The only way one could now redeem one's national existence was by incinerating the individual stock of such

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In Hind Swaraj Gandhi states of the role played by educated and moneyed men in the continuance of British rule in India. Of educated he says: 'It is worth knowing that, by receiving English education, we have enslaved the nation...It is we, the English-knowing men, that have enslaved India. The curse of the nation will not rest upon the English but upon us' Parel, p. 104. And of moneyed men: 'I fear we will have to admit that moneyed men support British rule; their interest is bound up with its stability'. Parel, p108.

Gandhi's thought was either inspired from or carried similar connotation as of Leo Tolstoy. In a 'Letter to a Hindoo', Tolstoy had written: 'A commercial company enslaved a nation comprising 200 millions. Tell this to a man free from superstition and he will fail to grasp what these words mean. What does it mean that thirty thousand people, not athletes but rather weak and ill-looking, have enslaved 200 millions of vigorous, clever, strong, freedom-loving people? Do not the figures make it clear that not the English but the Indians have enslaved themselves?' Preface to Leo Tolstoy's "letter to a Hindoo", CWMG vol. 10: 5.
clothes. On 31st July 1921, he personally lit bonfire of a huge collection of foreign cloth on the ground of a friendly Bombay textile mill.2

The central thesis of the non-co-operation was adoption of Charkha and replacement of foreign apparel by hand-spun-hand-woven fabric of Khadi. But, in Gandhi's campaign against the British imperialism, destruction had been an important component, as indispensable an act as the construction.3 As the fire-waves leapt up the skyline of Bombay on that fateful day in July, the electrifying spectacle was witnessed by a sea of humanity that had worn coarse and white Khadi. For Gandhi the exhilarating moment was a 'soul-stirring sight' and he called it a *yajna*.

Through his speeches, writings, and the weakly silence, Gandhi brought home one point to his Indian audience: The foreign cloth revived 'Black Memories' and therefore must be destroyed.5 In his speeches, Gandhi warned the public that 'Foreign cloth constitutes our slavery. You should throw it off...Regard foreign cloth as no better than beef or liquor.'6 His political language was replete with references to

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2 'I regard this day as sacred for Bombay. We are removing today a pollution from our bodies. We are purifying ourselves by discarding foreign cloth which is the badge of our slavery. We attain today fitness to enter the Temple of Freedom (swaraj).' 'Speech on Swadeshi', Bombay, July 31 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 434.

3 'In Swadeshi alone are present both purposeful destruction and purposeful creation. 'Discarding old and creating new', *Navajivan*, July 21 1921, CWMG vol. 20: 413-16.

4 Gandhi reported: "It was to me a soul-stirring sight. Bombay the beautiful lit yesterday a fire which must remain for ever alive even as in a Parsi temple and which must continually burn all our pollutions, as yesterday we burnt our greatest outward pollution, namely, our foreign clothing. Let it be a token of our determination never to touch foreign cloth. Untouchability of foreign cloth is as much a virtue with all of us as untouchability of the suppressed classes must be a sin with every devout Hindu. To me, yesterday's outward fire is the symbol of the inner fire that should burn up all our weaknesses of the head or the heart. Our purified reason must show us the true economics of swadeshi. Our purified hearts must make us strong to withstand the temptation of yielding to the charms of foreign cloth." 'Speech at Public Meeting', Bombay, August 1 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 458.

5 'In my humble opinion cloth which revives such black memories and is a mark of our shame and degradation is fit only to be destroyed.' 'Notes: Why Burn?', *YI*, July 28 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 433

6 'Speech at Public Meeting', Bombay, July 2, 1921, CWMG vol.20: 317. Something similar was again repeated on 1st of August 1921, when he said: 'Untouchability of foreign cloth is as much a virtue with all of us as untouchability of the suppressed classes must be a sin with every devout Hindu.' 'Speech at Public Meeting', Bombay, August 1 1921, CWMG vol.20: 458.
foreign cloth as 'sin', 'filth...dirt...plague', 'pollution', 'a badge of our slavery' which
required to be discarded, burnt and against which an aversion needed to be created.

The depth of the injury caused by the East India Company and the magnitude of suffering that India then went through loomed large over Gandhi's consciousness and politics. By whatever means—fair or foul—the Company crippled the weaving industry, accumulated wealth, waged wars, acquired control of ports, monopolized trade and finally established their rule over India. The country was enslaved for satisfying the greed of the foreign cloth manufacturers. India's indigenous cloth industry 'was made to die'. The Company's persecution was so cruel that Indian craftsmen were 'obliged to cut off their own thumbs in order to avoid imprisonment'.

While the Indian manufacturers paid by their thumbs, starvation and lives, the

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7 'It is a sin now to wear any foreign cloth. We should give it up as early as possible and, in order that we may have Swadeshi cloth to wear, every one of us should spin. Spinning will protect our religion and our culture and, of course, our economic well-being.' Speech at Arbi, Navajivan, April 3 1921, CWMG vol.19: 445.

8 'My Notes: Bombay Surpasses Itself', Navajivan, August 7 1921, CWMG vol. 20: 472.

9 I assure you that the foreign cloth that I see on the persons of these beautiful sisters of mine, the foreign cloth that I see on the persons of so many of you, is nothing but a badge of our slavery and for once it is my honest conviction that the men and women of India clad in foreign cloth look not handsome but ugly. 'Speech at Cocanada', April 2 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 502.

10 In a speech delivered to Bombay public Gandhi spoke: "Collection of foreign cloth is like collection of refuse, every particle of which an industrious and careful housewife puts in the dustbin." 'Speech at Public Meeting', Bombay, August 1 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 459.

11 Gandhi wrote: "For the last hundred and fifty years India has been importing foreign cloth at the expense of her great cottage industry, i.e., spinning. Romesh Chandra Dutt has pointed out in his study of the history of the deliberately planned destruction of the spinning and weaving industries of India." 'Notes: Why Burn?', Yf, July 28 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 432. In a speech he said: "I shall have committed a wicked sin if we force ourselves into somebody's house and smash his oven. The imports of foreign cloth have done this to our poorer classes, have utterly destroyed our [cloth] industry and reduced many of us to the verge of starvation. We have, through this trade, destroyed the very means of our livelihood. This also has been a terrible sin." 'Discussion on Boycott at AICC Meeting, Bombay', On or after July 28 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 443.

12 'Foreign cloth constitutes the largest drain voluntarily permitted by us.' 'The Secret of Swaraj', Yf, CWMG vol.19:239.

13 'Speech at Rotary Club', Calcutta, The Englishman, August 19 1925, CWMG vol.28: 84.

14 Who Cut The Thumbs?, Yf, CWMG vol.19: 487. In an interview to Katherine Mayo on March 17, 1926, Gandhi repeated the charge: 'The East India Company came to buy, and remained to sell. It compelled us to cut off our thumbs. They stood over us and made us behave against our wills till thousands of us cut off our thumbs. This can be verified from the records of the East India Company. By means the foulest imaginable our trade was captured and then killed by them in order to make a market for their own goods. Practically at the point of the bayonet they forced us to work. For suppose I am tired of work—tired as we were tired till we cut off our thumbs to avoid being driven farther—is not that the pressure of the bayonet? This is the history of how our skill was lost.' CWMG vol. 30: 119.
indigenous consumers got tempted to the imported clothes. 'Who was tempted at the sight of their silver? Who bought their goods? History testifies that we did all this.' Indians therefore were required to perform a double penance; one for the oppression the ancestor producers had to endure and second, for the sin of having succumbed to Satanic influences of the foreign manufacturers. If the former meant destruction of foreign clothes, latter required taking up spinning as a National Duty and Khadi as the State Dress. In such a scheme incineration of the foreign clothes was as much a sacrament as the spinning of the Khadi yarn.

In his public speech delivered on the occasion, Gandhi, who was yet to strip himself to the minimal clothing that became his iconic trademark for all his remaining life and beyond, hoped that the fire would not die out but similar fire would be lit 'every week...in every town and every street of India'. That process was to continue 'till every article of foreign clothing' had been reduced to 'ashes'. The 'sacrificial fire' was the pinnacle of and was preceded by one of the most aggressive and determined campaign in the history of modern India. The campaign had progressively accredited to itself an accusation for fomenting hatred and violence against the fellow human beings and their creations. He was accused of fostering narrow nationalism against India's Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam. And, he was also advised that instead of burning the clothes he should give it to the poor. The volley of accusation came from friends and foes alike. While friends were pained, foes felt vindicated at the sight of Gandhi's violence, manifested in his act of lighting the pile.

'Cleansing of filth is not violence', Gandhi's was a point-blank reply. 'It is a mockery to ask India not to hate when in the same breath India's most sacred feelings

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15 'Why was India lost?', Hind Swaraj, Parel, p40
17 'Khadi is on a fair way to become the State dress, it is not the foreign muslin that will henceforth deck our bodies on auspicious occasions, but the sacred khadi reminiscent not of sweated labour or the enforced idleness and pauperism of India's millions, but of the reviving poetry of the home life and of the incoming prosperity of the poorest toiler.' Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay, August 1 1921, CWMG vol. 20: 458.
18 'The flame that was kindled on that day symbolized the flame that is aglow in the country's heart today.' My Notes: Bombay Surpasses Itself, Navajivan, August 7 1921, CWMG vol. 20: 472.
19 The imports of foreign cloth have done this to our poorer classes, have utterly destroyed our [cloth] industry and reduced many of us to the verge of starvation. We have, through this trade, destroyed the very means of our livelihood. 'Discussion on Boycott at AICC Meeting', Navajivan, CWMG vol.20:446.
are contumaciously brushed aside', Gandhi wrote in response to a criticism. He shrugged off all oppositions, even from so close a friend as Andrews who advocated giving the foreign clothes to poor instead of consigning them to fire. 'The central point in burning', Gandhi wrote to Andrews, 'is to create an utter disgust with ourselves that we have thoughtlessly decked ourselves at the expense of the poor.' About the burning itself Gandhi said 'it was a noble act nobly performed.' With this one act, Gandhi said, people were 'silently and unconsciously transferring their hatred of sinners to sin itself.' Burning was a life-saving 'surgical operation'. If there was any anger or ill-will, the fire gave it a disciplined vent. Fire was symbolic of transformation of impotent hatred into conscious self pity. Giving to the poor discarded foreign cloth was like giving 'discarded costly toilet brushes to them'. Such an 'inartistic and incongruous' charity was an insult to their sense of patriotism and the state of poverty. The sin was not the foreign fineries nor even the foreign conquest but folly of Indians falling to the conquerors' bait in the past.

Past was an important reference point for Gandhi just as it is for the post-independent proponents of Hindutva. In the contemporary contention for hegemony it is the present's necessity to call for the past to stand a witness. Gandhi called for facts from past, aptly supported by historical research of Naoroji and Rajani Dutt, to support his argument that the British machinations rather than their machinery killed India's flourishing craft of cloth-making and impoverished her.

Notes:
- 'Notes: On the Wrong Track', YI, December 8 1920, CWMG vol. 19: 81.
- 'I see nothing wrong in making it a sin to wear cloth that has meant India's degradation and slavery. What I am trying to do just now is to perform a surgical operation with a hand that must not shake.' 'Letter to C F Andrews', CWMG vol. 20: 499.
- 'Burning in Bombay', YI, CWMG vol.20: 486.
- The majority of the articles burnt had no correspondence with the life of the poor. The dress of the middle class had undergone such a transformation that it was not fit to be given to the poor people.' 'Burning in Bombay', YI, CWMG vol.20: 486.
- 'Why should the poor adorn themselves with what we have discarded? Why should we have to give alms to the poor? The only gift we can bestow on the poor is to make them self-reliant; our movement is for making them like us.'
- 'History does not tell us that Khadi went out of use because foreign cloth was better and cheaper. Even today, foreign cloth cannot compete with the better sort of Khadi. Cloth like the shabnam muslin of Dacca has disappeared for ever. When foreign cloth was first introduced, it was not
Past, Gandhi carried a legitimacy of aggrieved conscience. The only way a mistake of past could be redeemed was by avenging in present a past-wrong. Gandhi avenged through atonement for having succumbed to temptation and turmoil. He not only fixed responsibility for destruction but also attempted reinstating the economy to tilt balance against the imperial needs. Responsibility was laid not on the perpetrators of the destruction but on Indians who caved in to pressure and temptation from the British traders. So avenging the wrong perpetrated in the past did not mean to hate the present-day British rulers but reclaiming an empowered self by stripping all weaknesses.

Gandhi drew a distinction between bad actions and bad men. Gandhi's politics, as he tirelessly repeated from umpteen platforms, was 'directed not against men but against measures'. It was not directed against the Governors, but against the system they administered. The roots of his politics lay not in hatred but in justice, if not in love. 'And so I hope this great movement... has made it clear... that whilst we, may attack measures and systems, we may not, must not, attack men. Imperfect ourselves, we must be tender towards others and be slow to impute motives.' If he did use harsh language, Gandhi said, they were condemnation free of any evil intention. Even on 31st of July 1921 when passion ran high at the sight of that massive bonfire of foreign clothes, there were English men and women on the platform along with even cheap. History tells us, on the contrary, that the East India Company deliberately destroyed the spinning and weaving industries and, by securing various forms of protection, made us accept foreign cloth. I have not invented this history out of my ignorance. I have gathered it from Shri Romesh Chandra Dutt's vast storehouse of knowledge. I am not aware of these assertions having been disputed to this day; if this belief of mine is erroneous, I shall certainly be ready to revise it.' 'Triumph of Spring', Navajivan, May 25 1924, CWMG vol. 24: 128.

As Gandhi wrote: "The dynamic force behind this great movement is not vocal propaganda but the silent propaganda carried on by the sufferings of the innocent victims of a mad Government." 'Notes: Difficulties in the way', YI, July 13 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 356.

'We should try to end British rule not by visiting them with punishment but by acquiring strength through self-purification.' 'Speech to Students of Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad', January 13 1921, CWMG vol.19: 225.

Such a perception was deeply engrained as can be gazed from the following letter that Gandhi received: 'You always say that you and your followers have arrayed yourselves against the English Government, and not against Englishmen. While you hate the system and want either to mend it or end it, you have absolutely no ill-feeling towards Englishmen themselves.' The letter had made a complaint of Jawaharlal Nehru's certain comments in the public. Nehru wrote back clarifying his comment. CWMG vol.21: 452 & 535

'It is directed not against men but against measures. It is not directed against the Governors, but against the system they administer. The roots of non-co-operation lie not in hatred but in justice, if not in love.' The Simla Visit, YI, May 25 1921, CWMG vol.20:134.
Gandhi. Gandhi was striving to establish Swaraj in India by appealing to moral force to attain which he relied upon selflessness and sacrifice. 'We should try to end British rule not by visiting them with punishment but by acquiring strength through self-purification.' It is this fine distinction that needs to be understood by the free India even when it sets itself on the agenda of correcting the past. While Gandhi’s destruction of foreign cloth was meant to strengthen India as a nation, Hindutva’s destruction of Babri-Mosque brought her civil chaos and bloody-reprisal.

On 9th January 1915, a forty-six year old Mohandas Gandhi disembarked at Bombay dock. After twenty-one year of stay and struggle in South Africa, ‘the saint’ was returning his homeland. He wore a ‘Kathiawari suit of clothes consisting of a shirt, a dhoti, a cloak and a white scarf, all made of Indian mill-cloth’. He had long been preparing for this day. In 1914, a month before his departure from South Africa, Gandhi had instructed his twenty-five-year old nephew and co-worker, Maganlal, about the propriety of dress code while landing on Indian shore. ‘I want every child to land in India’, Gandhi instructed, ‘with Indian—style clothes on.’ He even laid down the dresses to be worn. ‘The very young should have a lungi, a shirt and a cap. The grown ups like you should wear a safa and a long coat. ...I see no need for the boys to have shoes ...The boys...should start wearing dhotis on the steamer....It would be good if everyone learnt to eat with one hand only (the right one) and that too sitting cross-legged on the floor.’

Sartorially, Gandhi was a man transformed, indeed. In about a quarter century of struggle in South Africa that established him as a front-ranking activist for the people of Indian origin, he had shed his western fads and reclaimed his Indian roots. His sartorial profile had begun to change in South Africa, ‘in keeping with that of the

32 The parting comment by General Smuts, ‘The saint has left our shore’, was not the only comment which saw in Gandhi traits of saintliness. In India, as Kripalani writes, he was seen more as religious reformer than as political leader (Kripalani, J.B., Gandhi, His Life and Thought, p.56.) Nanda writes, ‘The fact is that the image of Gandhi in his home land was that of a high-souled reformer rather than of a political leader’. (Nanda, B.R., In Gandhi’s Footstep: The life and times of Jamnalal Bajaj, 1990, p.29.) Margaret Chatterjee quotes C.F. Andrews, as having written to Rabindranath Tagore of his impression from the first meeting with Gandhi in January 1915 as Gandhi being ‘a saint of action rather than contemplation’. Chatterjee, Margaret, Gandhi’s Religious Thought, 1983, p.1.
34 Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, CWMG vol.12, 379.
indentured labourers', his constituency. Formerly he had been westernized in his tastes. In 1888, as reflected in a well known autobiographical snippet, Gandhi had sailed with in-vogue Bombay suits but had still fallen short of London fashion. Even in 1903, when he had gone to South Africa along with his wife and children, he had been particularly conscious of what he and his family wore. At the time, much to her discomfiture, Kasturba wore Parsi style long sari, in imitation of India's most modernized community which in South Africa then was minuscule in number. His sons wore shoes and stockings. They ate or were made to eat with forks and spoons alone.

Changeover, therefore, seemed dramatic. Throughout his Indian career, his manner of dressing would attract pungent sarcasm from his opponents. In Champaran, in 1917, Gandhi was pilloried by the officials as well as the English Press critical of his work, for his manner of dressing.\textsuperscript{35} He was yet to achieve the mahatmahood and a political preeminence that would be his in another two years. On 'a humanitarian mission', Gandhi in Champaran was investigating the oppressing system engendered by the English Planters under which the poor farmers growled to no redress. The methodical manner of his investigation and the deft dealing with the top Empire officials helped Gandhi successfully outmaneuver the planters' lobby for their indictment. Nipped, the planters and their sympathizers searched for issues to malign him. They choose to ridicule his dressing. Their charge was that Gandhi's dress, 'temporarily and specially adopted', was designed to produce an effect upon the credulous ryots. Gandhi was quick for a rejoinder on an issue which clearly marked him out from the contemporary anglicized politicians. Writing in \textit{The Pioneer}, 'the leading organ of Anglo-Indian opinion in the country',\textsuperscript{36} he called his dress a national dress that suited India's climate and which 'for its simplicity, art and cheapness, is not to be beaten on the face of the earth and which answers hygienic requirements.'\textsuperscript{37} Copying the English style of putting one's 'legs into the bifurcated garment' signified

\textsuperscript{35} Champaran, a deeply rural district in north Bihar, was characterised by the presence of large estates and was dominated by landlords rather than peasant proprietors. Most of the large landlords had rented out their land to temporary tenure-holders, a substantial number of whom were European planters and they in turn either cultivated the land directly or rent it out to peasant tenants. The plantations were of indigo which was ceasing to be a paying proposition as German manufactured synthetic indigo began to undercut the natural dye on world markets. The planters proceeded to transfer their losses on to their tenants. The result was a 'planter raj' causing considerable discontent perturbing even Government officials.

\textsuperscript{36} Letter to Revenue Secretary, January 24 1918, CWMG vol.14:165

\textsuperscript{37} Reply Regarding Dress to The Pioneer, CWMG vol.13: 450.
'our degradation, humiliation and our weakness'. And then, Gandhi invited the English to leave their 'false pride and equally false notions of prestige' and adopt Indian dressing when in India. That however was not the last word on his sartorial transformation. Final change was to come in 1921 at the height of the Khadi Movement when he appeared for the first time in the public covered only by his now patented loin cloth.

Gandhi had transformed his identity too. From being a successful lawyer he had turned to 'agriculture and weaving'. As his involvement with politics of rights grew, much of Gandhi’s legal engagements in South Africa went to Rieth and Polak, his comrades-in-arm in the struggle for expatriate Indian’s identity and dignity. He himself built Phoenix settlement as the citadel of his experiments, terming it to be a unique institution in the world ‘in its ideals or its way of life’. ‘If there is any, the civilized world has not heard of it.’ After the Phoenix, he along with Kallenbach had settled to develop the Tolstoy Farm. In 1911, at Tolstoy Farm, Gandhi proposed to give more attention to weaving. He even sent a colleague to acquaint with handlooms in a factory. It is another matter that timing of Gandhi’s avowed declaration of his intent to become ‘farmer and weaver’ coincided with the irreparable estrangement with his eldest son, Harilal. Gandhi was increasingly getting disenchanted with the gloss of modern civilization.

‘The more I observe things here’, Gandhi on a deputation to England in 1909 had written discouraging his second son Manilal who had been pining for an opportunity to be educated at London, ‘the more I feel that there is no reason to

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38 In 1924, Gandhi noted that the annual expenditure on his clothes amounted to not more than a mere rupees three. 'My Notes: Humour', Navajivan, July 20 1924, CWMG vol. 24: 415.

39 Gandhi explains that change came out of conviction and was gradual in coming. It was at Madura, in September 1921, that he brought such a ‘radical alteration’ in his dress. But before that, twice he had come close to adopt loin-cloth, each time he had restrained himself. First was when he was shaken by famine-stricken Khulna. The second occasion was when Mohammed Ali was arrested. During his Madras tour he was told about the scarcity in khadi availability and lack of people’s purchasing power. He discussed among his co-workers such as Maulana Azad Sobhani, Rajagopalachariar, Doctor Rajan and others before taking the decision. (CWMG vol. 21, p.181.)

Emma Tarlo says, 'No Indian leader took the problem of what to wear more seriously than Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and probably no other leader changed his clothes so dramatically.' See, for a chronological study of Gandhi’s changing dress, Tarlo, Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India, Viking, 1996, pp62-93.

40 Letter to Dr Pranjivan Mehta, May 8 1911, CWMG vol.11: 66.


42 Letter to Dr Pranjivan Mehta, May 8 1911, CWMG vol.11: 67.
believe that this place is particularly suited for any type of better education.\textsuperscript{43} The mother metropolis with all its opulence had disheartened Gandhi. It was on this return voyage that Gandhi penned his ideological masthead, Hind Swaraj, which many an analyst sees as severe condemnation of modern-western civilization.\textsuperscript{44} Again in 1914, the small interregnum that he spent in the war-torn England between his departure from South Africa and arrival in India, she seemed ‘like poison’. ‘My soul is in India’, he wrote.\textsuperscript{45} The words showed if anything the transformation of Gandhi that he had undergone since his own determined departure in 1888 for an education at London Bar. Twenty-Seven years later, in 1915, Gandhi had disembarked at the Bombay dock a visibly changed man—as much outwardly as inwardly.\textsuperscript{46}

Yet, arrival in India was 'suffocating'.\textsuperscript{47} Bombay, where he had landed, looked more like 'the scum of London.'\textsuperscript{48} He was also pretty unsure of his future that waited in India.\textsuperscript{49} ‘And having reached [India] what shall I do with myself?’, Gandhi wrote in

\textsuperscript{43} Letter to Manilal Gandhi, August 10 1909, CWMG vol.9, 352. It was not alone the unsuitability of London as a place for imparting education to the young mind that weighed upon Gandhi’s mind, however. His reluctance to let his own son to benefit from the privileged education at London was borne out of his high sense of self-sacrifice in the cause of community. In April 1909, from his South African jail, Gandhi wrote to his friend and comrade, Polak, ‘Manilal is naturally somewhat dissatisfied with his studies. But it is inevitable. We are in the experimental stage and the first students have to be the victims.’ ‘Letter to H S L Polak’, April 26 1909, CWMG vol. 9: 213.

\textsuperscript{44} Rudolf Heredia calls Hind Swaraj as 'a foundational text for any understanding of the man and mission'. Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIV, No. 24, June 12-18, 1999, pp1497-1502.

\textsuperscript{45} Letter to Chaganlal, CWMG vol.12: 533.

\textsuperscript{46} ‘I do want a medal, but of a different kind altogether’, Gandhi wrote to a friend upon arrival in India. Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari, June 10 1915 CWMG vol.13: 104.

\textsuperscript{47} His reception meetings were well attended and the meetings were chaired by people who were not very sympathetic to his agenda and activities. Very first meetings upon his arrival were chaired by Pherozeshah Mehta (CWMG vol.13: 5), Tilak (CWMG vol. 13: 7), Jinnah (CWMG vol. 13: 9) and by the members of Servants of India Society (CWMG vol. 13: 8).


\textsuperscript{49} He landed at Bombay proclaiming passionate loyalty to the Empire. His notion of loyalty however had a subtlety that would keep the Empire dumbfounded till clarity dawned upon four years later, in 1919, when he rebelled to ‘mend or end the Empire’. Gandhi’s notion of loyalty, he wrote in the 1910 preface of the English translation of Hind Swaraj, was based not in the present quality of governance dispensed by the Empire. It was based ‘in a future acceptance by Government of that standard of morality in practice which it at present vaguely and hypocritically believes in, in theory.’ He further added that he was not particularly enamored by the stability of the Empire as about that of the ancient civilization of India which, in his opinion, ‘represents the best that the world has ever seen.’ Preface to “Indian Home Rule”, CWMG vol. 9: 189.
a letter to a Phoenix colleague. To his credit, however, Gandhi’s arrival in 1915 was preceded by two noteworthy achievements which were to facilitate his future engagements. First, in South Africa, he had led a protracted struggle which was, as he had written to his ideological teacher, Tolstoy, ‘greatest of modern times’ in as much in goal as in the methods adopted to reach the goal. Second, Hind Swaraj, his ideological masthead, published in 1909, stood embargoed by the government of India as it was thought to be ‘seditious’ and subversive to British supremacy.

Gandhi’s Ashram enterprise in India began simultaneously with his self-acquainting tour across the country. Ahmedabad was chosen as the place for his Indian settlement. The establishment of the Satyagraha Ashram was in continuation of his experiments at Phoenix and Tolstoy Farm in South Africa, with weaving and agriculture being its designed activities. While his co-workers, comprising of some fifty inmates, struggled to settle, Gandhi took to traveling. Bound by Gokhale’s

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50 ‘I have been so often prevented from reaching India’, a pensive but exuberant Gandhi had written weeks before, abroad SS Arabia, to, ‘that it seems hardly real that I am sitting in a ship bound for India.’ Letter to A. H. West, CWMG vol.12, 465.

51 Gandhi asked Tolstoy’s help to popularize his movement. Gandhi wrote in his letter: ‘If it succeeds, it well be not only a triumph of religion, love and truth over irreligion, hatred and falsehood, but it is highly likely to serve as an example to the millions in India and to people in other parts of the world, who may be down-trodden and will certainly go a great way towards breaking up the party of violence, at least in India.’ He had enclosed a biography of his, written by Doke. ‘Letter to Leo Tolstoy’, November 10 1909, CWMG vol. 9: 528. Gandhi had also enticed Gokhale to support his movement by calling it as ‘the greatest struggle of modern time.’ ‘Letter to G K Gokhale’, November 11 1909, CWMG vol. 9: 531.

52 Parel, *Hind Swaraj*, p-5, footnote2

53 Several provinces claimed Gandhi. Being a Gujarati, he chose Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujarat as the site of Satyagraha Ashram founded on 25th May, 1915. It was an ancient centre of hand-loom weaving, and thus an appropriate location for his proposed scheme to revive hand-spinning and weaving. Ironically, the city was a great centre of mill-made cloth, and industry introduced and financed by wealthy Indians on the British pattern which threatened to destroy all remnants of artisan spinning and weaving. It was likely to be the most favourable field for the revival of cottage industry. He thought he could influence the people most through his mother tongue, Gujarati. A no less important consideration was the monetary help offered. Ahmedabad being the richest trading centre in Gujarat, Gandhi thought its wealthy citizens could be easily induced to help a new activity. (Tendulkar, D.G., *Mahatma, Life Of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. One, 1951, pp. 163-75.)

54 During this period, Gandhi, with wandering-born-wisdom, was in a belligerent mood. He spoke as if on an educating spree, without fear or favour. In a country dominated by giants of parliamentary debates, from Ranade to Mehta to Gokhle, his speeches, at various public gatherings, showed empathy, not eloquence. He preached politics of people away from the podium- the forte of the Moderates. There was much to desire from the Indian political class. Speeches--content and language--utterly alien to the masses, spewed out from the high podium, somehow lacked mass appeal. Lost in the labyrinth of verbiage, resolutions passed at conferences, went into limbo even before the ink went dry. Bejeweled princes agonized over poverty around, in stark contrast to their lifestyle. Gandhi
‘compact of silence’ for a year, Gandhi took to train traveling with a vengeance rarely witnessed among the contemporary politicians. He traveled third class and then shot off missives complaining passengers’ plight. ‘The latrines were in a dangerously filthy state’ and still he would not allow hapless Kasturba to take the benefit of comparatively clean second class bathrooms. He had expected to join Servants’ of India Society at the behest of Gokhale, ‘friend, philosopher and guide’, whose death in February 1915, however, left Gandhi ‘without shelter’. Immediately

spoke famously about these prevailing inconsistencies at Banaras Hindu University, in February 1916, and, while students applauded, princes led by Annie Besant, emptied the hall. Mrs. Besant first asked Gandhi: ‘Please stop it’, while he was in the midst of his speech. With cries of ‘Go on’ supporting Gandhi and with the consent of the Chairman, Gandhi went along with his speech. Unable to bear, Mrs. Besant left the hall, followed by the princes. ‘Speech at BHU’, 6 February 1916, *CWMG* vol. 18, pp. 210-6. Gandhi himself noted in a speech: ‘I am at war with my leaders’. CWMG vol. 13: 69.

In a letter to Gokhale, Gandhi wrote: ‘I shall scrupulously observe the compact of silence for one year after my arrival in India.’ CWMG vol. 12: 360.

Politically, in 1915, India was beginning to show signs of renewed vigour. An attempt was being made to put aside the stupefying spell of Surat which had splintered the nationalist platform and dampened the national upsurge. Tilak had been released, and with the Surat sentiment on the wane, he naturally became the focus of a revitalized Indian polity. His re-entry into the Congress was facilitated not just by the demise of his most vociferous critic, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta but also by the aggressive campaigning done on his behalf by Madame Annie Besant. She, in recognition of her contribution to India, was chosen to preside over the annual Congress session of 1916, at Lucknow. Later, she and Tilak founded their respective Home Rule Leagues to expedite India’s march to self rule. (Besant’s follower in League such as Omar Sobhani and Shankarlal Banker later became close adherents of Gandhi.) While, at Lucknow the politically established leaders were involved in hammering out a Hindu-Muslim Pact, Gandhi had been in the background, garnering support for the Indians settled in South Africa. He cajoled the daïsful of leaders to allow him to put before the august Congress, a resolution on the system of indenture. He demanded stoppage of emigration, as it was an ‘evil which cannot be mended but only be ended’. Most of the leaders present hardly took notice of his plea. One man, an illiterate villager, named Rajkumar Shukla, however, saw, in him, a potential which made him pester Gandhi till he agreed to accompany him to Champaran. ‘Drawn more or less accidentally’ to the arena of indigo, Gandhi looked upon it more as a humanitarian mission than as a political campaign. Success here was easy. Soon, however, he found himself embroiled in a labour strike at Ahmedabad. He exhorted the mill owners to bind their working force with ‘silken thread of love’. The first serious conflict with the British authorities, however, was yet to take place and that happened at Kheda. ‘Authority’, he said while fighting for farmers’ right, ‘is blind and unjust’. ‘Speech at Aklacha’, April 1918, *CWMG*, vol. 14, p. 323. Although the gains at Kheda were insubstantial, the people acquired a spirit of fearlessness and a consciousness of their strength to employ satyagraha whenever necessary.

Of one such arrival after a long train journey, *The Hindu* reported his condition as: Mr. Gandhi looked thin and emaciated, a loose shirt soiled by four days of continuous travel covered his body and a pair of trousers similar in appearance covered his legs. *The Hindu*, April 17 1915, CWMG vol. 13: 47.


‘Speech at Reception by Calcutta Modh Community’, March 12 1915, CWMG vol. 13: 35.
after, the Society regrouped to spurn Gandhi's overtures.\textsuperscript{60} His cross country journey, however, continued in 'genuine search of knowledge'.\textsuperscript{61}

His tour itinerary invariably included a certain visit to the indigenous cloth making centers. He appears as an educationist researching and pointing afflictions and also presenting befitting solutions through actions and thoughts. Gandhi's speeches were laden with Swadeshi messages. The constant refrain of Gandhi in his speeches was that Swaraj and Swadeshi had to go together.\textsuperscript{62} At Karachi, he spoke of his strong feeling that in the absence of 'swadeshism, there can be no self-government'.\textsuperscript{63} In his speeches, he enquired about the practice of handloom weaving and the condition of weavers in the area. At Mayavaram, near Madras, he was told that the handlooms were chiefly engaged in making sarees for womenfolk. 'Is Swadeshi to be confined only to women?', he chided the crowd.\textsuperscript{64} At Nellore, in a speech to students, he bemoaned the fact that the educated lacked appreciation for Swadeshi enterprise. He found that the clothes made of fly shuttle weaving and exhibited for sale at the meeting place had largely remained unsold. In such a contrary attitudinal environment

\textsuperscript{60} His application for admission into the Society was dictated either by his reverence for Gokhale or his own insecurity upon arrival in India. For Gandhi had nurtured an ambition that was very much contrary to the ideals of the Society. Very early in 1909, Gandhi had vented his opinion on Society in a letter to Maganlal Gandhi. It was immediately after he had authored Hind Swaraj. He had then written: 'I felt sad when I read Chi. Chhaganlal’s description of the Servants of India Society. It is a matter for regret that a great man like Prof. Gokhale is engrossed in it. I believe he will come out of it, for he is honest. It is simply an indifferent imitation of the West. Is it proper for the servants to have servants? And who are the servants? Why was it necessary to engage them? Why do they have others to cook for them? What do these 'servants' think of religion? Why should there be large buildings in India? Why should not huts be enough? What a superstition that only an M.A. or B.A. could become a 'servant'! I do feel that the aims of Phoenix as well as the way of life there surpass those of the Society. What we are doing here is the real thing, what goes on in Poona is, leaving aside the motive, unreal. The motive is good, but what is being done is bad. Phoenix is comparatively better than the pomp and show of Poona. According to the standard indicated by me in Swaraj, the work of Mr. Gokhale's 'servants' cannot be regarded as proper. It is likely to add to our slavery. If I tried to turn East into West, I also would sigh like Gokhale and lose heart. We do not aspire to improve India; we want to improve ourselves. The position taken by the 'servants' was materialistic and not spiritual. We have to rid ourselves of the fetish of literacy and mundane knowledge. Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, January 27 1910, CWMG vol. 10: 137-140.

\textsuperscript{61} Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, April 16 1917, CWMG vol.13: 366. 'I have been moving about in this country for a month and seen on what an enormous scale fraud is prevalent here.' 'Speech at Prize Distribution to Students in Bombay', February 14 1915, CWMG vol. 13: 22.

\textsuperscript{62} Speech at Reception in Hyderabad, Sind, The Hindu, CWMG vol.13, 251.

\textsuperscript{63} Speech In Reply to Address, Karachi, February 1916, CWMG vol.13, 254.

\textsuperscript{64} Speech at Reception at Mayavaram, The Hindu, CWMG vol.13, 71.
there was no other way by which indigenous enterprises could flourish.\textsuperscript{65} In March 1916, at Gurukul, Hardwar, he exhorted his student audience to take on hand weaving because more than 85 percent of India comprised of the peasantry.\textsuperscript{66} Making India produce its own cloth formed an inevitable component of his primary aim. Though in real terms what it meant and how could it be achieved became clear in the course of next three years. In 1909, when Gandhi, for the first time, wrote of ‘handloom’ as panacea for India’s poverty he had not yet seen the appliance.\textsuperscript{67} But his knowledge was to rapidly grow after his arrival in India.

Much of what Gandhi had seen and made opinions about during his nation wide wanderings found its place in the constitution for Ashram which he first drafted in May 1915. It was through the Ashram that the ideal of Swadeshi was laid out. Gandhi began by earnestly laying its Constitution to include the ‘sacred law of Swadeshi’ and ‘Hand-weaving’ in realization of ‘the dignity of labour’.\textsuperscript{68} The Constitution laid down ‘the virtual disappearance of spinning wheels and handlooms’ as one of the chief reasons of poverty in India.\textsuperscript{69} Gandhi’s ashram was instituted to begin the process of repair and recovery. Along with the Constitution, Gandhi appended some vows with specific callings whose adoption were prerequisite for being a resident of the Ashram.\textsuperscript{70} For a man whose life was dictated by ‘disciplinary

\textsuperscript{65} Speech At Students Meeting, Nellore, New India, CWMG vol.13, 75.

\textsuperscript{66} Speech at Gurukul Anniversary, March 20 1916, CWMG vol.13: 264.

\textsuperscript{67} In 1909, for the first time in Hind Swaraj, Gandhi wrote of ‘ancient and sacred hand-looms’. At the time he did not know the difference between a loom and a spinning-wheel (charkha). As he writes in his Autobiography, ‘I do not remember to have seen handloom or a spinning wheel when in 1909 I described it is Hind Swaraj as a panacea for the growing pauperism of India’ (CWMG vol. 39: 389). He stated in 1925: ‘...I had put forward my argument in its [charkha’s] favour in Hind Swaraj before ever having set my eyes on the spinning wheel’ (CWMG vol. 25: 600). And in 1928: ‘It was in London in 1909 that I discovered the wheel. I had gone there leading a deputation from South Africa. It was then that I came in close touch with many earnest Indians—students and others. We had many long conversations about the condition of India and I saw in a flash that without the spinning wheel there was no Swaraj. I knew at once that everyone had to spin. But I did not then know the distinction between the loom and the wheel and in Hind Swaraj used the word loom to mean the wheel’ (CWMG vol. 37: 288). ‘Even in 1915, when I returned to India from South Africa, I had not actually seen a spinning-wheel’ (CWMG vol. 39: 389).

\textsuperscript{68} Speech On 'Ashram Vows' at YMCA Madras, February 16 1916, CWMG vol.13: 234.

\textsuperscript{69} Draft Constitution for the Ashram, Before May 20 1915, CWMG vol.13: 95.

\textsuperscript{70} Vows, product of his deep and abiding religiosity, unbounded by scriptural dogma, had been an important aspect of his growing up. ‘A vow is nothing but a fixed resolution to do or abstain from doing a particular thing’, Gandhi explained, from his sickbed in Bombay, to Esther Faering, on 25 January 1919. (‘Letter to Esther Faering’, 25 January 1919, CWMG, vol. 15, p.76.) Esther Faering wrote, asking for deeper meaning, ‘Do we take a vow in order to help and strengthen our
resolutions such a course was a natural corollary. Among the cluster of vows [Truth, Non-Violence, Celibacy, the Palate, Non-Stealing, Non-Possession] was included a subsidiary vow of Swadeshi. The vow of Swadeshi was framed under the conception that the foreign manufactures involved violation of truth and destruction of lives. The inmates were required to shun artificial beautifying of the body and adopt simplicity. They were also to abjure the foreign fineries. These voluntary resignations were meant to strengthen the vow of brahmacharya. The vow of Swadeshi, therefore, had subtle moral bearing.

Character? Does God require us to take any kind of vows? Can a vow not become fatal? ...(I)f God is a father, and if God is perfect love, does it not then cause suffering to Him when His children take burden upon them, which they are not asked to carry?'. (Footnote 4 in 'Letter To Esther Faering', CWMG, Vol. 15, p. 76.) Gandhi replied, bringing out the dichotomy between the body and soul. 'Body is matter, soul is spirit, and there is eternal conflict between the matter and spirit. Triumph of matter over the spirit means destruction of the latter'. (Ibid., p.77.) Body is merely an instrument for uplifting of the soul. As soul is imperishable living in a body, which is perishable and transitory, for body to yield in the service of the soul it is to be controlled through the mechanism of the vows.

Gandhi’s penchant for vows came under close scrutiny in 1918 when he fell to an incapacitating illness and came close to death’s door. It was Kedha’s lukewarm response to his call for recruitment to assist British war effort that led to Gandhi’s nervous breakdown and the first major debilitating illness. For six months he remained confined to bed; his body wrecked and his morale low. Friends advised him to take the nourishing milk. Gandhi did not relent as way back in 1912 he had vowed against the intake of milk. (CWMG vol.39, 263) The vow was impelled by the stories of mistreatment of cows and cruel practices adopted to extract every ounce of milk from her udder. In a letter to a friend, Gandhi wrote, ‘From religious point of view what I said about milk still stands. But from the point of view of health and under Indian conditions, giving up of milk seems an impossibility. It is many years since I gave up milk and I am under a vow never to take it in this life. But I can not advice others to give up milk so long as I have not a substitute having the qualities of milk’. (Letter to a Friend’, 9 August 1919, CWMG, vol. 15, p.12.) Further, since 1906, he was practicing brahmacharya and had found by experience that milk acted as stimulant. Gandhi therefore was most osteinate to any suggestion to break his vow. He, however, did bring his scientific temperament in use and requested Dr P C Ray, the Swadeshi chemist from Calcutta, to suggest a vegetable extract substitute for milk. (Letter to PC Ray, August 27 1918, CWMG vol.15, 32 also CWMG vol.15, 43) During the illness, it became a source of deep consternation and agony among his friends and family members. In the end, however, the desire to live and work, and also implored by Kasturba, he began to take goat-milk. Gandhi covered his flanks by asserting that while undertaking the vow against milk he only had cow’s milk in mind. This did not satisfy many who requested him to give up the vow straightway and not violate it gradually. (Letter to Narhari Parikh January 21 1919, CWMG vol.15, 73 also Letter to Narhari Parikh, January 27 1919 CWMG vol.15, 78) Gandhi did concede painfully that though letter of vow remains, by taking goat’s milk he has diluted the spirit. (Autobiography)

Draft Constitution for the Ashram, Before May 20th 1915, CWMG vol.13, 91.

Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari, June 10 1915, CWMG vol. 13: 104. In his new year message in 1909, Gandhi wrote: 'Swadeshi carries a great and profound meaning. It does not mean merely the use of what is produced in one’s own country. Swadeshi means reliance on our own strength. “Our strength” means the strength of our body, our mind and our soul. The soul is supreme, and therefore soul-force is the foundation on which man must build. Passive resistance or satyagraha is
One of the objectives of the Ashram was to make every inmate learn hand-weaving, study at first hand the secrets and defects of the art and then find out the means of saving the industry.\textsuperscript{75} Gandhi envisaged his role on three-dimensional plain. Firstly, it was to initiate research in the traditional looms as to introduce corrective reforms, if any.\textsuperscript{76} Secondly, to wean youth from the lure of government jobs by making weaving as respectable a profession as any other middle class vocations. And, thirdly, to facilitate reclamation by those who had abandoned the profession of weaving.\textsuperscript{77} In ten years to come, Gandhi hoped, the Ashram would become a hub of industrial resurgence. Thousands of weavers who had earlier left their traditional vocation would have resumed it.\textsuperscript{78} The Ashram was to weave its own cloth to provide the necessary inspiration to industrial resurgence in the country. It was therefore envisaged that the Ashram shall use minimum of machinery and shall depend mostly on human labour.\textsuperscript{79} In the Ashram school curriculum, instruction in the 'handloom weaving' was included.\textsuperscript{80} Gandhi was keen to assemble the elements of the cloth making by hand at his Ashram. But he was constrained by the limited experience or expertise of inmates. In June, he wrote to his friends to send 'the loom and the man who will teach how to operate it'.\textsuperscript{81}

By early 1917, Ashram boasted an inmate-base of which almost everyone knew rudiments of weaving. It had seven looms working within the precincts whereas

\textsuperscript{75} Circular Letter For Funds For Ashram, On or after July 3 1917, CWMG vol.13: 462

\textsuperscript{76} Gandhi in fact discouraged any alteration in the traditional machines. He had written to a friend that he should first experiment on the traditional machines before introducing any innovation. 'I would advise alteration in Indian looms, only after they have been patiently handled and such alteration is found necessary. An intelligent man may suggest improvements, but only after he has learnt to operate a hundred per cent Indian loom and produce cloth on it. There will be some propriety in that. Yarn, too, it seems to me, should be spun on our own spinning wheels. That way, I see, lies the prosperity of the country, of its poor, that is.' Letter to Ratilal M Sheth, February 27 1915, CWMG vol.13: 30. Gandhi even advised Maganlal to 'do without machinery as far as possible' in the functioning of Ashram activities. Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, CWMG vol.13: 33.

\textsuperscript{77} The Moral Basis of Co-operation, The Indian Review, October 1917, CWMG vol.13: 537

\textsuperscript{78} Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram, on or after July 3 1917 CWMG vol.13: 462.

\textsuperscript{79} Speech at Gokhale Condolence Meeting, Poona, March 3 1915, CWMG vol.13: 33.

\textsuperscript{80} Draft Constitution for the Ashram, May 1915, CWMG vol.13: 95.

\textsuperscript{81} Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari, June 9 1915, CWMG vol.13: 103.
five were run outside under its supervision. It had till date made a capital investment
of rupees three thousand and sold clothes worth rupees five hundred. Seventeen
persons were making a living out of the weaving work. The Ashram made yarn
available to these weavers, arranged to collect the woven clothes and paid at the
market rate. Transactions were strictly in cash.\textsuperscript{82}

In July 1917, Gandhi bought a plot of fifty-five acre on the bank of Sabarmati
at the outskirts of the city for his Ashram.\textsuperscript{83} The inmates now moved to this new site
from their earlier abode at Kochrab. Land was to be used for weaving and agriculture.
Gandhi however was primarily worried about the weaving programme.\textsuperscript{84} Ashram's
weaving enterprise held an unsurpassable importance. Gandhi admitted that the
Ashram was positioned to observe Swadeshi with respect to the clothes alone.\textsuperscript{85} He
had even hoped that all the deficiencies of the Ashram, like inevitable ego clashes or
bickering among its inmates, would be remedied once the Ashram 'atmosphere is
loud with weaving'.\textsuperscript{86} In order not to hamper its growth, Maganlal, the Manager, was
advised to employ paid labour in the Ashram for any work but weaving.\textsuperscript{87} Inmates
were freed from their work in the community kitchen and from other miscellaneous
chores so that they could concentrate on learning and running the loom.\textsuperscript{88} Maganlal
himself was sent to Madras presidency to learn weaving.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{82} The enterprise of weaving, as Gandhi himself noted, began just six month ago. 'Five families that
had left off the calling have reverted to (weaving) and they are doing a prosperous business. The
Ashram supplies them at their door with the yarn they need; it volunteers to take delivery of the
cloth woven, paying them cash at the market rate. The Ashram merely loses interest on the loan
advanced for the yarn. It has as yet suffered no loss and is able to restrict its loss to a minimum by
limiting the loan to a particular figure. All future transactions are strictly cash. We are able to
command a ready sale for the cloth received. The loss of interest, therefore, on the transaction is
negligible.' The Moral Basis of Co-operation, \textit{The Indian Review}, October 1917, CWMG vol.13:
537.

\textsuperscript{83} Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari, November 18 1917 CWMG vol.14, 93.
\textsuperscript{84} Letter to Fulchand Shah, August 9 1918, CWMG vol.15: 11.
\textsuperscript{85} Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, Last week of January 1919, CWMG vol.15: 82.
\textsuperscript{86} 'All the deficiencies in the Ashram will end when farm-work prospers, whether with hired labour
or that of the Ashram inmates and the atmosphere is loud with weaving.' Letter to Maganlal
Gandhi, Last week of January 1919, CWMG vol.15: 82.
\textsuperscript{87} Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, June 1 1917, CWMG vol.13: 433.
\textsuperscript{88} Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, July 2 1917 CWMG vol.13: 459.
\textsuperscript{89} Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi, February 23 1916, CWMG vol. 13: 246.
Champaran, which in 1917 became a temporary ‘domicile’ for Gandhi on a ‘humanitarian’ mission, taught him with greater intensity the damage the collapse of cloth-industry had done to India. His experience in Champaran was heart-rending. It showed him how India suffered due to the dearth of clothes. ‘Here people shiver in the cold for want of clothes’, he wrote to his Ashram workers. ‘Every moment’, Gandhi wrote, ’I realize the value of cloth.’ Gandhi narrated a stark incident that had gripped his conscience. While finding a woman clothed in dirty-rags, he asked his wife to investigate the cause. The woman took Kasturba aside and said, ‘The sari I am wearing is the only one I have. How am I to wash it?’ The reason was simple scarcity and lack of purchasing power. Gandhi communicated this to Maganlal in order to induce greater urgency on the Ashram weaving enterprise. He reasoned: ‘If the handloom, which they formerly worked in the pit, had been flourishing today and if we had been spinning all the yarn we require, we would not, with all this cotton available, have to face this terrible rise in the prices of cloth.’ His regular letters were constant source of guidance for young but battle hardened Maganlal.

Irrespective of his physical presence, Gandhi’s mind was always focused on the Ashram weaving activities. The enterprise was gradually expanding and required greater financial support to carry on. In July, from Motihari, the district town of Champaran, Gandhi wrote a letter marked ‘For Private Circulation Only’. It was circulated among friends all over the country. It outlined Ashram’s expanding activities including hand-weaving that now required greater resources. The financial

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90 Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, January 20 1918, CWMG vol.14: 161
91 Gandhi had written to a friend describing conditions of masses: ‘I have come in the closest touch with them in Kaira and Champaran. They have nothing.’ Letter to Prof. Jevons’, August 11 1918, CWMG vol. 15: 15.
93 In 1921, Gandhi wrote to Maganlal: ‘If swaraj and swadharma are based on swadeshi, then let us be the best of carders, spinners and weavers. Develop still further weaving, carding and spinning and make these processes more scientific. The rest of the things can be done by others; but engage only qualified persons in these things.’ Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, after August 18 1921, CDMG vol: 24:113
94 In February 1918, as a visitor noted, Ashram despite its select gathering lacked self-propellant and appeared lifeless in the absence of Gandhi. (Letter to Prabhudas Gandhi, February 2 1918, CWMG vol.14: 180) The period of Gandhi’s physical absence would grow longer and longer as he got greatly involved at first in the localized satygrahas and later, as he got sucked into the national activities. This would disturb Maganlal too who wrote a scathing letter in 1918 telling Gandhi that his involvement in India wide activities was ruining his true calling.
95 Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram, July 2 1917, CWMG vol.13: 455.
assistance sought was in the tune of rupees 1,500 a month, in which about rupees 100 was earmarked for hand-weaving. He hoped that the hand weaving enterprise at Ashram would soon become self-supporting. In a clinching statement Gandhi noted that many who had hitherto been using 'shoddy mill-made stuff, whether foreign or home-made' had begun using 'durable Ashram-made cloth'. As the letter was primarily meant for his rich textile-mill owner friends, he did not want to roughshod their benevolence. 'It is admitted on all hands that, even if the textile mills stay, there is sufficient scope in the country for hand-weaving', he wrote calming perhaps their raised antennae.

Ashram's foray into cloth-making began with weaving. It was in response to the knowledge that poverty and idleness were caused by the import of foreign fabrics. The inmates resolved to discard their mill-woven cloth in favor of hand-woven. It was also decided that inmates weave their own clothes. It was a challenge when they lacked expertise in weaving but in meeting it they were exposed to the trials and tribulations of the weaver community. The weavers were under the perpetual indebtedness and were on the mercy of traders owing to their dependency over the supply of yarn. Most of the handloom weaving of fine cloth at the time was done out of foreign yarn. Indian mills spun lower-count (coarser) yarn but mostly to feed their weaving plants or for export. Handlooms weaving Indian-mill yarn were non-existent. Fine cloth, hand-woven from Indian-yarn, therefore, was difficult to procure either from dealers or from weavers themselves. After much persuasion, some weavers agreed to weave Indian mill yarn under the condition that produced clothes would be wholly bought by the Ashram. But soon the uncomfortable truth dawned. In doing so

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96 Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram, on or after July 3 1917, CWMG vol.13: 462.
97 Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram, July 1 1917, CWMG vol.13: 455.
98 In January 1918, Gandhi was reporting of his method in reviving handloom as: 'The method that I have adopted for reinstating those who have left off weaving is to supply them with yarn, at the lowest market rates, to buy out all the cloth they may manufacture, for cash, at the highest market rates, the yarn to be paid for in installments, without interest, convenient to the weaver. This has enabled them to earn at the rate of about Rs. 17 per month. These weavers do not give their whole time to weaving and their manufacture is confined to the coarsest cloth. They do not want to aspire higher and what they earn is enough for their wants. But I know that a clever weaver manufacturing finer counts, with perhaps a little pattern-work, can make twenty-five rupees per month. Every weaver lost to the country is, in my opinion, so much national waste, and every weaver reinstated is so much national gain. Letter to Messers Liengier & Co., January 21 1918, CWMG vol. 14: 162.
the Ashram was in danger of becoming a mascot for Indian spinning mills and a mediator between such mills and handloom weavers.

Hand Spinning was not yet on the agenda of Ashram. Its focus was on the hand weaving. Gandhi's own clothes were 'hand-woven and hand-sewn'. In fact, as his autobiography testifies, as yet, he had neither seen a wheel nor had a notion of it. Gandhi's facts about the weaving culture in the country too lacked clarity. Commenting on the system of education, Gandhi desired that the students be given instructions in farming and weaving. It was because 'nearly 95 percent of the country's population is engaged in agriculture, while 90 percent of these used to be engaged in weaving'. Never ever in the country's history was such a vast population engaged in the occupation of weaving, either for the self or for market, a fact Gandhi would soon recognize and change his emphasis from weaving to spinning. Weaving as a vocation was defined by caste division and was largely specialized. Spinning was a casteless vocation. Later, Gandhi came to regard spinning as a hereditary occupation common to all castes.

The expanding understanding brought the need to spin one's own yarn. But it was women who had been spinning till the vocation itself was routed out of the social mores in Gujarat. A woman alone could discover another still nurturing the art and vocation of spinning.

Gangabehn Majmudar was 'that remarkable lady' who scouted Gujarat's countryside and found spinning wheel at Vijapur in the Baroda state. The discovery inaugurated a process which made the Ashram and Gandhi acquainted with the whole gamut of hand-spinning. At Vijapur women agreed to spin upon receiving an assurance of a regular supply of cotton slivers and a steady-purchase of spun yarn.

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99 'One change I have made and it is that having taken to the occupation of weaving and agriculture and having taken the vow of swadeshi, my clothing is now entirely hand-woven and hand-sewn and made by me or my fellow-workers.' 'Reply regarding the Dress to Pioneer', June 30 1917, CWMG vol.13: 450.

100 'Spinning is a hereditary activity with us. Those who read Darwin understand the theory of heredity. If we refuse to take up this work, we shall lose this inheritance.' 'Speech at Gujarati Bandhu Sabha, Poona, August 8 1919, CWMG vol.16: 21.


102 In a letter to Diwan of Baroda state, Gandhi wrote of his spinning enterprise that was then being organized by Gangabehn. He wrote, introducing Gangabehn and asking assistance, There is a
It put the momentum into the Ashram's Swadeshi enterprise. Majmudar began a production centre there but barriers were no less. Procuring slivers was the first hurdle. Gandhi tapped his friends in textile sector. Umar Sobhani, a Bombay mill-owner, provided slivers. They were the mill-slivers. But doubts arose, 'if one could use mill-slivers, why not use mill-yarn as well?' Where from the indigenous hand-spinners, before being obliterated, procured their slivers? The pangs that very soon began to etch their probe took Gandhi and his team to the bottom of the spinning activity. They came to know that it was carding of the raw cotton that made slivers. The knowledge led to the discovery of carders. They taught the entrepreneurs to draw slivers out of carded cotton. Simultaneous process was on at both the places, in the Ashram and at Vijapur. Soon Ashram was devoting its best time to carding, spinning and weaving. In due course, collective spinning became one of the most visible features of community life in the Ashram. And, Khadi was born.

While Gandhi and his ashram inmates were wrestling with the wheel, the government of India, in early 1919, thought it prudent to foist what came to be called as Rowlatt Bill. It was most hastily and recklessly conceived legislation but it was also an opportunity. Gandhi was at Bombay, recuperating from an illness that had

prominent lady from Broach, a widow, in Vijapur. Spinning, and now weaving as well, is being promoted there through her. In this way, it is hoped to restore to the agriculturists an old-time subsidiary occupation of theirs. As part of this programme, at present 125 women spin in Vijapur and, depending on how much they work, earn daily two to four pice or even more. Gangabehn and others work for the love of God.

'A loom has also been installed recently. I saw that the institution was very much short of space. My request to the State is this. Make one or two acres of land available near the station and immediately get a building ready, in which people may live and work. I am prepared to pay rent for it. If I get some encouragement, I am hopeful that, in a very short time, we shall have plenty of cloth produced in Vijapur taluka and the agriculturists and others will have a means of supplementing their income.' Letter to Manubhai Nandhankar Mehta, August 4 1919, CWMG vol. 16: 8.

Gandhi required more money for his expansion work. Of his expanding work on cloth enterprise, Gandhi reported to his old benefactor, as, 'Work on cloth is expanding rapidly. After the Ahmedabad strike, I have come into contact with a number of weavers. About three hundred women have started working the rentia. I believe we shall get, before long, about two maunds of handspun yarn every day. These women were unemployed. They are employed now. About thirty weavers outside have also found employment. Some of these are Dheds. They used to labour for wages but now they have found an independent vocation.' Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, July 2 1918, CWMG vol. 14: 467.

Gandhi wrote to V S Srinivas Sastri: 'To me, the Bills are the aggravated symptoms of the deep-seated disease.' Letter to V S Srinivasa Sastri, February 9 1919, CWMG vol. 15: 87.
brought him close to 'the death's door'. For the last six month Gandhi had laid in bed; his body wrecked and his morale low. And, now he heard of Rowlatt Bills. He gave a call for Satyagraha. The main element of what came to be called as the Rowlatt Satyagraha was adoption of Swadeshi Pledge. The pledge confined itself to the matters of clothing alone. Through a pragmatic foresight it left aside the vast array of goods that India then imported from abroad. Even in its limited scope, the observance of the Swadeshi Pledge was not without difficulty. The pledge required adherents to shun clothes manufactured from anything foreign, be that machinery, raw-cotton, or yarn. Given the contemporary indigenous manufacturing base, Gandhi's Swadeshi pledge was nothing more than being a courageous defiance. Gandhi wanted people to fortify their Swadeshi pledge with religious conviction. But in the absence of favorable manufacturing environment, the pledge was more a pamphlet than a practical proposition.

The Swadeshi pledge comprised of three different options to suit the varying degree of people's preparedness and convenience. One could either wear clothes woven on handlooms out of yarn spun in Indian mills or clothes woven and spun in Indian mills or clothes woven in Indian mills/handlooms out of imported foreign yarn. A proper observance of the pledge required people to don only hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn but that clearly was an impossibility. In the circumstances, Swadeshi clothes primarily came to be identified with clothes that were woven on handlooms out of yarn spun in Indian mills. Ashram's role was crucial for the minimal success that Swadeshi was to achieve. With its limited man-power and expertise, Ashram as yet had not begun its spinning enterprise though it was on the threshold for such a breakthrough. Gandhi called for a 'Herculean effort' and

107 Gandhi explained: 'One meaning of the Swadeshi vow suggested by me is that in taking it we desire to do penance for our sins, that we desire to resuscitate the almost lost art of hand-weaving, and that we are determined to save our Hindustan crores of rupees which go out of it annually in exchange for the cloth we receive.' 'The Swadeshi Pledge-I & II', April 8 1919, CWMG vol.15: 195-201.

108 Scarcity of Swadeshi clothes could have constrained the success of his campaign did not occur to Gandhi. He asked people to take to minimal clothing as 'general climate of India is such that we require very little clothing'. 'Moreover, when many men take the vow, there would be set up many spinning wheels and handlooms.' What India needed were just two elements: 'self-denial and honesty'. 'The Swadeshi Vow-I', April 8 1919, CWMG vol.15: 196.

109 'When the religious sense is awakened, people's thoughts undergo a revolution in a single moment.' 'The Swadeshi Vow-I', April 8 1919, CWMG vol. 15: 206.

asked all the Ashram inmates to begin spinning and weaving earnestly. He advised curtailment of other activities at the Ashram in order to focus on spinning and weaving alone. ‘We should drop or curtail, one by one, those of our activities which we think others are likely to take up; and pay more attention to those in which others have less faith, or none, but which are all the same essential. Spinning is one such activity,’ Gandhi wrote to Maganlal.111

The campaign around the Rowlatt Satyagraha gave a spurt to production and sales of Khadi.112 In a letter to a South African friend, Gandhi assessed his own success at Swadeshi campaign. ‘I have begun an active Swadeshi campaign’, Gandhi informed, ‘and within the short period of six weeks, it has spread very rapidly’.113 Gandhi’s spirited advocacy of Swadeshi inspired many an enterprising persons to open ‘Stores’ to sell Swadeshi clothes. In Vittalbhai Jerajani, he had first of enthusiastic supporters who dedicated himself in organizing sales of Khadi in Bombay by opening Swadeshi Stores. After the launch of Satyagraha in April 1919, the setting up of Swadeshi stores at different places caught its momentum. Its opening was seen as a tool of propaganda. Invitations poured in for Gandhi to open the stores as that encouraged people to take to Swadeshi clothes.114 Soon, however, Satyagraha stood suspended in the wake of violence that broke out in several parts of the country. The Satyagraha was short-lived, so too the spurt in Khadi sales. The energy infused by it too dissipated and the demand for Khadi generally declined. Even Jerajani’s

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111 Letter to Maganlal Gandhi June 1 1919, CWMG vol.15: 339.
112 In November 1918, Gujarat Swadeshi Store was opened at Ahmedabad. ‘Being bed-ridden’, Gandhi wrote in his message for the inauguration, ‘I am unable to be present, but my spirit is there, of course.’ (Letter to Jamanadas Gandhi, December 21 1917, CWMG vol. 14:114) At Nadiad, a company called “Swadeshi Bhandar, Limited” was established. It was claimed that enterprise was mainly to propagate Khadi and service-motive and not profit-motive had dictated the venture. (Letter to Jamanadas Gandhi, December 21 1917, CWMG vol.14: 114) In June 1920, while declaring the Bhandar open, Gandhi expressed the hope that the shop would not buy its inventories from Bombay but from villages around Nadiad. That was the application of the principle of neighborliness which would be catalyst for the local production and consumption. (Speech on Swadeshi, Bombay, June 4 1920, YI, CWMG vol.17: 479) The mathematics of business was methodologically worked out although it got mixed with suitable douse of moral-play and request for fair-play from the merchants. Most of the stores used Ashram produced clothes for sales. Swadeshi Stores were asked to cut five percent profit over the cost price of the goods. Ashram however forsook its profit margin in order to keep the price low and contributed its labour free.

113 Letter to a lady Friend in South Africa, June 18 1919, CWMG vol.15: 384.
114 Speech on Swadeshi, Bombay, September 7 1919, CWMG vol.16: 112.
Swadeshi Store in Bombay reported of slackening in demand. The stock of Khadi produced at Sabarmati Ashram piled up. Its non-clearance brought the prospect of closure of Ashram’s cloth-making enterprise. Besides the in-house production, Ashram had allied with many spinning and weaving centres that had spawned in the wake of Gandhi’s Swadeshi campaign. They sustained, however meagerly, many a destitute families. Such centres now faced the specter of closure.

In some way, such a scenario was also a measure campaign’s success in inducing people to hand-spinning and weaving. The glut meant that consumption was not keeping apace with production. It was the question of managing the market, promoting the sales, and projecting Khadi as a commodity of conscious choice. The greatest handicap in the public image of Khadi was its perceived un-finished quality, lack of varieties, its artlessness as was its colorlessness. It crumbled on wearing, shrank on washing, weighed heavy, demanded maintenance, and ‘looked like a sieve’. This pale-looking colorless fabric held little attraction for the young and old of Ashram. It was too heavy, coarse, and thick to qualify for a sari. Even Kasturba found it difficult to perform domestic chores in heavy Khadi sari. Gandhi was unable to convince even Ashram women to adopt Khadi in full. He wrote to Maganlal, in March 1920, that he saw ‘no compelling reason why the women should have no garment of Khadi on their bodies’. If that was the state of its acceptance in Ashram, how could Gandhi ask for national patronage? Gandhi implored women-inmates of

115 Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani sends news from Bombay that the demand for khadi there has gone down or altogether vanished. This was painful reading for me, but not at all surprising. 'Value of Khadi', Navajivan, February 8 1920, CWMG vol.17, 16. Gandhi wrote a letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi asking, 'I have heard that, in the old Swadeshi Store, no one looks at our Khadi.' Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi, June 7 1919, CWMG vol. 15: 350.

116 'The stocks of Khadi with me have grown so large that the quantities cleared are inadequate.' 'Uses of Khadi', Navajivan, April 25 1920, CWMG vol.17: 338.

117 Gandhi wrote adding meanings to the commodity of Khadi. 'In my eyes Khadi is artistic enough. Khadi has the property of absorbing moisture. Khadi is a more useful and superior cloth. It is more beautiful than calico because it has a soul in it. There is some craftsmanship at any rate in the making of Khadi. Just as no two leaves of a tree are exactly alike, no two lengths of hand-spun, hand-woven Khadi can be so.' Ibid.

118 Gandhi wrote: 'During the National Week, (Sarladevi) expressed a desire to wear a sari and blouse of Khadi. I have not so far succeeded in inducing any woman to wear a sari made of Khadi and so at first I thought Sarladevi was joking. But she was perfectly sincere in what she said and, what is more, she meant Khadi as rough as what I wear. I got a sari and a blouse made for her and she celebrated the National Week in these.' Ibid.

Ashram to wear at least 'loose blouses made of Khadi'. Another handicap, which Ashram suffered in the beginning, was its inability to produce a coloured sari. A white sari without colored border was a symbol of widowhood, and no married Indian woman conscious of her social placement agreed to wear such a sari. He tried to redefine the colorless Khadi by his own meanings. The whiteness was the symbol of purity; the coarseness that of simplicity. He asked his wife to set an example and requested her not to object to put on a white sari without coloured border. 'True learning and greatness lie in this', her sacrifice was idolized.\footnote{True learning and greatness lie in this. Don't object to put on a white sari having no border.' 'Letter to Kasturba Gandhi', April 23 1918 CWMG vol.14: 367.} He also disapproved of the idea of her wearing something lighter clothes while cooking. If asked to choose between food and Khadi, Gandhi said, he would chose the latter.\footnote{Speech at Borivili Meeting, June 30 1912, CWMG vol.20: 306.}

Gandhi took to aggressive brand-building of Khadi. Overcoming the prejudices against Khadi was as important as its production. He wrote a salesman's article in his newspapers outlining the defects in Khadi and yet brandishing its utility.\footnote{I have, today, a very large stock of Khadi with me. We are, moreover, facing a situation in which it may be necessary to abandon an activity that gives work to some women and poor people. I appeal for help from every reader for popularizing Khadi.' 'Uses of Khadi', April 25 1920, CWMG vol.17, 338.} He readily admitted that 'all Khadi is not of equally good quality'. And yet he called for religious fervor and patriotic vigor in the patronizing consumers.\footnote{If one took a task with religious fervour, it was sure to succeed. Gandhi wrote: 'It ensures grand results with little effort. With modern ways of working, we produce a small result after a big effort.' The Congress, CWMG vol. 16: 463.} If Khadi was all that, then national duty had occasioned sacrifice of art and aesthetics, tastes and fashion, choices and colours. Gandhi's general admonition was coupled with practical tips to potential converts. Khadi, if perceived as unsuited for upper garments, could still be used for coverings and curtains, loose-shirts and undergarments, carpets and canopies.\footnote{Khaddar can be used for making underwear, even if one is disinclined to use it for the outer costume. But even if one is not inclined to use it for personal wear, it can be used for making caps, towels, wipers, tea-clots, satchels, bed-sheets, bedding, holdalls, carpet pieces, cushions, covers for furniture etc. I am having it dyed Turkey red in swadeshi dye. It then becomes more durable and looks less dirty when it is used for carpets or mattress-making or upholstering. I would advise those who wish to support this industry of the poor and the neglected to send for the khaddar by corresponding with the Manager, Khaddar Department, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.' 'The uses of Khaddar', Y/, April 28 1920.} It was a clever but sensitively written article that...
brought immediate response as bulk-orders poured in from across the country clearing the stock in a very short span.\(^{125}\)

For a long time Gandhi was the sole commodity-ambassador for Khadi. He was its ideologue and brand-manager, its Public-Relation-person and business pointman, its live-in model and venture-capitalist; he was everything that a fledgling business concern required. With time, however, he began to attract number of likeminded individuals to his cause. ‘I try especially to seek out sisters', Gandhi wrote while boasting of his conquests, '"...In Ahmedabad I have found such a sister. At Bombay, Madras, and elsewhere, too, I have found someone or other. In Punjab, I found Sarladevi.'\(^{126}\) Anasuyabehn, Gandhi’s colleague during mill-hands strike in Ahmedabad and sister of mill owner, Ambalal Sarabhai, was first to dedicate to the cause of spinning. In mid-1918, Gandhi presented her with a spinning wheel.\(^{127}\) By September 1919, he had succeeded in recruiting Bombay socialites such as ‘Lady Tata, Lady Petit, Mrs. Jaiji Petit’ to his spinning cause.\(^{128}\) Shankerlal Banker was one of the first of series of dedicated male Khadi workers that Gandhi attracted.

Gandhi had a penchant to seek out women and men of repute to be his Khadi-ambassadors. He firmly believed in the Bhagwad Gita’s dictum that *what the eminent man does, others do. The standard he sets up, the rest of the world follows.*\(^{129}\) Accordingly, he made conscious drive to recruit high and mighty of the state in the service of his cause. He wanted Viceroy Lord Hardinge to inaugurate the fashion of Khadi wearing just as Lord Curzon in his time had done with the beverage of tea. The

\(^{125}\) ‘The reader will be glad to know that the stock of khadi which had accumulated in the Satyagraha Ashram has been entirely sold out.’ *For Users of Khadi*, *Navajivan*, May 16 1920, CWMG vol. 17: 419. Gandhi’s article evoked orders for Khadi from as far as ‘Baluchistan, the Nilgiris, and even Aden’. ‘Swadeshi day by day’, *YI*, May 19 1920, CWMG vol. 17: 428.

\(^{126}\) ‘Men I have found everywhere. But I try especially to seek out sisters, for I know that, unless our sisters in the country give their blessings to the brothers, India’s progress is impossible.’ *Speech at Ahmedabad*, February 27 1920, CWMG vol.17: 53.

\(^{127}\) Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, Between April-May 1918, CWMG vol.14: 384.

\(^{128}\) ‘Swadeshi in Nutsheil’, *YI*, September 13, 1919, CWMG vol.16: 126. Gandhi’s advocacy of Charkha through Society-ladies was full of ironical twists. In one of his letter to Lady Tata, Gandhi offers to send her a charkha if she sends her car to pick it up. He writes: ‘If you would send your car about noon (Friday), I shall send one machine and some dressed cotton with Govind Baboo who will be able to give you a few tips about spinning and keeping the machine in order, if you could give him a little time.’ *Letter to Lady Tata*, August 21 1919, CWMG vol. 16: 54.

Viceroy however remained unmoved. In April 1919, in the midst of Satyagraha against Rowlatt Bills, Gandhi wrote to the new Viceroy, Chelmsford, reiterating his plea. "What a great thing it would be if the Viceroy would take the vow [of Swadeshi]", Maffey, the Viceroy's Secretary, was told. 'Even if the Viceroy cannot see his way to take the vow, but if he approves of the scheme, I would like you to let me have a separate letter for publication', he further wrote. Gandhi had also written similar plea to other high dignitaries including editor of the Times of India and the Governor of Bombay. To every one of them he had also enclosed a form of Swadeshi Pledge.

In August 1919, Gandhi wrote an impassioned letter to the Governor of Bombay Presidency when his repeated request for an audience failed to interest the 'preoccupied' official. In his letter, Gandhi was cautious enough to specifically mention 'religious and economic aspects' of the Swadeshi movement although, he admitted, the movement was fraught with 'political consequences of lofty, moral type'. After placing his arguments in favour Swadeshi, Gandhi requested the Governor to 'secure Lady George Lloyd's patronage for my spinning classes'. He also desired active support and encouragement from district officials. Gandhi desired to have a letter of support from the Governor himself for the publication. The Governor did not reply back. Not unpredictably, as earlier in May 1919, he had written to Montagu, the Secretary of the State, of Gandhi as 'really pretty wicked, as cunning as a fox and at heart entirely anti-British.' These were Gandhi's loyalist days.

130 Speech On Swadeshi at Missionary Conference, Madras, February 14 1916, CWMG vol.13: 223
132 Letter to Sir Stanley Reed, April 30 1919, (CWMG vol.15, 261, 262) Reed, claiming that he always bought things Indian, advocated 'highest standard of commercial morality in India'. 'Sir Stanley Reed's letter to Gandhiji', May 2 1919, CWMG vol. 15: 503.
133 Gandhi wrote to the Secretary of the Governor of Bombay: I beg to enclose herewith for His Excellency's perusal form of the Swadeshi pledge which is now ready for issuing. I would esteem it as an event of great significance if His Excellency could see his way to sign the pledge unless his official position precludes him from doing so. His Excellency's endorsement of Swadeshi would at once emphasize the fact that the Swadeshi vow is not being taken up in any spirit of hostility, but that it is a long-deferred recognition of an economic necessity. 'Letter to N P Cowie', April 30 1919, CWMG vol.15: 262.
134 Letter to PS to Governor, Bombay, August 25 1919, CWMG vol.16: 60.
135 Quoted in Nanda, B.R., In Gandhi's Footsteps: The Life and Times of Jamnalal Bajaj, p42.
Gandhi recruited highly placed Indians too. He invited nationally renowned men to his Ashram and took them to a guided tour of his weaving work. In March 1919, Mahatma Munshiram visited the Ashram. Maganlal was asked to ‘drench him with love’ and give ‘Ashram cloth as a gift’.\textsuperscript{136} In 1920, Madan Mohan Malviya not only introduced looms in the precincts of the Banaras Hindu University but also endeavored to convert India’s myriad of Royalty, among whom he carried substantial influence.\textsuperscript{137} In Vittalbhai Jerajani, Gandhi found an enterprising man who organized Swadeshi Stores in Bombay for Khadi sales. There were other notable figures too who were swept off by Gandhi’s persuasive power.\textsuperscript{138}

Sarladevi Choudhrani had been a woman in her own right. Married to a Punjabi Rambhuj Dutt Choudhri, Sarladevi took public tours with Gandhi in the immediate aftermath of Jallianwala Bagh massacre and lifting of martial law. Mostly they spoke of Khadi. During the anti-partition Swadeshi movement in Bengal in 1905, she had been one of the front leaders.\textsuperscript{139} She also had a lofty pedigree, being a niece of the poet Rabindranath Tagore. In the year of 1920, Gandhi toured widely and conducted joint public meetings with her in the cause of Swadeshi propaganda.\textsuperscript{140} He gave publicity and prominence to Sarladevi’s Khadi work.\textsuperscript{141} His newspapers

\textsuperscript{136} Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, March 16 1919, CWMG vol.15: 136.
\textsuperscript{137} Swadeshi, \textit{Navajivan}, July 18 1920, CWMG vol.18: 59.
\textsuperscript{138} On April 5 1919, Gandhi wrote to Tagore, 'I venture to ask you for a message from you—a message of hope and inspiration for those who have to go through the fire. I do it because you were good enough to send me your blessings when I embarked upon the struggle. The forces arrayed against me are, as you know, enormous. I do not dread them, for I have an unquenchable belief that they are supporting untruth and that if we have sufficient faith in truth, it will enable us to overpower the former. But all forces work through human agency. I am therefore anxious to gather round this mighty struggle the ennobling assistance of those who approve it. I will not be happy until I have received your considered opinion on this endeavour to purify the political life of the country.' 'Letter to Rabindranath Tagore, April 5 1919, CWMG vol. 15: 179.
\textsuperscript{139} Sumit Sarkar, \textit{Swadeshi Movement}
\textsuperscript{140} Gandhi made it sure she read and heard what he was saying to the country in his new found status. 'Did you read my message on the Khilafat to the A.P.? Lest you may not have got a copy of \textit{Y.I.}, I am sending you a copy. Do please read the article on khaddar.' 'Letter to Sarladevi Chowdhri', April 29 1920. CWMG vol. 17: 357.
\textsuperscript{141} 'Thanks to Sarladevi, she has shown that it is possible to make even saris out of khaddar. She thought that she could best express herself during the National Week by wearing khaddar sari and khaddar blouse. And she did it. She attended parties in her khaddar sari. Friends thought it was impossible. They thought a woman who had never worn anything but the finest silk or the finest Dacca muslin could not possibly bear the weight of heavy khaddar. She falsified all fears and was no less active or less elegant in her khaddar sari than in her finished silk saris.' 'The uses of Khaddar', \textit{YI}, April 28 1920, CWMG vol.17: 353.
regularly reported on her travel, speeches and changing wardrobe. His repertoire of Sarladevi’s meeting brought in the heightened drama. Sarladevi’s Khadi sari spoke with greater eloquence and élan than her speeches. On seeing Khadi-clad Sarladevi, hitherto silk-laden, speaking on the virtues of Khadi, women resolved to discard their foreign fineries in favour of coarse Khadi. Sarladevi reported her success in bringing wives of jailed victims of Martial Law and widows of Jallainwala Bagh massacre to adopt spinning. She had opened a school to teach spinning to women.

During the Khadi campaign and joint-tours, something seems to have developed between them. In August 1920, Gandhi wrote to a friend of South African time, of a woman who had come to occupy in his life a position of ‘spiritual wife’, an intriguing designation. In South Africa, Kallenbach, a German architect, was a fellow experimenter with Mohandas ‘Bhai’ Gandhi. Gandhi was writing to him after about a gap of four years. It was but natural for Gandhi to confide his middle age emotional upheavals in him. ‘I have come in closest touch with a lady who often travels with me’, Gandhi confided. It was Sarladevi that Gandhi referred to. While he himself called the relationship ‘indefinable’, one of his colleagues saw it akin to ‘intellectual wedding’. ‘I want you to see her’, an almost blushed Gandhi wrote. And, in the very second line, Gandhi wrote of ‘Mrs. Gandhi’ as having ‘aged considerably’ with all her ‘faults and virtues’. Gandhi often admitted of the temperamental difference between him and his wife. ‘Ba does not understand me’, Gandhi wrote in

142 Swadeshi in Punjab, YI, July 7 1920, CWMG vol.18, 20; also, Pure Swadeshi, Navajivan, July 11 1920, CWMG vol.18: 32.
143 ‘Her khaddar saris continue to preach true Swadeshi more eloquently than her tongue.’ The Music of the Spinning-wheel, YI, July 21 1920, CWMG vol. 18: 70.
144 Swadeshi, Navajivan, July 18 1920, CWMG vol.18: 60.
145 “I have just got up with two dreams, one about you and other about the Khilafat. To my great joy, you returned within two days. I asked ‘How so quickly?’ You replied, ‘Oh it was Panditji’s trick to have me by him. I have therefore returned.’ I discovered that it was a dream. I expect you to join the party and enliven it with your music and your laughter...I can go on writing.” Letter to Sarladevi Chowdhrami, April 30 1920. CWMG vol. 17: 359. ‘You still continue to haunt me even in my sleep. No wonder Panditji calls you the greatest shakti of India. You may have cast that spell over him. You are performing the trick over me now. But even two swallows cannot make a summer... I was certain of a letter from you yesterday. But none came. Today too there is a blank. I wonder, however. I know you have not failed me. It is the wretched post. The last hope of hearing from you today is gone. For the post-boy has arrived bringing some newspapers only.’ Letter to Sarladevi Chowdhrami, May 2 1920. CWMG vol. 17: 375.
146 Letter to H. Kallenbach, August 10 1920, CWMG vol.18: 129.
the middle of 1921 to Mahadev.\(^{147}\) It was difficult for him to find a kind of woman he could identify with and hence this fascination for modern yet traditional Shakti in Sarla Devi.

But soon, within ten days of the letter which he wrote to Kallenbach, Gandhi was admonishing Sarladevi—'you remain a school girl'\(^{148}\)—for her ‘decidedly despondent and skeptical and suspicious’ letters which distressed him.\(^{149}\) It contained signs of cleavage that had begun to haze their ‘intellectual wedding’ and divorce seemed imminent. ‘My Dearest S’ wanted ‘rewards’ from her ‘Law-Giver’ and not ‘sermons’ for her ‘great surrender’. Gandhi was non-committal and wrote surrender to be its own reward. He also protected those who were criticized by Sarladevi by saying that they were ‘superior’ people who were ‘jealous of their ideal which is my character’. That almost ended the fragile relationship that had begun in 1901 when Gandhi for the first time had met Sarladevi. It was the last of passionate exchange that took place between them. Later, letters took somewhat accusing tone.

She protested of him not understanding her ‘complex nature’; he grumbled of her not understanding his language or thoughts.\(^{150}\) He asked her to cultivate ‘patience and trust’; she wrote of his deliberate omission of her. The tension in the relationship was evident when Gandhi wrote: ‘you are hugging your defects even when they are

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\(^{147}\) Letter to Mahadev Desai, August 17 1921, (CWMG vol.20: 516) Again in January 1920, Gandhi wrote to Esther Faering that ‘Ba has not an even temper. And she can be petty. At the present moment she is weak in body too. You will therefore have to summon to your aid all your Christian charity to be able to return largeness against pettiness. And so, my dear Esther, if you find Mrs. Gandhi trying your nerves, you must avoid the close association I am suggesting to you. On no account shall I have you to lose your inward peace and joy.’ CWMG vol. 16: 486. Then again on January 25 1920, 'The evil in Ba, for instance, must not be resisted, i.e., you or for that matter I must not fret over it or be impatient and say to ourselves, 'why will not this woman see the truth or return the love I give her'. She can no more go against her nature than a leopard can change his spots. If you or I love, we act according to our nature. If she does not respond, she acts according to hers. And if we worry, we 'resist evil'. 'Do you agree?', CWMG vol. 16: 506.

\(^{148}\) 'Your letters have caused me distress. You do not like my sermons. And yet so long as you remain a school girl, what should I do except giving you sermons? If my love is true it must express itself in sermons so long as you do not realize the ideal accepted by you as worthy.' 'Letter to Sarladevi Choudhrami', August 24 1920, CWMG vol.18: 193.

\(^{149}\) Letter to Sarladevi Choudhrami, August 23 1920, CWMG vol.18: 191.

\(^{150}\) 'I had two letters from you, one a scrap, the other a longish letter which shows that you do not understand my language or my thoughts. I have certainly not betrayed any annoyance over your complex nature, but I have remarked upon it. If a person is born with a deformation [sic] one may not quarrel with nature for it, but one may pardonably take note of it and try to remove it.' 'Letter to Sarladevi Choudhrami, December 11 1920, CWMG vol.19: 93.
pointed out by a friend in a friendly manner.... We all have them. It is the privilege of friendship to lay the gentle finger on the weak spots. Friendship becomes a divine institution only when it educates friends. Let us try to elevate each other." 

'Law Giver' Gandhi signed off the letter stating 'With dearest love I still subscribe myself.' It was the last of 'big letter' he wrote to his 'spiritual wife'. Letters that had taken a form of avalanche was soon to settle down to trickle. Though, Sarladevi from time to time kept abreast with Gandhi's trials and turmoil, its immediate fall-out was her open criticism of Gandhi's non-cooperation programme for its inherent 'negativity'. She saw the movement as a fountain-head of the hate-politics. It was an opinion which her celebrated uncle Rabindranath Tagore too shared. It was a short-lived relationship in the cause of Khadi. But when the relationship tended to grow larger than the cause, it collapsed.

Mohandas' relationship with Maganlal survived against all odds. Among the co-workers of Gandhi, Maganlal is least talked about. Yet, as Gandhi wrote to Maganlal on his 27th birthday in July 1917, 'You are all that I have and all I desire'. Maganlal's relationship with Mohandas was filial and professional, deep and long, spoken and silent. This relationship was an important partnership in the development of Khadi. For every thing that Gandhi brandied about Khadi, there was one man responsible; it was Maganlal. If Mohandas thought, Maganlal executed. In 1903, Maganlal had accompanied Mohandas to South Africa in search of fortune. Within a year Maganlal left his nascent but promising retail business in response to Gandhi's call for self-imposed poverty and joined the Phoenix settlement. Since then, Maganlal engaged himself in Gandhi's experiments and grew from being a nephew to a co-
worker to being the ‘best comrade’. Maganlal, who had never before handled a tool or machine, at Phoenix, took to printing, composing, and engineering with equal ease. Bereft of any formal academic degrees he learnt while on work so much so that later while in India he was the real man behind the organization of Ashram’s spinning and weaving enterprise.\textsuperscript{155} He assembled machines, innovated technologies, cultivated science, and authored books to pass on his accumulated ‘experience’. It was he who first coined the term ‘sadagraha’ to denote Gandhi’s philosophy of struggle, which hitherto was somewhat inappropriately and insufficiently being called as passive resistance. Gandhi later improved Sadagraha into Satyagraha. Maganlal was shaped more as an executor and manager than a political worker. Even during the struggle in South Africa he was confined to Phoenix faithfully taking \textit{Indian Opinion} out every fortnight. In 1924, when Gandhi published his account of \textit{Satyagraha in South Africa}, he dedicated this work to Maganlal.

Gandhi’s affinity with Maganlal was one of the many discordant notes that simmered in the Gandhi household. Harilal’s abrupt and angry abnegation of his father’s home is to some extent attributed to Gandhi’s alleged love for his nephew. Harilal was a self-defeating derelict; a son whom disciplinarian and conscientious Gandhi could never understand; a son who somehow knew that in his self-destruction alone lay his revenge. Kasturba’s mother instinct had harbored uneasiness towards Maganlal for usurping her sons’ position. When Harilal left, Maganlal too, knowing Kasturba’s sentiments, contemplated leaving Gandhi’s company. But Gandhi cautioned as they were ‘engaged in a mighty task’.\textsuperscript{156} Even in 1918, Gandhi had been trying to soothe Kasturba’s feelings. He pleaded with his wife to mother Maganlal. It was for his work that Maganlal had parted from his parents, Kasturba was consoled. And, it was Maganlal alone who could carry forward his work after him.\textsuperscript{157} Till the

\textsuperscript{155} ‘When I first picked up Maganlal, to all appearances he had nothing special about him. But today you are surprised by his personality. He was not educated. I trained him first for press work. He learnt composing in Gujarati and then in English, Hindi, Tamil and other languages. I was surprised at the speed at which he mastered the art. Since then he has shown his skill in various kinds of work.’ Talk with Mahadev Desai, August 31 1917, CWMG vol.13: 511.

\textsuperscript{156} Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, May 15 1911, CWMG vol.11: 75.

\textsuperscript{157} ‘You have to be a mother to Maganlal. He has parted from his parents and made my work his own. At present it is Maganlal, if anyone, who has so trained himself that he can carry on my work after me. Who will give him the needed strength? It is for you to show concern for his suffering, to be solicitous on his meals, to save him from all manner of worries.’ Letter to
end, however, Kasturba longed for the well being of her eldest son and had carried an empathy with his tragic rebellion.

While in India, full development and implementation of Gandhi’s ideas through his Ashram fell on Maganlal. Gandhi called Maganlal ‘soul of the Ashram’. In roughly fifteen years of work in India, he was a close confidant of Gandhi and he was one of the few workers who could talk Gandhi at his face. In 1915, Maganlal, among others, rebelled against Gandhi’s effort to recruit an ‘untouchable’ Dhed family in the Satyagraha Ashram. It was a temporary break-up and the prodigy soon returned to reclaim his position and took to constructing and managing the Satyagraha Ashram. Maganlal choose the ‘path of silent, selfless constructive service’ rather than politics. He immersed himself in the task of organizing the Ashram in Ahmedabad. He was ‘the watchdog of the Ashram in all its aspects—material, moral and spiritual.’ While Gandhi moved all over India Maganlal toiled to forge together Gandhi’s concept in reality. As a ‘born mechanic’ Maganlal took to the assembling of all the processes that eventually led to Khadi. When All India Spinners’ Association (AISA) was born he was made the Director of its Technical Department. Richard Gregg, Maganlal’s co-author of the book, Takli Teacher, was told by Gandhi that Maganlal had ‘assimilated the inwardness of the spinning movement’.

In the beginning of 1919 Maganlal faced a rebellion of sort to his alleged dictatorial management in the Ashram. Gandhi was called in to quell and calm the ruffled feathers. His remedy was characteristically equivocal. He asked those who had been critical of Maganlal’s management to leave the Ashram. He declared the indispensability of Maganlal, claiming that without him the Ashram would have never been founded. ‘One of my creations here in the Ashram is Maganlal. If I have found from experience five million shortcomings in Maganlal, I have found ten million virtues in him. …Maganlal has offered all his work as sacrifice, not for my sake but for the sake of an ideal. It is not for me he is staying; he is wedded to an

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159 Letter to Fulchand Shah, August 9 1918, CWMG vol. 15: 10.
ideal.' It was a blunt, straight but soothing speech.\textsuperscript{160} In 1919, by his own admission, the Mahatma ‘slipped’ for a charismatic woman. It was then turn of Maganlal to advice caution to the daring experimenter.\textsuperscript{161} In 1930 March, the Mahatma left Satyagraha Ashram on his trek to Dandi with promise to return with freedom alone. Gandhi never came back. Gandhi’s leaving the Ashram was dictated no less by Maganlal’s untimely death in 1929. It had left an irreparable void.

Maganlal died of typhoid at Patna on 23 April 1928. Although Gandhi himself felt ‘widowed’ on the death of his ‘heir’, he cabled family members to abjure grief. In a tribute written immediately after his death, Gandhi wrote, ‘He was my hands, my feet and my eyes.’ And then added perceptibly ‘The world knows so little of how much my so-called greatness depends upon the incessant toil and drudgery of silent, devoted, able and pure workers, men as well as women. And among them all Maganlal was to me the greatest, the best and the purest.’\textsuperscript{162} Magnalal was Gandhi’s ‘first disciple’, striving constantly to achieve ‘unity of action and thought’.\textsuperscript{163} To the last, Maganlal remained fully submerged in Gandhian ideal.\textsuperscript{164}

Maganlal’s work in the Ashram was the backbone of Gandhi’s Khadi campaign. If Gandhi was the brand-manager, Maganlal was behind-the-scene man introducing innovation while simultaneously sewing and forging the network of spinners, weavers and buyers. Gandhi had envisioned that after Maganlal had mastered the art he would by himself, independent of Gandhi, take up the cause of

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\textsuperscript{160} ‘You must take it as proved that I am bad to the extent that Maganlal is bad…. You may persuade me to give up either the Ashram or Maganlal.’ ‘Address to Ashram Inmates’, February 17 1919, CWMG vol.15: 91.


\textsuperscript{162} ‘And but for a living faith in God, I should become a raving maniac for the loss of one who was dearer to me than my own sons, who never once deceived me or failed me, who was a personification of industry, who was the watchdog of the Ashram in all its aspects—material, moral and spiritual. His life is an inspiration for me, a standing demonstration of the efficacy and the supremacy of the moral law. ‘My Best Comrade Gone’, \textit{Yf}, April 26 1928, CWMG vol.36: 261-3.

\textsuperscript{163} ‘If I were fit to be anyone’s guru, I would have proclaimed him my first disciple.’ ‘Soul of the Ashram’, \textit{Navajivan}, April 29 1928, CWMG vol.36: 279

\end{footnotesize}

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handloom weavers.\textsuperscript{165} Maganlal was possessed of a natural talent for mechanics. He mastered the art of weaving quickly and then began training other inmates of the Ashram in weaving.\textsuperscript{166} As the Manager of Satyagraha Ashram, Maganlal handled the improvements and inventions in charkha. All experiments, small or big, were done under the guidance of Maganlal. Whilst Swadeshi was taking root, fraudulent inventions were bound to come before the public. He scrutinized advertisements that boasted of new charkhas. He was of the opinion there was nothing to beat the original charkha in simplicity, ease or output. He advised Congress Committees to guide spinners.

The All India Spinners' Association (AISA) took a decision to establish a Khadi Museum in the name of Maganlal. Such a museum later came up at Wardha. The idea of museum was of Maganlal himself and he ran a miniature museum at Sabarmati. Now his idea became a tribute to his memory and work. The museum was designed to house books dealing with the past and the present of cotton culture, the specimens of the finest to the coarsest Khadi produced in the past and in the present, the specimens of spinning-wheels, hand-gins, carding-bows and handlooms from the most ancient obtainable to the most modern. To museum itself a plot of land was attached to carry on experiments in growing cotton to suit cottage-spinners rather than world market. At Sabarmati, Maganlal had successfully carried out many an experiment in growing cotton. It had become very popular with hand spinners. It was important that cotton is home grown and is well picked to avoid the devitalizing process of pressing, easy carding, and help draw stronger yarn.\textsuperscript{167}

In a reporter's words Dr. P. C. Ray (1861-1944) was the 'Apostle of charkha in Bengal'. The renowned 'chemist, educationist, and entrepreneur\textsuperscript{168} whose valuable contribution during the Bengal partition movement made him a household name, took

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\item \textsuperscript{165} 'When you have acquired full mastery over the loom, you yourselves will take up the fight, without depending on me, for the uplift of handloom workers.' Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, June 1 1917, CWMG vol.13: 432.
\item \textsuperscript{166} The Birth of Khadi, An Autobiography, Chapter 39, CWMG vol.39: 390.
\item \textsuperscript{167} 'A silent worker so good and popular as the deceased deserves a memorial. The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association after deep consideration came to the conclusion that there could be no better memorial to the deceased than that a Khadi museum be established at some suitable place.' Maganlal Gandhi Memorial, Yi, May 17 1928, CWMG vol.36: 323-4.
\end{itemize}
to Khadi spinning and propaganda. Ray's adoption of Khadi and his work in its organization provided ideological breakthrough in the province. Gandhi gave prominent spaces to Ray's speeches and work in his journals and defended him and his work against the attacks from people such as MN Roy and others. In 1922, Gandhi wrote in Navjivan drawing legitimacy from the 'famous chemist like Dr. P. C. Ray' who had observed that it was through the spinning wheel and not through his researches in chemistry that famine could be vanished from Bengal. Ray was so impressed with the Khadi movement that he underlined the futility of the first Swadeshi movement in bringing mill-clothes from Bombay for the Bengal needs. Ray became the biggest messenger of Charkha in Bengal. Ray tried to instill the fashion of wearing coarse Khadi by wearing himself only the coarse variety. Despite a weak frame and poor health, he undertook tours of rural Bengal to provide relief for the victims of famine and flood. Ray regularly reported the living examples of Khadi works. He designed a spinning wheel called Khulna Spinning Wheel and distributed it among the poverty stricken people in the villages of Khulna. He took to storing of cotton to provide for the local spinners. Gandhi found some work of Khadi Pratishthan so exemplary that it surpassed even that of his Ashram.

Dr Ray founded many an organizations to lay the foundation for Khadi work in Bengal. Khaddar Board, the Khadi Pratishthan and the Deshi Rang Fund were few of those organizations. He ran many centres for spinning and weaving. They were mostly located in Chittagong rural tract. Here he and his close associate, Satish Chandra Dasgupta, also formerly a chemist, ran a school for ginning, carding, spinning, dyeing and weaving. In the school, trained volunteers, workers and inspectors were prepared. Atrai was the base where they stocked cotton and distributed it in surrounding villages for ginning, carding, spinning and weaving. Atrai had an old silk industry, which was practically killed by the East India Company. Ray's effort revived its industry. The work was most methodologically organized. Satish Chandra Dasgupta helped in standardizing the gin, the carding-bow, and the

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169 To Khoja Brothers and Sisters, Navajivan, February 2 1922, CWMG vol.22: 324.
170 'Practicing Lawyers and Volunteering', YI, February 2 1922, CWMG vol.22: 323.
171 To Khoja brothers and Sisters, Navajivan, February 2 1922, CWMG vol.22: 324.
172 Notes: Living on Spinning and Weaving, YI, May 15 1924, CWMG vol.24: 45.
charkha. He wrote three booklets in Bengali for instructions to workers. He introduced a complete system of records. There were altogether eighteen different kinds of printed books to keep a complete record of cotton purchased, issued and stocked; of cotton purchased, issued, and carded; of cotton spun and of yarn woven. There were ledgers of carders, spinners and weavers. There were the weekly reports, and classified records of gins, carding-bows, charkhas and looms. Pratishthan's weekly investment into charkhas and looms was to the tune of three thousand rupees. The Pratishthan patented a model of Charkha that not only worked efficiently but also sold cheaply. It sold at rupees two and annas eight.174

The Pratishthan had prepared a contingent of workers. They regularly visited villages with cotton, spare parts, scales and account sheets. They gave cotton, collected yarn, paid charges, and maintained the spinners' account card. They repaired charkhas and instructed on improving the yield. The weavers usually called at the centre for yarn, delivered Khadi, got the charges and took away further quantity of yarn. They had their cards too. Both, Ray and Dasgupta, invested their own savings in the Khadi work. Dasgupta prepared slides for Khadi propaganda which he showed with the help of lantern. He also wrote a book, with telling illustrations.

The launch of Rowlatt Satyagraha in early 1919 brought nascent Khadi activity from inside the abode of Ashram to a public realm. The short-lived Satyagraha provided a much needed launching pad for Swadeshi campaign. Gandhi however was keen to unhinge the movement for Swadeshi from that of Swaraj, which was more sensitive to political vicissitudes. In a very subtle way, Gandhi made it clear that path to Swaraj lay through Swadeshi. If Swaraj was the end, Swadeshi was the means. And, more importantly, the kind of means adopted determined the content of the ends achieved. None was superior to the other but for the very fact that on the latter was dependent the former made choice of means of prime relevance. Swaraj, therefore, was in Swadeshi. Issues like Rowlatt Bills, Gandhi said, were 'a mere

174 'Their scientific minds compel them to explore the possibilities of the wheel and khaddar as a permanent supplementary industry for the Bengal agriculturists. From a small experiment it has developed into a big organization called Khadi Pratishthan. It has branches in many parts of Bengal and contemplates opening more. Its object is to manufacture and sell pure khaddar and popularize the wheel and khaddar through publications, lantern lectures, etc. In order to give it a more stable character, it has been converted into a public trust.' 'Khadi Pratishthan', YJ, June 4 1925, CWMG vol.27, 190-2.
trifle' while Swadeshi campaign was more permanent. In the political arena, however, a contention for hegemony between means and end ensued which was a specific Gandhian contribution.

After the embargo on his Punjab visit, imposed in the wake of Rowlatt Satyagraha, was lifted in October 1919, Gandhi undertook a whirlwind tour of the afflicted state. He found the people receptive to his concerns. Spinning-wheel and its produce, Khadi, were at the centre of his thought and speech. It gave him precarious hopes of revival as people here had not yet forgotten the art of spinning. Moreover, self-spinning there retained perceptible pride among the populace. The practice of showering with flower-garlands was not of his liking. Flower garlands were sheer wastage. He appealed for yarn-garlands instead. Such garlands had some utility besides being evidence of 'great love and thoughtfulness'. He started getting heaps of it. Women made yarn balls and threw at him. Of such scenes he often referred in Punjab Letter, a sort of travel diary that he wrote for his Navjivan. 'In every place, the women made offerings to me of yarn spun with their own hands', Gandhi reported. '.But at a station named Dhinga... (t)he women stood behind the men and, from there, they threw ball after ball of hand-spun yarn and we in the train and the men who stood in between caught them as they came. ..I understood...that the women of Punjab have

175 Speech at a Public Meeting, Surat, May 26 1919, CWMG vol.15: 328.
176 'There is a small village called Jalalpur Jata near Gujrat, which also we had to visit. This village may be said to be inhabited almost entirely by weavers. The women spin and the men weave. The whole of the little lane had been decorated with hand-made cloth. The cloth was not just white khadi but khadi dyed red and embroidered with silk. Such cloth is known here as phulkari. Beautiful designs are worked on the cloth and these make the cloth delightful to the eye. But the sight of the bazaar filled with phulkaris also saddened me and my heart became heavy. The thought that this beautiful craft, which had been the chief source of India's prosperity, is about to vanish made me disconsolate.' Punjab Letter: February 15 1920. CWMG vol. 17: 29.
177 Swaraj in Swadeshi, Y!, December 10 1919, CWMG vol.16: 336.
178 'I am distressed with these masses of flowers and the useless expenditure incurred on them. I have, therefore, started asking for garlands of hand-spun yarn and I have been getting them.' Punjab Letter: Garlands of Yarn, CWMG vol. 16: 329.
179 Experiences in Gujarat, Navajivan, April 24 1921, CWMG vol.20: 37.
understood my message." The message was of a Swadeshi creed that protected India's wealth and women's honour.

Gandhi denounced the use of foreign articles in decorating the meeting places and platforms. He pointed out the incongruity of 'decorations, presents, and medals' made of foreign clothes and materials for a person who advocated Khadi. He did not shirk from admonishing an adoring audience that had come wearing foreign cloth. He chided, cajoled, and coaxed the crowd assembled to receive him to adopt spinning and wear Khadi. At the same time, he eulogized any use of Khadi that he witnessed.

The practice of presenting a welcome address printed on Khadi came to be widely adopted. Muslims of Jallandhar, he was told, used Khadi for the bier. He appealed Hindus and Muslims to use Khadi for their holy occasions. 'I often feel like insisting that I would bow my head only when the officiating priests made our Thakoreji swadeshi by dressing him in Khadi', Gandhi wrote. Idols of worship must be dressed in Khadi. 'There was nothing better, nothing pure and nothing more beautiful than Khadi made of yarn spun by Indians. Khaddar was the best and holiest

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182 'Take up the spinning-wheel for the sake of the purity of India. Take up the sari that the charkha can give you. Let the spotless sari of India be the protection of the virtue of man and woman in India.' 'Speech at Rajahmundry', April 3 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 509.

183 The Leader reported that Gandhi 'regretted that foreign articles were used in the decorations and buntings and foreign candles and lamps were used for the illumination.' 'Speech On Non-cooperation, Agra, The Leader, November 26 1920, CWMG vol.19: 15.

184 'For me, there can be decorations, presents and medals of Khadi alone. You have given me just an empty purse; and a still greater crime is that it is all made of foreign material. Its dye is foreign, its yarn is foreign, the silk thread in it is foreign.' 'Speech at Taluka Conference', Halol, April 16 1921, CWMG vol.20: 2.

185 At Jallandhar, Gandhi was given a address printed on Khadi. He was also told that Muslims were purposely using Khadi for the bier. 'Notes: My last visit to the Punjab', Navajivan, March 20 1921, CWMG vol.19: 455; see also, 'Growing prestige of Khadi', Navajivan, April 3 1921, CWMG vol.19: 508.

186 'I wish that, just as the Muslim brethren have started using Khadi for holy occasions, the Hindus too should begin to use Khadi in the temples and for other sacred purposes.' 'Notes: My last visit to the Punjab', Navajivan, March 20 1921, CWMG vol.19: 455.

187 Writing of his experiences of Puri temple, Gandhi wrote: 'The garments in which the images are draped are of foreign cloth! Why so much ignorance and utter thoughtlessness? For the garments of deities in temples, countless virgins, with love in their heart, used to spin fine yarn and, with similar love, innumerable weavers wove it into cloth. Cloth made otherwise was considered unholy. I was lost in thought, wondering how it was that the Brahmin priests had now become insincere and foreign minded.' 'My Orissa Tour: Foreign Apparel', Navajivan, April 10 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 550.
of cloth.\textsuperscript{188} Gandhi also went to the extent of proposing changes into the marriage customs. Marriages could be solemnized by the exchange of Khadi garlands.\textsuperscript{189} Just as by asking yarn-garland Gandhi was setting new tradition, he was also altering the exiting ones.

Charkha was the panacea for all the ills.\textsuperscript{190} At Barisal in Bengal, he told a group of prostitutes who had come to visit him to redeem their fallen status by spinning on Charkha.\textsuperscript{191} To widows, Gandhi suggested spinning terming it to be the 'remarriage of the purest kind'. ‘It is my conviction ', Gandhi wrote to the widow of his nephew, ' that any man or woman who produces cloth for the people will have earned the highest \textit{punya}\textsuperscript{192} When communal riots broke out in Malabar, he offered hand-spinning as the 'greatest and the most efficacious antidote'. ‘If I could only get the whole of India to become busy with this development, it would stop all violence in the movement.' On charity-givers he came down heavily. ‘Let those who wish to feed the poor, find spinning-wheels for them and provide facilities for learning the various processes.'\textsuperscript{193} Charkha was to spin rebellion too. In late 1921, Gandhi openly claimed that if he had not yet called soldiers to leave their cantonment it was due to the nationalists' limitation in offering them gainful employment.\textsuperscript{194} He warned the public

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\item \textsuperscript{188} Speech at Mass Meeting, Bombay, May 29 1921, CWMG vol.20: 153.
\item \textsuperscript{189} Infanticide of girls, \textit{Navajivan}, July 13 1924, CWMG vol.24: 381.
\item \textsuperscript{190} ‘If we want to infuse strength into our people, the spinning-wheel is the only effective remedy.’ ‘Reply to Welcome address by Surat Municipality’, April 19 1921, CWMG vol. 20: 10.
\item \textsuperscript{191} ‘The movement of non-co-operation is nothing, if it does not purify us and restrain our evil passions. And there is no occupation but spinning and weaving which all can take up without overcrowding.’ ‘Fallen Sister’, \textit{Navajivan}, September 11 1921, CWMG vol.21: 95.
\item \textsuperscript{192} ‘Letter to Nirmala’, May 6 1919, CWMG vol.15: 281.
\item \textsuperscript{193} ‘If we want the nation to have any self-respect at all, we must provide against the recurring scarcity. Spinning-wheel has possibilities which no other occupation has. For it involves the preliminary processes of ginning and carding and the subsequent process of weaving.’ ‘Notes: The Only Activity’, \textit{Yf}, October 6 1921, CWMG vol.21: 239.
\item \textsuperscript{194} ‘I have not asked individual sepoys to come out, it has not been due to want of will but of ability to support them. I promise, that as soon as the spinning-wheel finds an abiding place in every home and Indians begin to feel that weaving gives anybody any day an honourable livelihood, I shall not hesitate, at the peril of being shot, to ask the Indian sepoy individually to leave his service and become a weaver. ‘Tempering with Loyalty’, \textit{Yf}, September 29 1921, CWMG vol.21: 221.
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that the prosecution for 'tampering with the loyalty of the army' was but the precursor of prosecutions for tampering with the loyalty of the people to foreign cloth.\textsuperscript{195}

The chain of events inaugurated quite inadvertently by the promulgation of Rowlatt Laws culminated in launching of the first great movement for Swaraj, although then it did not seem to be so. On 13 April 1919, great catharses of the Indian national movement, Jallianwala Bagh massacre, happened.\textsuperscript{196} It hurt and aroused the patriotic sentiments but opposition was yet within the bounds of constitutionalism. Gandhi at the annual Congress in December 1919 supported the Reform package and welcomed the Royal Proclamation.\textsuperscript{197} While Gandhi was preoccupied with providing balm to the pain of Punjab, he simultaneously also got involved with Khilafat agitation. He was called to Delhi to deliberate upon the issue of impending eclipse of the Khalifa and India's response to such an eventuality. He proposed Swadeshi in clothes and boycott of the foreign fabrics as a part of the agitation. That left many Muslim leaders hungry for more. They desired to avenge the Islamic ignominy at the hands of the allies. An influential Islamic clergy proposed boycott of the British goods as a direct measure of hitting the British. Gandhi opposed the boycott creed.\textsuperscript{198}

Instead, he pitched for non-cooperation. He advised Muslims to withhold co-operation but to abjure boycott.\textsuperscript{199} He saw the option of non-cooperation as within the

\textsuperscript{195} I warn the public that the prosecution for "tampering with the loyalty of the army" is but the precursor of prosecutions for tampering with the loyalty of the people to foreign cloth.' Notes: Expression of Opinion', \textit{YI}, October 6 1921, CWMG vol.21: 240.

\textsuperscript{196} The massacre took a total toll of at least 370 people, whose collective crime was an innocent congregation. Nanda, \textit{op. cit.}, p.41

\textsuperscript{197} Tilak who opposed the Reform Package was exhorted by Gandhi to support it. 'The Reforms Act coupled with the Proclamation is an earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India. If you accept your own civilization, I ask the author of the commentaries on \textit{Bhagavad Gita}, if he accepts the teachings of \textit{Bhagavad Gita}, then let him extend the hand of fellowship to Mr. Montagu.' 'Speech on Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress', January 1 1920, CWMG vol.16: 365.

\textsuperscript{198} It would create adverse world opinion on the movement. 'I suggested that, instead of advising boycott, they could, if they had the strength, resolve to withhold co-operation. But we have no right to resort to boycott; and its result is bound to be undesirable. We do not have this right because boycott implies an intention to punish the British people, and such an intention ought to be eschewed. Our grievance is against the Government. The results, too, will be unfortunate because a satisfactory solution to a problem like that of the Khilafat can be secured by winning world opinion over to our side. By resorting to boycott it is very likely, on the contrary, that we may antagonize it.' 'Punjab Letter: My Speech', December 1 1919, CWMG vol.16: 322.

\textsuperscript{199} 'Speech at Khilafat Conference', November 24 1919, CWMG vol.16, 307; 'Boycott is a sign of anger; to refuse co-operation, on the other hand, is a sign of firmness. Boycott indicates our
legal and constitutional framework of the Empire. Boycott of British goods was not only violation of the same but also bore ill-will towards fellow being. 'Boycott is a punishment and is conceived in a vindictive spirit...is a form of violence', he spoke. In contrast, Swadeshi was a duty dictated by the highest principle of human existence. The difference between non-co-operation and boycott was that of 'an elephant from an ass'.

Gandhi was yet to break from the loyal proclamation to English rule. But soon he was on war-path to mend or end the empire. One man's brutality, after the publication of insensitive and an all wash-out Hunter Commission verdict, became characteristics of a 'satanic' empire whose obliteration was turned into a fine science. The aim fixed, methodology took time to shape although signs became starkly evident. Rhetoric took sharp turn towards political viciousness. And he brilliantly coalesced the administrative brutality in Punjab with the cause of eclipsed Khilafat and yet retained their uniqueness in forging two major community of India in opposition to British.

Though reluctantly, but a political Gandhi was definitely born. Yet, his politics, he said, was not for the control over the institutions of power. As if to cement his new approach, he agreed to the presidency of the All India Home Rule League in April 1920. He changed its name to Swaraj Sabha and set its creed to be Swadeshi.

With Muslims on toe, Gandhi in order to pre-empt any reticence from the established Congress politicians, constituted a Non-Cooperation Committee and declared that the movement be launched on the First of August, 1920. His strategy caused many a heartburn but his stars were on ascendance and therefore those uncomfortable with his activism preferred to work behind the scene.

weakness; non-co-operation proves our strength.' 'Punjab Letter: Khilafat Meeting', December 1 1919, CWMG vol.16: 318.

200 'Boycott is a punishment and is conceived in a vindictive spirit.' Khilafat, YI, March 17 1920, CWMG vol.17: 91.

201 'They have asked me to join the All-India Home Rule League. I have told them that at my time of life and with views firmly formed on several matters I could only join an organization to affect its policy and not be affected by it.' 'Letter to VS Srinivasa Sastri', March 18 1920, CWMG vol.17: 97.
Declaring Swadeshi to be an 'eternal rule of conduct'\textsuperscript{202}, Gandhi called for its adherence without the wait for launch-date. He regarded Swadeshi to be the most powerful weapon against the bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{203} Its pursuance was not to be interrupted even when the desired settlement was arrived at.\textsuperscript{204} Such autonomy was necessitated by the need to protect a nascent constructive activity of Khadi from government's angry reprisals. He was even opposed to its inclusion in the Non-Cooperation programme.\textsuperscript{205}

Muslims took to Swadeshi only in reflected sense. At that point of their political development, part of the Muslim intelligentsia saw the British rule adversely affecting the world Islamic identity. Far removed as the Khilafat issue was from the Indian reality of right-deprivation, poverty, and political alienation, large section of the Muslim masses remained alienated from those propagating the pan-Islamic cause. Even then and also propelled by the political propaganda, the Khilafat did become a cause of identity celebration. And, hence, Muslim attitude towards Turkish turmoil was of civilizational confrontation; an assertion of the pan-Islamic identity. They were vindictive towards the Christian rulers. They, therefore, despite Gandhi's espousal to the contrary, preferred Boycott of British goods as a political strategy rather than adoption of the Swadeshi creed.\textsuperscript{206}

\textsuperscript{202} 'Swadeshi must be pushed forward without waiting for the 1st of August, for it is an eternal rule of conduct not to be interrupted even when the settlement arrives.' 'Statement by Non-cooperation Committee', YI, Before July 7 1920, CWMG vol.18: 13.

\textsuperscript{203} Speech at women's Meeting, Allahabad, The Bombay Chronicle, December 1 1920, CWMG vol.19: 44, (fn.2)

\textsuperscript{204} 'The swadeshi movement is intended as a permanent change. No matter how justly Europe deals with us, it is our duty to use only Swadeshi goods so that India may ever get perfect justice. The country, thus, can prosper only through the spinning-wheel and the handloom.' Khilafat and Swadeshi', Navajivan, July 4 1920, CWMG vol. 18: 8.

\textsuperscript{205} 'He had hesitation in accepting swadeshi as a plank in non-co-operation. To him swadeshi was as dear as life itself. But he had no desire to smuggle in Swadeshi through the khilafat movement, if it could not legitimately help that movement. But conceived as non-co-operation was in a spirit of self-sacrifice, Swadeshi had a legitimate place in the movement. Pure swadeshi meant sacrifice of their liking for fineries.' 'Speech at Swadeshi', YI, August 4 1920, CWMG vol. 18: 97.

\textsuperscript{206} Even in 1928, in a pamphlet, The Poverty of India and its cure, Jawaharlal Nehru was advocating a creed contrary to Gandhi's understanding of Boycott. His focus was on boycotting British cloth. He wrote: British cloth can be ousted either by Indian mill-made cloth or by Khadi or by both. There is no objection to wearing Indian mill-made cloth but it should be remembered that there are many mills in India which are being run with British capital, and the profits of which go to Britain. There is no difference between the cloth made in these mills and the foreign cloth. Secondly if we want to boycott all British cloth immediately, that cannot be done by replacing it with Indian mill cloth. Big mills cannot be erected overnight in large numbers. This will require
Gandhi preferred boycott of not only the Empire goods but all foreign goods, if the strategy was inevitable. He further advocated continuance of boycott beyond the limited goal of redressing the immediate wrongs. Even then he was dead against its inclusion in the package-deal of the non-co-operation. His reasoning was dictated both by moral and practical consideration.\textsuperscript{207} Boycott was vindictive and therefore alien to Non-co-operation, conceived as it was as a movement towards self-purification by undergoing suffering and offering sacrifices.\textsuperscript{208} Secondly, boycott as a measure of punishment needed to be swift, certain and adequate for its effectiveness. Thirdly, it was impractical as it demanded sacrifices from the rich who were timid, cautious, stingy and hard on sacrifices. Fourthly, such a call was constrained by India’s un-preparedness to observe it wholesomely and at the same instant. Fifthly, Gandhi could have added, accepting boycott stood low in the moral struggle that he was engaged in with the Raj. It soon befell on the Muslims the difficulty in making the boycott effective. Leaving sporadic news like one from Damnagar where some 300 Muslims on \textit{Id} day had resolved to boycott the use of foreign goods\textsuperscript{209}, the movement generally failed to elicit response. Chastened community-leaders veered to Swadeshi and insisted on its inclusion in non-cooperation programme.\textsuperscript{210}

Despite Gandhi's disapproval, the Calcutta Congress in September 1920 included boycott of foreign goods in the non-co-operation resolution that Gandhi himself had introduced. He called the inclusion 'an anomaly', 'a practical impossibility'.\textsuperscript{211} His main contention was that there was 'inwardness' in the non-

\textsuperscript{207} Boycott was contrary to the 'spirit of self-sacrifice', was 'ineffectual' and 'thoroughly impractical'. 'Boycott of British goods to be effective must be taken up by the whole country at once or not at all. It is like a siege.' 'Boycott of Goods V. Non-co-operation Programme', \textit{YI}, August 25 1920, \textit{CWMG} vol.18: 198.

\textsuperscript{208} 'But there is vindictiveness and anger in this attitude and hence I reject it. I do not only because the idea is morally wrong, but also be-cause it is impracticable and, therefore, unworthy of consideration.' 'Speech on Boycott at Gujarat Political Conference', August 29 1920, \textit{CWMG} vol.18: 213. 'I cannot endorse the view that this is an unfortunate interpolation due to a misapprehension', VJ Patel's note on Draft Instructions, September 22 1920. \textit{CWMG} vol.18: 489.

\textsuperscript{209} The Path of Truth for the Brave alone, July 1920, \textit{CWMG} vol.18: 8.


\textsuperscript{211} 'Item is a practical impossibility', 'Speech replying on non-cooperation resolution', \textit{CWMG} vol.18: 251. 'Boycott of foreign goods finds a place in my resolution. I am sorry for it. I may not state
cooperation movement of which the essence was 'discipline and self-sacrifice'.

Inclusion of the Boycott Clause in this enterprise of self-suffering and self-sacrifice marred the ‘musical harmony’. Boycott of foreign cloth was inherent part of Khadi propaganda. Swadeshi, he declared, was 'the biggest, the safest, and the surest part' of the non-co-operation agenda in its constructive part.

Thus began one of the most celebrated struggles in the history of nations. After the launch of Non-cooperation Movement in August 1920, Gandhi's countrywide tours became more intensive and elongated. His task now was to facilitate the national awakening to express itself in constructive action. Each of his political moves was to enable Congress proximate a mass organization and make it an instrument of effective action. In December 1920, at Nagpur, he got the Congress to accept the creed of 'all legitimate and peaceful means'. Here he also gave the country a powerful dream of 'Swaraj in one year'. Gandhi was on the move practically all the time. In September 1921, he looked back and wrote: 'Hardly anyone could have toured India as I have done in the last 13 months.' During his tours he addressed vast audiences and wrote voluminously. In Bihar, where he was in August 1921, he found that the masses brimmed with faith in Khadi programme. Spinning and weaving of Khadi was going on apace and thousands had started wearing Khadi exclusively. It was due to the Congress workers in Bihar -‘men of such simple and

how it came to find a place there. But as it did not conflict with my conscience, and in order to show my reasonableness, I undertook to move a resolution whose musical harmony was marred by a false note. Boycott of foreign cloth is included in swadeshi. Boycott of all other foreign goods is a senseless proposition if only because it is a virtual impossibility.' 'The Congress', YI, September 15 1920. CWMG vol. 18: 262.

212 'The inwardness of Non-cooperation', YI, September 8 1920, CWMG vol. 18: 235.

213 The Mists, YI, April 20 1921, CWMG vol.20,15. The Leader, 1-12-1920, adds: “Mr. Gandhi then insisted on the use of swadeshi as the most powerful weapon against the bureaucracy. If they would save the 60 crores of rupees which were being spent in buying British goods, they would command the services of the 57 members of Parliament from Lancashire. If they determined to use only swadeshi goods they would get swaraj. But that could only be possible when they acquired simple habits. They should no longer put on muslin. Only khaddar should be used.' ‘Speech on Non-cooperation, Allahabad’, November 28 1920, CWMG vol. 19: 44.

214 It is said that Gandhi instituted a dialogic form of politics in place of antagonistic one. Hardiman, David, Gandhi in his time and ours, Permanent Black, 2003.

215 It was in the nature of a pilgrimage to me. I covered the country from Karachi in the west to Dibrugarh in the east and from Rawalpindi in the north to Tuticorin in the south. I have said what I wished to say and there is nothing new for me to say. The responsibility now rests entirely with the people. They can follow Swadeshi and win Swaraj. Without Swadeshi, there can be no Swaraj. 'My Notes: End of the tour', Navajivan, October 9 1921, CWMG vol.21: 268.
pure lives' with deep 'faith in non-violent non co-operation.' Assam's capacity for Khadi production and consumption was greater than Punjab. Here each women, like those in Andhra, carded their own cotton. 'If the women here take up spinning and weaving, they will do so out of love for the country and not for love of money.'

Bengal disheartened him yet there were signs of reversal. Gandhi concluded that 'in point of Swadeshi, of all the provinces Bengal stands at the bottom.' But at PC Ray's National School in Barisal he saw 'very fine and even yarn'. But Khadi was thinly spread in this thickly populated province. Madras however proved Gandhi's impression about Bengal's performance wrong. 'The use of Swadeshi seems to have spread even less in the Madras Presidency than in Bengal', Gandhi conveyed his impression to Mahadev Desai, 'and, among the women one may say that it is practically nil.' Yet, his overall conclusion from his tours was that masses accepted his belief in the spinning wheel. If however Khadi was to spread geometrically, 'efficient and enthusiastic' workers were needed to harness the momentous enthusiasm of the people.

As a part of campaign strategy Gandhi wrote pamphlets, issued in the name of various segments of society such as mill-owners, cloth-merchants, weavers,
women\textsuperscript{223}, students. From each of them he asked for solidarity. If Swaraj was hung on the slender thread, if Charkha held the key to India's economic freedom, if spinning provided subsidiary occupation to famished multitudes, it was necessary that all the sections of India's population were involved into spinning and the related activities. Only by involving varied sections of the population in the process of hand-spinning India's required target of yarn production could be met. The most important issue around which campaign was built was hand spinning.

He requested mill-owners to 'to introduce ...a little of the national spirit' in their business. He pointed them out their unpalatable role during the 1905 Swadeshi movement when they taking benefit of people's patriotic sentiments had forced up the price and palmed off foreign clothes under the name of Swadeshi. His appeal to cloth-merchants was to 'subordinate your individual gain to the country's'. They were responsible for India's 'deep and distressing poverty'. He urged them to stop the import of the foreign cloth. Once they stopped the import, there lay abundance of opportunity in production and distribution of Khadi. 'It is an enterprise worthy of your patriotism.' Patriotism against profit was the new ethics that he tried to inculcate in the business community.

Women were the first section that Gandhi targeted through his massive propaganda exercise.\textsuperscript{224} Spinning wheel's biggest beneficiary were women. It is

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\textsuperscript{223} The women of India have during the past twelve months worked wonders on behalf of the motherland. You have parted with your cash and your fine jewellery. You have wandered from house to house to make collections. Some of you have even assisted in picketing. Some of you who were used to fine dresses of variegated colours and had a number of changes during the day have now adopted the white and spotless but heavy Khadi sari reminding one of a woman's innate purity. Boycott is impossible \textit{unless you will surrender the whole of your foreign clothing}. 'To the Women of India', YI, August 11 1921, CWMG vol.20: 495. Gandhi asked women to organize spinning clubs and spinning competition.

\textsuperscript{224} Would that the merchants of India, ceasing to be mercenary, will study the ancient art and make it their \textit{business} to revive it. There is no swaraj without swadeshi. And swadeshi means for India a permanent boycott of foreign cloth. I invite you to lead the way. 'Open Letter to Cloth-Merchants', July 7 1921, CWMG vol.20: 335.

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Even in South Africa, Gandhi's settlements provided 'spiritual and physical freedom' to women that were then unavailable to them in India. 'Letter to Maganlal Gandhi', August 31 1910, CWMG vol.10: 311. Yet, Gandhi's attitude betrayed sometimes his insolence to his wife. In 1918, Kasturba was invited by Hindu Sri Mandal preside over the annual function of the Mandal and the Dadabhai Naoroji birthday celebrations. In response, Gandhi, on behalf of his wife, wrote back declining the acceptance. He replied: Though we two are independent and have equal rights, we have decided our spheres of work for the sake of convenience. Moreover, at the time of our marriage, my wife was altogether illiterate. I gave her some education with great effort, but, for several reasons, I have not been able to do so to my satisfaction. It is not possible, therefore, for
argued that spinning was a libertarian movement for Indian women. The revival of spinning brought needy Indian women in interaction with men-folk who mainly organized the network, provided raw-cotton and Charkha, and acted as exchange-centres. Spinning also brought women together when they took to collective-spinning at the network-centres. It brought them out of their domestic realms into politicized arena. It provided them much-needed economic support. It played a role in their lives while enhancing inter-personal exchanges in a society that was gripped by the theory of seclusion for women. If a loom were suggested to them not many women would have taken it enthusiastically. The movement brought women out of their home confines and provided them a new opportunity for social interaction. A new space for inter-personal exchange was created for the women hitherto limited to home, hearth and harvest. Thousands of women took to lonely and daily trek to Khadi centers to receive cotton, deliver self-spun yarn, and receive remuneration. In some silent way Khadi movement added a new spatial autonomy to women.

Gandhi's attitude towards women was similar to his imagery of India. Her civilization was the best in world but due to the betrayal of her own people she found herself in the sad morass. Similarly, Indian women were reduced to public recluse due to the negligence of duty by men towards their womenfolk. He drew women in the public sphere like no one before. Women were targeted to become so many of cotton covenanter. This was symbolic of their contribution to national awakening and participation. He was aware of the ills that afflicted Indian women but his prescription were singularly ingenious. Unlike the early reformers, he did not lay emphasis on widow re-marriages of which of course he never disapproved either. Instead he urged them to spin. In addressing public meeting attended by women his subject

her to accept your proposal. I don’t think my wife can read out her speech from the chair. She will certainly not be able to prepare her own speech. She is not at all conversant with your activities and hence cannot say anything extempore either. Very regretfully, therefore, we have both to request you all to excuse us. Letter to Rasikmani, August 12 1918, CWMG vol. 15: 17.

225 'Women should mainly take to spinning, while men must weave.' 'Speech at women's Meeting, Dohad', August 31 1919, CWMG vol. 16: 80.

226 'How good would it be if you wore a sari out of hand-spun yarn? It is through you that I seek Ramarajya.' 'Speech at Bhuvasan', CWMG vol.26: 17.

227 To the widow of his nephew, Gandhi wrote: 'It is my earnest desire that you especially pick up weaving and spinning well. I look upon it as pious and sacred work. Giving of food and clothes in charity is considered excellent gifts among us. It is my conviction that any man or woman who produces cloth for the people will have earned the highest punya.' 'Letter to Nirmala', May 6 1919, CWMG vol. 15: 281.
invariably was spinning wheel. Spinning was womanly vocation while men generally
wove clothes. He urged all women—aristocratic and fallen, moneyed and idle,
widow and old—to take to spinning. Men were implored to procure cotton and
provide slivers after getting the cotton carded to their womenfolk.

Women were targeted both as producers as well as consumers. If they had
substantial say in the purchase of family-clothes, they also had idle hours which
could be harnessed for spinning. In his public speeches, he cited examples to
influence his women-audience. In meetings in Bombay Presidency, he said of Punjabi
women who irrespective of their caste spun their own yams and got the village
weavers to weave clothes for themselves. He made use of allegorical references
from holy books in order to make them leave the tastes for fine clothes. In the days of
Ravana, 'Sita Devi had to wear for fourteen years the rough garment made from the
bark of the tree'. Today's women, living in this modern Ravana Raj, too must discard
their foreign garments and adopt coarse Khadi. 'Simplicity is best adornment.' It
was also a religious sacrament to spin regularly. Women were to disregard quality in
cloth produced from yarn spun by other women and wear such cloth for the purpose
of covering their bodies. 'Take up the sari that the charkha can give you.' He

228 'In the days of our prosperity, there was a spinning-mill in every home. Brahma saw that if India
was to remain free her women should be persuaded to look upon it as their sacred duty to produce
some yarn [every day] That is why it happened that he did not create a distinct community whose
function would be to spin but made that obligatory on all women.' Speech at Weavers' Conference, Nagpur', December 25 1920, CWMG vol. 19: 147.

229 'So long as women in India do not take equal part with men in the affairs of the world and in
religious and political matters, we shall not see India's star rising.' Women could substantially
help the Swadeshi movement. Speech at Women's meeting, Bombay, May 8 1919, CWMG
vol.15: 290.

230 Some women plead helplessness, saying that they are subject to men. Some men, on the contrary,
argue that they are helpless because women would not give up their love of fashion, that three-
quarters of their expenditure is over women's dresses and so they ask me to persuade women first.
I have met a large number of women. I have also had a hand in running a home. It has always
seemed to me that I took second place to my wife.' Speech at Women's meeting', Surat, May 26
1919, CWMG vol.15: 324.

231 If you spare some time from what you spend in preparing meals and in gossiping, have the
spinning-wheel in the home and spin, you will be able to compete with the mills. When you
weave your cloth on the looms, India's freedom will be near, she will have dharma and starvation
will disappear. Ibid.


233 Speech at Public Meeting, Allahabad, November 29 1920, CWMG vol.19: 45.
appealed to their sense of piety and asked them to spin and give as 'of all charities the charity of cloth was the best'.

Students were second set of niche target. Campaign for recruiting students for spinning received a massive boost with the declaration of non-co-operation that called students to withdraw from the government owned and affiliated educational institutions. Gandhi called students to spin for an hour daily. Giving up education was not an option but even if one had to than one's capacity for thinking did not suffer. The easiest method of increasing the output of yarn was to get pupils to spin. Accordingly, the Gujarat Vidyapith recommended that the schools affiliated to it introduce spinning and help produce the required yarn.

At Nagpur Congress in December 1920, Gandhi gave a call for Swaraj-in-a-year. 1921 was that year. Gandhi advised for suspension of all activities excepting spinning as that was an Emergency Duty. Although conditions applied on the delivery, the call fired the national imagination and brought urgency into the struggle. All national educational institutions were to convert itself into a principally carding

234 'All women should devote at least one hour daily to spinning Realizing that simplicity is dharma, women should regard them selves adorned through it, regard as sacred whatever quality of cloth is produced from yarn spun by girls and wear such cloth for the purpose of covering their bodies.' 'To Women', Navajivan, October 2 1921, CWMG vol.21: 227.

235 Speech at Rajahmundry, April 3 1921, CWMG vol.19: 509.

236 Women, who formerly used to live upon the charkha, were now leading a very miserable life in the bondage of slavery, breaking bricks and stones and being abused by overseers. He had come across many women in Champaran who had got only one sari to cover their body with and hence they could not go for a bath in the Ganges when they wanted to do so. Their life of freedom, when they used to have clothes made of the yarn spun by their own hands, was no more. Speech at women's meeting, Patna, The Serachlight, December 8 1920, CWMG vol.19: 68.

237 'Spend six hours daily in spinning, or, if that is not possible, at least four.' Speech to Students of Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad, January 13 1921, CWMG vol. 19: 226.

238 'If in your view it is committing suicide for students to leave schools and go without education, I would certainly tell you that you should desist from the sin of continuing in your schools and commit suicide. If you wish to see non-co-operation crowned with success, set apart one hour from your time entirely for spinning. I shall say that spinning for the country is in itself the highest degree that can be obtained today.' 'Speech to students of Gujarat Mahavidyalaya', Ahmedabad, Navajivan, January 20 1921, CWMG vol.19: 223-30.

239 'Our mills cannot produce it. Only the spinning-wheel can do it, and the easiest method of increasing the output of yarn is to get school pupils to take up this work. Accordingly, the senate of the Vidyapith has recommended that the schools affiliated to it should introduce spinning and help produce the required yarn.' 'Duty of Spinning', Navajivan, January 20 1921, CWMG vol.19: 259.
and spinning institute. Making youth learn spinning was imbued with two positive outcomes: Pupil's self-reliance and rapid spread of spinning activity.

It was thought if students' took to spinning activity, they restored the vocation its 'respectable status'. Their identification with the Khadi hastened the process of making it fashionable. Their patronage and practical recognition compelled the attention of the handloom weavers and influenced the floating consumers. These 'spinning addicts' infected an increasing population with their fervour. Spinning enterprise was to serve another purpose too, that of financing education. Hitherto education infrastructure was financed by taxation from liquor sales. Students' taking to spinning freed individual pupil from their dependency over the colonial government. As Gandhi dissected, it was a 'slave-owning state'. 'I have never yet known a slave-owner teaching his slave the price of freedom, the price of liberty. Wherever slaves have enfranchised themselves, they have done so in spite of the slave-owner.'

So, under Gandhi's Swaraj scheme, 'the resources for education would not come either from liquor or land but from spinning-wheel'. Education was to make pupils self-reliant right from their early years. He envisaged a curriculum in which spinning wheel and loom was a permanent fixture. If spinning was a hereditary occupation, carding and weaving was specialized, professional vocations. Together their earning could finance one's education. In his conception ordinary literacy and education could begin after India had won her independence. Once Swaraj was established primacy of literary learning could be reverted back. Gandhi held high hopes from the experiment of introducing the charkha in the national schools. It was the most efficient method of introducing education in the villages of India. It required no extra financing and no search of immoral sources of taxation. So during the emergency of national struggle, a national school was a school for spinning. The chief

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242 'In the first place, the children will learn to be self-reliant and, in the second, when in schools, too, children are taught spinning, it will soon spread all over the country.' My Notes: My Miscalculation, Navajivan, May 8 1921, CWMG vol.20: 78.
243 The Duty of Spinning, Yf, February 2 1921, CWMG vol.19: 316.
244 The Message of the Charkha, Yf, June 29 1921, CWMG vol.20: 294.
difficulty in working out the scheme, besides making the idea nationally acceptable, was the availability of spinning-wheel. It had to be manufactured in large numbers to meet the enhanced demand. The village carpenter was thought of but it needed highly inspired organizational network which was still lacking at the time.

It was for this that Gandhi in the very beginning of his call to students was not so sure of the post-withdrawal engagements for the students. He had advised them, after leaving schools, they 'could roam about the streets, follow the same course of instruction or best of all take to hand-spinning till Swaraj was established.' There were too many alternatives. Gandhi later thought he had erred. 'I should have boldly said the whole truth and suggested hand-spinning and hand-weaving as an integral part of the proposition regarding boycott of educational institutions.'

Various municipalities which were under the control of the nationalists attempted to introduce Khadi and spinning in schools under their command with varying success. Surat municipality was requested by Gandhi to forgo a government grant and introduce education-funded-by-spinning. Municipality of Lahore had prescribed khaddar dress for all municipal employees. Gandhi wanted Salem municipality to make spinning compulsory in municipal schools.

Weavers had been the greatest victim of the mercantile imperialism of the East India Company. Millions had been left into a state of total shock with their hereditary occupation unable to match the machination as well as machinery of the newly steamed British. Those who survived now wove only foreign yarn as use of hand-spun yarn for the garments had almost become extinct. Further, the hand spun yarn was uneven, feeble and snapped repeatedly on loom. Most of them, like other countrymen,

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245 'The best national education for India is undoubtedly an intelligent handling of the spinning wheel.' 'A Confession of Errors', YI, August 18 1921, CWMG vol. 20: 529.

246 'I have advised the Surat Municipality to impart education of this type. It intends to forgo a grant of one hundred and ten thousand rupees. If it might be possible to do this, no additional taxation would be necessary, the children could be given free education and the Swaraj movement would be greatly helped.' My Notes: My Miscalculation, Navajivan, May 8 1921, CWMG vol.20: 78.

247 At Salem Gandhi spoke of Lahore municipality that had prescribed Khadi dress for all its employees. Speech in Reply to Municipal Address, Salem, September 27 1921, CWMG vol.21: 210.
used foreign garments for personal wear. As Gandhi observed, 'The race of the peaceful julahis of the Punjab is all but extinct. It is for the scholars of the Punjab to make it possible for the Punjabi weaver to return to his innocent calling.' The Congress and Khilafat Conference appeals especially targeted to this section of the population who were the direct victims of but were now co-opted by the British industrialism. They pleaded with the weavers to use exclusively hand-spun yarn for weaving. Converting the weavers and other complementary craftsmen such as carders, carpenters, blacksmiths etc. to the cause was important for the well-being of the movement. Only when the carders prepared slivers that the spinners could spin and weavers weave. Gandhi even suggested special drive for their enrolment into the Congress fold. Gandhi called himself a 'farmer-weaver'.

If import substitution was the target, indigenous production of clothes had to increase. Indigenous textile mills had their own limitation. Their plant capacity could not be increased overnight. It needed large investment too. Handloom sector produced clothes that were larger than the combined production of Indian textile mills. There were 'enough weavers and enough looms in India to replace the whole of the foreign import of cloth.' The handloom weavers though catered to imported yarn. It meant there was no dearth of weavers, but there was a dearth of spinners. While call was made to all sections of society to participate in the yarn-production process, there

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248 'Your manner of carrying on your profession is not the right one. If you follow it for the benefit of the country, you should produce additional yarn, or have it produced by others, and weave that. You will find it difficult to weave this yarn, but you should not mind it.' Speech at Weavers’ Conference, Nagpur, December 25 1920, CWMG vol.19: 148.

249 'I have to work among farmers and weavers. We can inspire more enthusiasm in them than in the educated classes.' Speech at Women’s Meeting, Bombay, CWMG vol. 15: 291.

250 'The Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee held a special meeting of the weavers. They have agreed to use in the future exclusively hand-spun yarn for weaving and mill yarn only if they must. Till now, they have been using foreign yarn exclusively, though they themselves told me that their forefathers used only hand-spun yarn. From now on, if these weavers are supplied good hand-spun yarn, they will most certainly use it to the exclusion of other yarn. If no enthusiastic workers come forward, they will as certainly continue to use foreign yarn even though they have agreed to use hand-spun yarn. Our task now is to persuade weavers, carders, carpenters, blacksmiths and others to take interest in public work. I hope that in every town of Gujarat, Congress workers will get in touch with such artisans, enrol them as members and secure their services.’ My Notes: Weavers’ Meeting, Navajivan, August 21 1921, CWMG vol.21: 4.

251 'I am not a weaver by profession, but I regard myself as a farmer-weaver.' Speech at Weavers’ Conference, Nagpur, December 25 1920, CWMG vol. 19: 147.
were efforts to entice weavers from weaving imported yarn.\textsuperscript{252} Weavers' was a specialized vocation, a sophisticated art. Unlike spinning, it was a complete means of livelihood. Weaving due to its capacity to pay higher wages was one occupation that Gandhi suggested to many. To the striking Railway workers at Chittagong he suggested weaving as an alternative occupation. It paid twice as much as any other.\textsuperscript{253}

Swadeshi in economy was more to do with traders and merchants. The earlier wave of Swadeshi during the anti-partition struggle had ebbed largely due to the merchants who took benefit of the patriotic sentiments of the populace and had 'palmed off foreign goods as Swadeshi articles.'\textsuperscript{254} A pragmatic Gandhi this time appealed to merchants' credulity and exhorted them to 'follow truth in their business.' 'Just as the kshatriya's duty is not killing [but protecting], so also the business man's duty is not amassing wealth.'\textsuperscript{255} Here was the example of what Parekh says Gandhi taking liberty in the interpretation and moulding of tradition to suit his intention.\textsuperscript{256}

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\textsuperscript{252} 'I have resolutely set my face against doing anything for weavers who weave mills-spun yarn, for they cut their own throat by weaving mill-spun yarn, and they know it.' 'Letter to Achyut Patwardhan'. January 30 1935, CWMG vol.60: 139.

\textsuperscript{253} 'Swadeshi will fail if we are not business-like. We must touch the hearts of the weavers of India. We must organize them. Those weavers who for want of scope for their art have left their calling should be induced to come back to it. We must hold their meetings and tell them why they should weave hand-spun yarn even though it may be uneven, and why they should consider it a sin to touch foreign yarn. Similarly we must induce carders (dhunias) to prepare slivers for spinning. We must also induce clothiers to introduce patriotism into their trade and sell hand-spun cloth and give up selling foreign cloth. We must have for Swadeshi shops inspectors who are experts in distinguishing between foreign cloth and Swadeshi and between hand-spun and machine-spun. This great work cannot be done unless we are able to organize ourselves on a grand scale. And such organization is utterly impossible unless every Congress body is able to concentrate upon Swadeshi, i.e., boycott and production to the exclusion of every other activity.' 'Essentials of Success', 7\textit{1}, August 11 1921, CWMG vol.20: 493.

\textsuperscript{254} 'The salvation of our country, remember, is not in the hands of others but of ourselves, and more in the hands of merchants in some respects than the educated people; for I strongly feel that so long as there is no swadeshism, there can be no self-government, and for the spread of swadeshism Indian merchants are in a position to do a very great deal.' Speech in reply to address, Karachi, February 29 1916, CWMG vol.13: 254.

\textsuperscript{255} 'It is not the right way for a business man merely to earn and lay by money and get rich anyhow by exploiting the poor. Business men should follow truth in their business and not bear hard on people through their operations. He is no worthy business man who, in times of famine, raises the prices so high that the people simply break down. This kind of thing ruins both the people and the business men.' Speech at Karachi, February 29 1916, CWMG vol.13: 256.

\textsuperscript{256} Parekh, Bhikhu. (1999), \textit{Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse}.\end{flushleft}
Interaction with merchants therefore was a common public exercise in Gandhi’s tour programme. Throughout my travels in the different parts of India I have taken good care to see the merchant community, Gandhi declared while speaking, in September 1921, at the meetings of Madras Piece-Goods Merchants’ Association. The meeting was largely attended by the members of the Association who had gathered to discuss the question of boycott of foreign clothes. ‘You will be glad to learn from me that in all these places they have been in full sympathy, as they ought to have been with this great Swadeshi movement’ Similar meetings at other places were also held during his tours.

Arousing patriotic fervor in merchants was a necessity if Khadi was to succeed. His aim was to enlist their support. His tools were limited to appeal to their heart. ‘I lay my hand on my heart and say that, when the merchant class understands the spirit of patriotism, then only can we get Swaraj quickly.’ There was also the morality play in his speeches as he advised the gathering of merchants to shun ‘unfair means’ in trading practice. He was sure the public shall not ‘tolerate divorce between profession and practice.’ That was the nearest he came to issuing a dictate. But he also knew the futility of mere appeal to the patriotism of those whose chief aim was

Gandhi wrote: ‘It is true that one who wears foreign or mill-made clothes will have no place in the Congress. Even those who trade in foreign-cloth or who own textile mills can join the Congress, but they must recognize the importance of khadi by themselves wearing it, by sympathizing with the poor and by helping in the spread of the spinning-wheel.’ ‘Causes of failure’, Navajivan, September 14 1924, CWMG vol.25: 141.

Bajaj was used to negotiate with Calcutta merchants for the implementation of boycott programme. Gandhi also attempted to entice potential converts by showing them the rosy picture of full profit if merchants supported Khadi manufacture and sales in place of what they now got as commissions. ‘I want to put before you a few mathematical problems. Today our importers are really nothing more than commission agents. You get perhaps Rs. 5 out of every hundred rupees worth of cloth. But Rs. 95 entirely goes out to your principals. Now, imagine that you are the manufacturers of the cloth that we need in India itself. Then the whole of the hundred rupees would remain in India; and see that we shall still want almost all the cloth that we have been hitherto importing from outside. Who is going to trade with 60 crores of rupees per year? I need not tell you that you are the people.’ ‘Speech at Piece-Goods Merchants Meeting’, Madras, September 16 1921, CWMG vol.21: 127. But ultimately the onus for choosing cloth was put on consumers.


Notes: Practicing Lawyers, YI, March 30 1921, CWMG vol.19: 490.

In 1919, in Bombay, at Gandhi’s suggestion a committee of leading men was appointed to raise a body of volunteers to assist in the preservation of order at the cloth market and the surrounding locality. CWMG vol. 15: 215.
Merchants were also the mainstay for financing the Congress machinery. They helped Congress scramble to rupees one crore mark by the deadline of June 30 1921.

The merchant community at some places, as reports suggested, showed 'remarkable awakening'. In Guntur, on the day of Tilak's anniversary in 1921, 'almost every one of them wore new swadeshi clothes and attended the procession and the meeting'. The cloth merchants here were willing to deal in Swadeshi clothes, provided they were shown a way to dispose stocked foreign goods. In the whole of this district, there were 29 lakh worth of foreign cloth. They were willing to re-export the stock to any place outside India, and deal solely in Khadi. Guntur's Congress leaders asked for Bombay merchants' expertise. But if the deal did not come through, Gandhi desired that the merchants sold only to those customers who insisted on buying only the foreign cloth. Merchants however put the onus on the consumers.

Merchants largely remained indifferent to 'growing popular dislike' for foreign cloth. Their import of foreign cloth did not stop. Instead, mills took advantage of Swadeshi propaganda and sold their manufacture as Khadi to beguiled customers. Cloths stamped with 'Swadeshi Cloth Mark' invaded the market that sold as Khadi. Gandhi planned to counter such spurious invasion by issuing leaflets informing the true intent and texture of Khadi. 'Volunteers should very politely put this leaflet into the hands of all persons who are not clad in Khadi. Description of Khadi should be written out on large wooden boards and big leaders, not hired men, should parade the streets wearing these.' Gandhi offered himself to roam one hour every day in Ahmedabad market with the board suspended over his neck. He also advised

262 'When lovers of Swadeshi begin to consider it their duty to wear khaddar, when the required number of spinning-wheels are working and the weavers are weaving hand-spun yarn, the mill-owners will be bound to reduce prices. It seems almost hopeless merely to appeal to the patriotism of those whose chief aim is to increase their own profits.' Gandhi also hoped that soon a new fashion would be set. The Message of the Charkha, 17 July 1921, CWMG vol.20: 295.

263 'I wish that the merchants in Bombay will come to the assistance of the dealers throughout India and try to re-export as much stock as is possible.' Notes: Non-Co-Operation In Andhra', 17 August 1921, CWMG vol.21: 9.

264 My Notes: Mill-Made Khadi, Navajivan, June 1 1924, CWMG vol.24: 168.
Swadeshi shops to appoint inspectors who were experts in distinguishing between foreign cloth and Swadeshi and between hand-spun and machine-spun. 265

Gandhi exhorted the merchants to sacrifice the trade in foreign cloth and turn their attention to organizing the Khaddar manufacture and trade. Congress undertook peaceful picketing of foreign cloths. Gandhi hoped that if the merchants cooperated then picketing would become wholly unnecessary and men and women would divert their energy into positive work of spinning, weaving and thereby help manufacture Khaddar faster. 266

In his nation wide propaganda tours Gandhi advocated leaving of mill cloth only for the poor. Rest of India was to take to Khadi. The consumption of foreign cloth was wide, almost universal. India's own manufacturing base had been crippled. Most of its clothing needs were being satisfied by imports. Almost the whole country wore foreign cloth. The mass manufactured foreign fabrics sold cheaply. It was said that it were affordable to the most. While appealing to the rich and educated Gandhi asked Indian mill textile for the use of poor alone. Mill-cloth was only for poor. 267

It was the loss of patronage from the affording class which was responsible for the demise of indigenous industry. Gandhi attempted at reorienting the consumption patterns of the rich and educated. Such consumptive reorientation was designed to give a spurt in the demand for Khadi and to draw people's attention to the lives and works of artisans whose craftsmanship and inventive faculties had stunted due to lack of patronage from the educated class. 268 As he saw, it was the duty of educated to

265 'It is no doubt necessary to revise our taste, revert to simplicity and cut down our wants to a minimum. No non-co-operator can afford to wear more than three articles of dress. We must not hanker after the Bezwada finery but must be satisfied with the coarsest Khadi.' 'Essentials of Success', YJ, August 11 1921, CWMG vol.20: 493.

266 Interview to the Press, February 26 1922, CWMG vol.22: 482.

267 Mill-cloth is for the poor, whom my message cannot reach. Only if it is reserved exclusively for them will mill-owners behave worthwhile. For such people, of course, there is no choice but to use mill-cloth unless they produce their requirements locally. What this requires is not wealth, self-sacrifice or intelligence. All that is necessary is zest. If you do not adopt the traditional simplicity of India, you cannot resuscitate fine Muslims.' 'Speech at Meeting in Barsi', May 24 1921, CWMG vol.20: 126.

268 'The success of the Swadeshi movement depends in a large measure on our producing simple but quick-working machines for ginning cotton, on our making the process of carding easy and effecting possible improvements in the spinning-wheel and the loom.' Notes: Spinning Wheel, Navajivan, October 10 1919, CWMG vol.16: 218.

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provide their women-folk with spinning wheel and facilities for training in its plying. Further, he expected their condescending to wear clothes made out of such hand-spun yarn alone. It inaugurated the process of rebuilding the ‘only possible cottage industry of India’.

But Gandhi soon found that it was difficult to make the rich adopt Khadi. Spinning too was unattractive. Gandhi called educated to spin, if for nothing, then for ‘quite reflection’. ‘The spinning wheel will have, on those who work it regularly, an effect which nothing else can produce’. The lukewarm response of the educated to his call made him declare that they had lost the art of labouring for their bread. Deskwork alone had become their forte. Graduates were sitting idle in search of the government jobs and were unhappily unemployed. But, according to Gandhi, unemployment was least of the problem as the wages of weavers, carders and spinners were rising daily. ‘Any man who weaves for eight hours a day may earn even at the commencement at least one rupee per day. Accomplished weavers today earn two rupees per day’.

The Congress at Nagpur in December 1920 adopted a new constitution with a changed creed of ‘the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means’. It also went through massive organizational restructuring to bridge the gap between ‘precept and practice’. It instituted an All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund of rupees one crore to be collected by June 30th 1921. The target was to bring more people in the net by garnering small contributions than having a few persons donate large amounts. There were other targets too;

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269 'If we continue to purchase foreign cloth, we deprive the Indian weaver and spinner of that amount from year to year without practically giving him or her any other work in exchange. Without a cottage industry the Indian peasant is doomed. He cannot maintain himself from the produce of the land. He needs a supplementary industry. Spinning is the easiest, the cheapest and the best. I know this means a revolution in our mental outlook. And it is because it is a revolution that I claim that the way to Swaraj lies through Swadeshi.' 'Swaraj in Swadeshi', YI, December 10 1919, CWMG vol.16: 336.

270 My Notes: To "Bhatia" Sisters and Brothers, Navajivan, February 19 1922, CWMG vol.22: 435.

271 'We the educated classes have lost the art of labouring for our bread.' 'Notes: The Bread Problem', YI, August 25 1921, CWMG vol.21: 12.


273 'It would be more fitting if many people gave a little each and a good fund was raised than if a few persons donated large amounts; in this way alone can the title of 'Lokamanya' conferred on
enrolment in Congress of one crore primary members and distribution of twenty-lakh Charkhas. The collection drive focused on woman's piety. Gandhi's meetings reverberated with calls to mores: Surrender 'superfluous ornaments', adopt temperance and give, give up smoking and give. 'And what kind of memorial is it to be? There would be no statue. More than two-third of collected money was to be spent on spinning, weaving and educational activities. Despite the avowed aim of collecting money from maximum number of people, ultimately it was the commercial Bombay on which the Congress came to depend. In fading hours of 30th June, collection scrambled to its targeted amount after Gandhi himself supervised the collection drive in the last fourteen days.

Gandhi was enthused. In quick succession, remarkable for its high-voltage propaganda and confident assertion, Gandhi was setting target after new target upon a bracing country. New target that he proclaimed immediately after the achievement of the Bezwada resolution was that of complete boycott of foreign cloth to be achieved by 30th September.

Bombay became the centre of this new target. From here symbolic battle for the complete boycott of foreign cloth was to be led. Bombay controlled India's cloth market. It was the gateway to foreign import. Heavy responsibility therefore came to be laid upon its commercial class. The merchants must cease their cloth imports. Mill-owners must revise their outlook. They must regularize their profits and manufacture principally for Indian markets. Mill employees needed to concern themselves with issues beyond their wages. Consumers had to strip themselves of their foreign fineries. They were to consign their wardrobe comprising of foreign cloth to fire. 'Let poor don mill-manufactures whereas the affording class must seek out Khadi. If

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276 'With that Fund, we are to win Swaraj; it is to be utilized chiefly for providing education to children, for promoting the spinning-wheel movement and remunerating public workers, that is to say, the contributions we shall make to the Fund will be used entirely for us. I at any rate cannot imagine a better use for our money than this. 'The National Tilak Swaraj Fund', Navajivan, March 20 1921, CWMG vol.19: 460.

276 And it may be noted here that the money is not to be spent in foreign or other propaganda, but largely in spinning, weaving, and other educational activity. 'All India Tilak Swaraj Fund', YI, March 16 1921, CWMG vol.19: 434.
Khadi was non-available, people must minimize their clothing needs. But the companion logic also entailed spending liberally to buy Khadi. 'Bombay the Beautiful has a golden opportunity. She must add to her beauty, or be prepared to lose what she has', Gandhi exhorted.

On 31st July 1921, Bombay gave evidence of its beauty. Gandhi lit a huge bonfire of foreign cloths that was witnessed by a great gathering. Once the fire was lit on 31st of July, it became a practice in demonstration when at various places people began to set afire their caps of foreign fabrics. The movement spread with the 'telepathic communication' which proved immensely effective compared to telephones and telegraphs. Gandhi's clarion call focused on atonement for the past and revival of the old professions of spinning and weaving. He was even against the concession to let people continue with their stock with commitment for no further purchase. He advocated incineration or dispatch to another nation. There was no question of giving them to the poor. 'Let even poor discard their foreign clothes and take to Khadi.' At Gauhati where Gandhi had been in August practice of bonfire of a large heap of foreign cloth was continued. The heap contained 'a great number of fine dhotis, fine saris and caps and a good quantity of lace'. As the fire was lighted 'Hundreds of fine

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278 'We cannot achieve boycott of foreign cloth unless we spend liberally in buying spinning-wheels, hand-spun yarn and khadi. We must conduct the swadeshi propaganda till the spinning-wheel has been placed on a commercial footing and has found a lasting place in every home.' 'Notes: The Beginning of responsibility', YI, July 6 1921, CWMG vol.20: 324.

279 Before we can be wholly free, we must be economically independent. A man who is forced to starve cannot be expected to pray to God. A starving man will sell his soul.'Bombay the Beautiful', YI, July 6 1921, CWMG vol.20: 330.

280 'At every place in our journey, caps made of muslin, velvet and felt pile up in heaps. Muslims throw in their Turkish and Astrakhan caps. A friend has commented that the telephone and the telegraphs seem ineffective when compared with the telepathic communication going on in the country.' My Notes: Burning of Caps, Navajivan, August 14 1921, CWMG vol.20: 511.

281 Speech at Weaver's Conference, Nagpur, December 25 1920, CWMG vol.19: 147.

282 'The imports of foreign cloth have done this to our poorer classes, have utterly destroyed our [cloth] industry and reduced many of us to the verge of starvation. We have, through this trade, destroyed the very means of our livelihood. The only gift we can bestow on the poor is to make them self-reliant; our movement is for making them like us. "Like us" does not mean wealthy, it simply means that they do not starve or go naked for want of clothes.' Discussion on Boycott at AICC meeting, Bombay, July 28 1921, CWMG vol.20: 443-8.
shirts and other garments of foreign cloth flew up in the air and fell back into the fire.1

On 22nd September 1921 at Madura in the South India, Gandhi effected a 'radical alteration' in his dress. It was initially motivated by the clamour that inundated him about the incapacity of people to buy Khadi if they discarded the foreign fabrics. The decision was therefore to prop up the boycott of foreign cloth which was to be enforced by the end of the September. The month of September was also the last leg of his call 'Swaraj-in-a-year' that was given at the September Congress at Calcutta in 1920. The change in the dress—stripping to 'only a loin-cloth and a chaddar whenever found necessary for the protection of the body'—was the final act that would transform Gandhi's persona and would give him a uniquely branded personality. The idea that he could advise the country to adopt simple and minimal clothing in the time of transition only when he practiced the same was the inspiration beneath the change.2 It was not only remarkable for its political honesty but it also showcased his empathy with his poor compatriots. 'I wish to be in tune with the life of the poorest of the poor among Indians.'3 But enforcement of total boycott of foreign cloth was not an easy task unlike that of collecting a crore of rupees. It proved so. The target remained elusive, Swaraj in a year call that was dependent on the achievement of the total boycott of the foreign clothes too remained a mirage.

Through this maze of propaganda duels, Gandhi prepared for mass civil disobedience at Bardoli and camped there with uncertain determination. While Bardoli was being prepared for the civil-disobedience, its inhabitants were asked to

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1 'A huge public meeting was held here, and at this meeting there was a bonfire of a large heap of foreign cloth. I saw in the heap a great number of fine dhotis, fine saris and caps and a good quantity of lace.' Experiences in Assam-I, Navajivan, September 4 1921, CWMG vol.21: 56.

2 'I know that many will find it difficult to replace their foreign cloth all at once. Millions are too poor to buy enough khaddar to replace the discarded cloth. Let them be satisfied with a mere loin-cloth. I give the advice under a full sense of my responsibility. In order therefore to set the example I propose to discard at least up to the 31st of October my topi and vest and to content myself with only a loin-cloth and a chaddar whenever found necessary for the protection of the body. I adopt the change because I have always hesitated to advise anything I may not myself be prepared to follow, also because am anxious by leading the way to make it easy for those who cannot afford to change on discarding their foreign garments.' Message on Loin Cloth, Madura, Sep 22 1921, CWMG vol.21: 181; My Loin-Cloth, October 2 1921, CWMG vol.21: 226.

3 My Loin Cloth, Navajivan, July 27 1924, (CWMG vol.24, 456)
wear Khadi.4 'Preparation for civil disobedience means intensifying constructive and productive activities such as popularizing Khadi and the spinning wheel, improving the quality of yarn and increasing its output, increasing the number of weavers, improving the quality of slivers...and so on.5 A prerequisite for the launching of the civil-disobedience was adoption of Khadi by the people whereat civil-disobedience was to be launched. 'Civil-disobedience without Swadeshi is death without hope of creation. It is like tearing down a field without any prospect of sowing a new crop.'6 Civil disobedience was an added incentive to the Khadi movement.

The civil non-payment of tax held out 'material bait', a privilege which Gandhi wanted to be balanced with a disciplined response. That included strict adherence to the non-violence creed and an unswerving understanding of the moral and the economic value of the Charkha and the Khadi.7 Bardoli was set on fast track for the civil-disobedience and yet it fell short of Gandhi’s exacting standards for Khadi wearing, yarn-spinning and cloth weaving through handloom. Addressing a five thousand strong Khadi-clad crowd of men and women Gandhi admonished: 'You are not yet in position to produce all the Khadi you require for yourselves. You still do not have as many handlooms as you require for weaving the Khadi you need.'8 He was somewhat forced into campaign by the circumstances. Relief arrived from Chauri-Chaura, and Gandhi unilaterally declared suspension of still unfolding programmes, making the AICC sign on dotted line to the astonishment equally of the colleagues and the opponents. On 11th March 1922, Gandhi was arrested putting an end to one of the most activist phase of the national movement. His parting message was reflection of his commitment. In a letter written from Sabarmati Jail on the same

4 My Notes: Bardoli-Anand, Navajivan, January 15 1922, (CWMG vol.22,192)
5 My Notes: About National Schools, Navajivan, February, 12 1922, CWMG vol.22: 391.
6 The constructive work which gives the movement stability cannot be felt. It has to be observed by seeing the work that is silently but surely going on in thousands of homes. He will find it in swadeshi, in the spinning-wheel. India will be permanently organized to the extent that hand-spinning is organized.'Notes: "Already Free", YI, January 12 1922, CWMG vol.22: 160.
7 'Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of civil non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation (which can only be temporary) of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes.' 'Non-payment of taxes', YI, January 26 1922, CWMG vol.22: 264.
8 'If you want to get credit for securing swaraj for the whole of India, if you wish to save the honour of Bardoli, you will have to spin in your taluka more yarn, and of finer quality, than you are doing at present. 'Speech at Bardoli taluka conference', January 29 1922, CWMG vol.22: 288.
day, he told Indulal Yagnik, ‘Place Khadi in my hands and I shall place Swaraj in yours’.9

Throughout the period of non-co-operation a spate of government sponsored bans came to confront those who wore Khadi caps either out of patriotism or convenience. Khadi caps became a site of conflict between loyalty to the Empire and patriotism to the country. At many places, the innocuous Khadi cap, popularly called as Gandhi Cap, became an issue of contention. As the Young India reported in January 1922, a European youth shot dead a Muslim Indian for the offence of wearing a Khadi cap.10 The Chief Justice of Bombay High-Court issued a ban on pleaders wearing ‘Gandhi Cap’ while appearing before the Judge. Any breach of the order drew consequences as of Contempt of Court.11 Some of the government departments took stringent measures as to suspend or remove employees. In March 1921, at Jubbalpore, one railway department prohibited its employees from wearing white caps!12 Then, the Central Province government decreed against wearing of such caps.13 The Collector of Allahabad disbanded the government employees from donning, in Gandhi’s words, 'beautiful, light, inoffensive caps'.14 These instances

9 Interview to Indulal Yagnik, March 11 1922, CWMG vol.23: 86.
10 'The shooting of a Mussulman youth by a European 'youth' (are European youths armed?) for the crime of wearing or selling (whichever it was) a khaki cap, cannot be passed by in silence. We must avenge the wrong if necessary by inviting the shooting on our own heads.' 'Next is Gunpowder, YI, January 12 19922, CWMG vol.22: 175.
11 'It shows how innocent but moral and economic movements are attempted to be killed by their adversaries.' 'Notes: Ban on Khadi Cap', YI, December 15 1921, CWMG vol.22: 15.
12 'To make temperance a crime would be only a step removed from making the wearing of white caps a crime. And yet I heard whilst at Jubbalpore that the servants of a railway department were prohibited from wearing white caps!' 'Notes: White Cap a Crime', YI, March 30 1921, CWMG vol.19: 487.
13 'The wearing of white caps by Government servants has been officially regarded as a crime in the Central Provinces, and the decision has been publicly endorsed in the C.P. Council. The doctrine laid down by that Government is most servile and dangerous. If the white cap is the badge of the non-co-operation party, the use of khadi may be equally regarded as such and penalized. And thus may swadeshi become a sin in the Government dictionary. Foreign cloth was forced upon India two hundred years ago. The attempt has now commenced forcibly to prevent India from reverting to swadeshi. Any well-meaning Government sensitive to public opinion would have encouraged the use of khadi by its servants. I deny that the use of the white cap is any sign of non-co-operation. I know many who are averse to non-co-operation and yet have adopted the white khadi cap as a convenience and as a symbol of swadeshi.' 'Notes: The White Cap in the CP, YI, August 11 1921, CWMG vol.20: 487.
14 I have read a notice issued by the Collector of the Allahabad District that Government servants must not wear the Gandhi cap. I would advise every Government servant to wear these beautiful light, inoffensive caps, and brave dismissal and even imprisonment. If a spinning-wheel can by
illustrated that increasingly in the country Khadi wearing was becoming a crime. Respectable young men had their khadi vests and caps torn from them, and had to witness those being burnt. One man had his cap spat into, and was then forced to wear it.\textsuperscript{15}

As the non-cooperation movement unfolded, its bare simplicity required practical men and women to adopt twin credo of spin and court imprisonment. And once in prison, spin there too. Many a cases were reported of imprisoned activists taking to protest when denied of the spinning wheel. Through a network of political workers spread over the length and breadth of the country acting as correspondents, the editor Gandhi marshaled facts and figures to show a crumbling government resorting to repression through arrests and bans. In Calcutta, a batch of women selling Khadi to the commuters was arrested on a charge of obstructing the highway. Among the arrested were the wife and sister of C.R.Das.\textsuperscript{16} But this arrest presented a model of action for other women in different parts of the country. In response, respectable society women took to hawking Khadi on the roads.\textsuperscript{17} In Amritsar, like at numerous other places, people carrying out procession in support of Khadi movement, were asked by authorities to disperse, and when refused, were beaten mercilessly.\textsuperscript{18} In Andhra, Venkatappaya, was put into jail. His only crime was his effort at popularizing Khadi.\textsuperscript{19}

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\textsuperscript{15}Respectable young men have had their Khadi vests and caps torn from them, and had to witness their being burnt. 'Notes: The Crime of Wearing Khadi', \textit{YI}, September 22 1921, CWMG vol.21: 171.

\textsuperscript{16}The women of India should have as much share in winning swaraj as men. Probably in this peaceful struggle woman can outdistance man by many a mile.' 'Women's Part', \textit{YI}, December 15 1921, CWMG vol.22: 21.

\textsuperscript{17}I cannot conceive any better occupation for ladies especially, besides, hand-spinning than popularizing khadi by hawking it themselves. It is fine training in throwing off false pride or false modesty. And it is a most harmless challenge to the police to arrest them if they dare.' 'Notes: Selling Khadi', \textit{YI}, December 22 1921, CWMG vol.22: 71.

\textsuperscript{18}Notes: Remarkable Proof', December 22 1921, CWMG vol.22: 74.

\textsuperscript{19}He was put into jail, but so far as he could see there was nothing against him except this crime of making the use of khaddar very popular among the people. Government was now afraid of such people and by book or by crook it was trying to put such people into jail.' 'Speech at Inauguration of Khadi Exhibition', Bombay, July 31 1921, CWMG vol.20: 453.
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In 1921, rattled by sustained movement against the foreign cloth, various provincial governments and the central government took counter-offensive measures. Provincial governments resorted to official dictates to repress rising emotion. In Bihar, a magistrate actually sent hawkers to sell foreign cloth. In Dharwar the local government issued an official circular in which it was said:

All officers subordinate to the Collector and District Magistrate are desired to take steps to make people realize, that inasmuch as India produces less than her population requires, a boycott of foreign cloth and its destruction or export must inevitably lead to a serious rise in prices, which may lead to a serious disorder and looting, and that these consequences will be the result, not of any action on the part of Government but of Mr. Gandhi's campaign.

The communiqué also suggested other means and ways by which Swadeshi movement could be effectively combated. It invited meetings of dealers opposed to Swadeshi. These were indirect pressures on dealers to refrain them from countenancing the boycott agenda.20 A resolution recommending improved spinning wheels to stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving was introduced in Madras Council. The resolution was debated and then summarily defeated. The nays argued that Khadi was not just economically non-viable but it lacked the qualities of a wearable fabric. Not just the hand-spun yarn was weak; the whole idea of hand-spinning was technologically deficient. It was said that any expenditure of public money over the failed enterprise of hand-spinning was criminal.21

The cudgel against the Khadi was limited not just to the Legislatures. It also took the form of aggressive pamphleteering. The Bihar government's publicity department issued vernacular leaflets giving reasons why foreign cloth need not be boycotted.22 It enumerated many reasons against the nationalist call:

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20 'The meaning of these circulars is obvious Pressure is to be put upon the dealers and others not to countenance boycott.' Notes: How to Kill Swadeshi?, YI, September 1 1921, CWMG vol.21: 33.
21 'Notes: Charkha in Madras Council', YI, December 22 1921, CWMG vol.22: 83.
22 'The system is designed to drain India dry and perpetuate the foreign yoke in the interest of the foreign capitalist, chiefly the Lancashire manufacturer. But for this selfishness running through every department, the circular I have translated will be an impossibility. The most natural thing that a national government will do will be to multiply handlooms and spinning-wheels, and flood the market with plenty of hand-spun. A national government will prevent the mill-owners from unduly raising prices, a national government would take advantage of the glorious upheaval to
India's production neither matched its need nor was its capacity sufficient
Habituated in fine foreign apparels, Indians would spurn coarse Khadi
Even Indian mills use foreign yarn for weaving fine cloth
Consumers shall be worse affected as during Swadeshi Movement in 1905
Consumers benefit by low price as competition pit foreign and Indian fabric
Hand-spinning pay peanuts; handloom weaves little
Civil chaos might unfold under the contradiction of boycott.

The Government of India went a step ahead and financed publication of a bulletin on Indian Piece-Goods Trade prepared by one A. C. Coubrough. It however played safe by distancing itself from the contents. In its introductory note it wrote that the 'statement made and the views expressed in the bulletin are those of the author himself'. But it did not escape the notice of the nationalists that its publication was financially supported by the government. The views in the bulletin went against the founding tenets of Khadi Movement. It argued that the Khadi Movement would fuel a prohibitive tariff and therefore shall enrich Indian Capitalist at the cost of the consumers. There was no competition between imported and indigenous fabric as they both catered to distinct tastes [there is contradictory claims by Indian and Bihari governments]. The boycott only raised the prices and benefited Indian capitalists. The destruction of the spinning wheel was the inevitable outcome of advancing technology which mercilessly obsoletes those who fail to keep pace. The farmers' ruin was the product of his neglect of once flourishing cotton culture in the country. What Gandhi was to do was to induce the agriculturists to undertake improved cotton cultivation. The report concluded patronizingly when it said:

If instead of filling homes with useless charkhas he were to start a propaganda for the more intensive cultivation of cotton and particularly for the production of longer-staple cotton, his influence would be felt not only at the present day but for many generations to come.23

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23 'That the Government of India treats the greatest constructive and co-operative movement in the country with supreme contempt and devotes people's money to a vain refutation instead of a sympathetic study and treatment is perhaps the best condemnation that can be pronounced upon..."
Gandhi saw insults inherent in such government decrees as more humiliating for the nation than the physical oppression. In his devastating indictment, Gandhi wrote: Under the rule of Ravana, keeping a picture of Vishnu in one's house was an offence. It should not be surprising if in this Ravanarajya wearing a white cap or not using foreign cloth, or plying the spinning-wheel came to be considered as offences. In repressive gestures of the government there was a fear of such people. He wrote 'by book or by crook it was trying to put such people into jail. It was, therefore, our duty to go to jail wearing pure white khaddar.' In the wake of Moplah violence, Khadi movement in Malabar received a crippling setback. The declaration of martial law provided an opportunity to the Government to suppress the Khadi movement. Government soldiers tore away Khadi clothes worn by people. Khadi caps, spinning-wheels, etc., were among the things forcefully burnt. The result was that Khadi caps and spinning-wheels, which used to be displayed in the shops of Calicut disappeared. Gandhi admonished Malabaris for allowing their clothes to be torn and burnt. It was cowardly, he said. 'We ought to be ready always to lay down our lives for Swadeshi and should display greater zeal for popularizing Khadi.' It was a religious duty.

In establishing communication with his compatriot, Gandhi was creating a space that was autonomous of the government. His campaign meant to widen this autonomous space untrammeled by the fear, favor, and obligation. His medium was spinning wheel. 'Spinning wheel is for India, what machine-gun is for British.' And

25 'Notes: Ban on White Cap', Navajivan, March 27 1921, CWMG vol.19: 482.
26 'Speech at Inauguration of Khadi Exhibition', Bombay, July 31 1921, CWMG vol.20: 453.
27 'The declaration of martial law has given an excellent opportunity to the Government to suppress the Swadeshi movement. It is said that, with the declaration of martial law, khadi clothes worn by people were torn away and thrown into fire. Khadi caps, spinning-wheels, etc., were among the things burnt. The result was that khadi caps and spinning-wheels, which used to be displayed in the shops of Calicut, had disappeared in one day. These do not mind wearing khadi but they still do not have the strength to die. Hence, out of fear, they forsook khadi and the spinning-wheel. We have an important lesson to learn from this. We wear khadi and put on a khadi cap as a matter of religious duty. It should be impossible for anyone, with threats and intimidation, to make us give them up.' 'My Notes: Moplah Riots', Navajivan, September 25 1921, CWMG vol.21: 204.
28 'He did not want them to possess these charkhas and to worship them but to take the same work from them which, as Mr. Mohamed Ali said in one of his speeches, the British Government took from machine-guns.' 'Reply to Address at Allahabad Conference', May 10 1921, CWMG vol.20: 85.
then again, 'Whether we advertise the fact or not, the moment we cease to support the Government, it dies a natural death.' But he perceived opposition from the government. He wrote to Andrews about this: 'The present activity of the Government fills me with unutterable distress. India is passing through a wave of purity. The people want to do away with the drink and the opium traffic. The Government is doing its best to thwart the purpose. People want to be simple. A subtle attempt is being made to prevent it. But I think the tide cannot be turned. It must go on.'

Gandhi's views on machinery have attracted reams of critical appraisal. It has been said that he was backward looking as far as science and technology is concerned. Gandhi's own opinion was that increased application of machinery would keep the human race in 'permanent slavery'. Gandhi envisioned a time when machine would fall to disuse owing to man's own weariness from its 'maddening speed'. His opposition to machinery was more to do with quality of its end-use. '...whether these machines will be such as would blow off a million men in a minute or they will be such as would turn waste lands into arable and fertile land.' He was categorically opposed to the manufacture of labour saving machinery that could jeopardize livelihood potential of people. His opposition too was India specific. In answering to charge that he was conspiring against the mills and manufacturing industry for their closure, Gandhi said, 'Opposition to mills or machinery is not the point. What suits our country most is the point.'

29 'Notes: India and the British Committee', YJ, January 19 1921, CWMG vol.19: 236.
30 Letter to CF Andrews, March 21 1921, (CWMG vol.19,462)
31 Letter to Manilal Gandhi, After June 1 1919, (CWMG vol.15,340)
32 'Pure swadeshi is not at all opposed to machinery. The swadeshi movement is meant only against the use of foreign cloth. There is no objection to weaving mill-made cloth. But I do not myself wear mill-made cloth and in the explanations to the swadeshi vow I have certainly suggested that it should be the ideal of every Indian to wear hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. If, fortunately for India, crores of people happen to translate this ideal into practice, the mills may perhaps have to suffer some loss. But if the whole of India makes that pure resolve, I am sure that even our mill-owners would welcome that resolve, respect its purity and associate themselves with it. I am not opposed to the movement of manufacturing machines in the country, nor to making improvements in machinery. I am only concerned with what these machines are meant for. I may ask, in the words of Ruskin, whether these machines will be such as would blow off a million men in a minute or they will be such as would turn waste lands into arable and fertile land. And if legislation were in my hands, I would penalize the manufacture of [labour-saving] machines and protect the industry which manufactures nice ploughs which can be handled by every man.' Swadeshi V. Machinery? YJ, September 17 1919, (CWMG vol.16, 135)
Keeping this ideal in view, Gandhi did not favor alteration in the design or technology of indigenous loom till it was patiently tried out and that too when it was found necessary to introduce alteration.33 This line of argument was misunderstood and he began to be seen as someone abhorring scientific quest. But he was also aware that the success of his movement depended on simple and quick-working machines for ginning cotton, on making carding easy, and enhancing the yield of spinning wheel and the loom. Gandhi therefore sought to correct the prevailing misconception. Technological improvements were inevitable, he argued. It should however be qualified with the twin criterias of suitability and simplicity. The suitability in spinning wheel required raised production for the same rpm so that spinners’ income could increase. This very fact would be enough to let the movement gather momentum. With the money offered by Rwashankar Jagjivan Mehta, his old benefactor, Gandhi instituted an award of Rs. 5000 for the best invention of ‘suitable’ spinning machine.34 Even prior to the institution of the award giving cash-prize, there were sporadic reports of artisans working on the improved wheel. Some aimed at durability and portability of the wheel, while others worked to improve the yarn output per rpm by increasing number of spindles. At Broach a two-spindle spinning wheels was plying.35 In Punjab, a craftsman from Ludhiana made a ten-spindle spinning wheel. It’s only drawback despite being ‘simple and cheap’ was that it was incapable of spinning on all the spindles simultaneously.36

In July, 1920, Ganesh Bhaskar Kale of Dharwar, announced a new spinning wheel that met the specifications required by the prize. Gandhi was particularly excited at the prospect. 'In a short-time', Gandhi declared enthusiastically, 'India will possess a renovated spinning-wheel—a wonderful invention of a patient Deccan artisan.'37 Kale claimed that it was made of cheap and simple material, lacked

34 In 1930s, the prize was again announced for the most suitable Charkha. This time money was one lakh rupee and competition was open to all, including foreign nationals. When AISA announced a contest worth rupees one lakh for a speedier Charkha that also fulfilled other required criteria, it was seen as an admission of basic economic error in Khadi movement. The competition was open not just to Indian nationals but even to those from abroad. CWMG vol. 42: 196
35 Notes: Spinning Wheel, Navajivan, October 5 1919, CWMG vol.16: 217.
complication, gave more yarn per rpm, and was pliant to any age-group or gender. Gandhi instructed Maganlal to write a biographical note of the inventor, name the wheel as 'Gangabai Spinning Wheel' and in case of disagreements, after Kale himself, and apply for patent.\(^{38}\) Gandhi hoped to employ Kale's invention to enhance the quality of yarn produced and experimented with its efficiency and capacity to run for eight hours at a stretch.\(^{39}\) Euphoria, however, was short-lived as report later indicated shelving of Kale's machine.\(^{40}\) In the beginning of 1921, he found another machine at Surat invented by a student who had dropped out of school and joined non-co-operation. The model used less wood and ensured more revolution. Maganlal was asked to examine this 'one-and-a-half-rupee spinning wheel'.\(^{41}\)

Punjab with its mastery over the spinning wheel captivated Gandhi. Punjabi women were expert in spinning. Spinning wheel was said to be present in almost all the homes. While touring Punjab, Gandhi found designer spinning wheels made of a variety of ebony. Their handles were made on the lathe and were skilfully designed and painted. Some were very artistically made. Expensive models had handles inlaid with ivory. Some had small mirrors in their wheels while others had small tinkle-bells. The price of the spinning-wheel had doubled within six months. Generally a good painted spinning-wheel carried a price tag of about Rs. 15/-. The demand for spinning-wheels was so great that the craftsmen were unable to meet it.\(^{42}\)

There was one called Gandiva spinning-wheel about which Maganlal first commented unfavourably in Navjivan. It was innovated by Shankarlal. On further

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38 'Do not delay the application for the patent.' Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, After July 18 1920, (CWMG vol.18,62)

39 Discussion aboard The "Gurkha", December 16 1920, (CWMG vol.19,130)

40 In 1934, Kale's machine raised its head again with Kirloskar backing. Gandhi was reluctant but was persuaded by friends to test the machine himself. The search for most suitable spinning-wheel was qualified by certain requirements: The conditions were: easy portability, capable of being worked by hand or by foot in an ordinary Indian village cottage, availability at a price not exceeding Rs. 150, machine's life for more than twenty years. The construction of the machine should be substantial and capable of being used, say, 20 years, with occasional repair. The replacement charges of wearing parts should be reasonable and may not exceed 5% of the cost of the machine per year. Kirloskar's machine while having a longevity was lacking in easy mobility and portable technology.\(^{40}\) (Letter to Satish Chandra Dasgupta, November 13 1934, CWMG vol. 59: 336; also CWMG vol. XLI: 242.) Gandhi however wrote Kirloskar to send the machine (Letter to Kirloskar Brothers, November 24 1934, CWMG vol. 59: 399)

41 Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, March 16 1921, (CWMG vol.19,438)

42 My last visit to the Punjab, Navajivan, March 20 1921, CWMG vol.19,454

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introduction of the spinning wheel could uplift the poor from their sad existence. 'No other industry can solve the problem of the mass poverty in India.' When Malviya argued that it was beyond the power of Indians to dethrone British, Gandhi differed. 'I believe that every man or woman has in him or her necessary strength for winning Swaraj.' The power of conviction unleashed by Gandhi would take many a hue that in a year or so would surprise many a skeptic.

One of the key to Non-co-operation movement was the boycott of councils. Other aspects of non-co-operation asked for withdrawal from government supported educational institutions, law-courts, and giving up recognition of the government. The call for council-boycott was opposed by many a stalwarts of the Congress. Even the plea that the elected members would use their lung-power and representative character to obstruct the Council work did not appeal to Gandhi. Instead his emphasis was 'not for futile obstruction in the legislative council but for real substantial non-cooperation which would paralyse the mightiest government on earth.'

All that demanded sacrifices and had a measure of suffering inherent in them. But suffering and sacrifices were asked from those who were economically privileged, and enjoyed governmental patronage and professions. It was this class of people who were also the target of Khadi—strip fineries, adopt coarse—campaign. Thus, in the name of national reconstruction and development, in the name of Swaraj, it was the upper crust that was implored to sacrifice their comfort, privilege and profession, their titles and council-membership. The lowest bottom inhabiting at the margins of starvation and leading a life of eternal scarcity, contrary to post-independence developmental experience, were not asked for the sacrifice. Amin contends that in keeping the subalterns as mere spectators, Gandhi played to a

54 Letter to C F Andrews, March 2 1921, CWMG vol.19: 395
55 Speech on Creed Resolution at Plenary Session of Congress, December 28 1920 CWMG vol.19,165
56 Non-cooperation and the Special Congress, August 12 1920, CWMG vol.18, 148
57 'No nation', Gandhi said in a speech delivered at Chowpatty, Bombay, on April 6 1919, 'has risen without sacrifice. No country has ever risen, no nation has ever been made without sacrifice, and we are trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in any shape or form. This is satyagraha.' CWMG vol.15: 186.
comprador’s composition. But he misses a vital point. Gandhi’s demand of sacrifices from the affording class is symbolic of extremely progressive thinking. It was Gandhi’s way of breaking the rich and educated class’ complicity in exploitation and arousing them to their national responsibility. It is another matter that despite creating a rebellious and fearless environment around the country by his call, as the report card made by various evaluators would later suggest, the movement attracted very few of those who actually were targeted by the call. The non-co-operation movement died, as Gandhi had predicted at the time of its launch, due to the ‘poverty of response’.

Gandhi had perhaps anticipated Amin’s charge but his reasons were different. Seen with the hindsight of post-independent plethora of development induced displacement of voiceless and marginalized people, legitimized in the interest of the nation, his stand admitted of a hierarchy in capabilities to sacrifice. Speaking in August 1920, Gandhi warned of the consequences if ‘classes’ failed to abide by the first step towards withdrawal of cooperation. ‘...if they fail in this primary duty, they will certainly fail in non-cooperation unless the masses themselves reject the classes and take up non-co-operation in their own hands ... leaving aside the leaders .... I want no revolution. I want ordered progress.’ This ‘ordered progress’ was only possible when the politicized section of the population, the literates, the middle class, take to suffering and sacrifices. It is they who had hitherto represented the mute millions to the government; it is they who had put forth demands, clothed as national aspirations,

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59 Latest and at popular level to talk of plight of India’s displaced has been Arundhati Roy. Others like Kothari, Smriti (1996). Whose Nation? The Displaced as Victims of Development, Economic and Political Weekly, June 15, pp.1476-1485. have been writing for long. Fernandez and others too.
60 The Doctrine of the Sword, YI, August 8 1920, CWMG vol.18,134
61 'The novel (Ghare-Baire) suggests that a nationalism which steam-rollers society into making a uniform stand against colonialism, ignoring the unequal sacrifices imposed thereby on the poorer and the weaker, will tear apart the social fabric of the country, even if it helps to formally decolonize the country.' Nandy, Ashis; The Illegitimacy of Nationalism, p19. But dependency is more of the politically aware class than of the poorer section whose direct benefit accruing from colonialism is almost negligible.
62 'Speech on Non-cooperation', Madras, August 12 1920, CWMG vol.18: 152.
to the government. Gandhi therefore directed his appeal to this population for the success of the first phase of the non-co-operation.63

But, Gandhi was soon to realize the folly of his presumptuous assumptions. The reality of this 'politicized class' confronted him during his nation-wide tireless tour to garner support and opinion in favour of non-co-operation. To his shock, Gandhi found that the people were not least enthused to abjure schools, law-courts, or Councils—'three infatuations',64 he called. He faced vociferous opposition to his idea of council-boycott, mainly from the aspiring politicians who wanted to enter the expanded Council.65

It was an ironical situation. As his popularity—propelled by a combination of mystique, moral, and charisma—peaked among the 'masses', his programme of non-cooperation contained little possibility of action for them. While his political base made quantum leap to sub-continental proportion among the illiterate and rustic rural masses, he demanded political action from the literates, the minuscule but powerful middleclass. The first phase of the non-cooperation, as Gandhi tirelessly reiterated, was directed to the 'politicized class'. To the newly emerging middle class, their very political awareness was a ladder to the upward-mobility and professional success. Given the restricted representation that was allowed at the time, reaching the rarefied environment of the Council was the realization of ultimate social achievement. Gandhi was to painfully realize that his political colleagues lacked faith in the non-cooperation or capacity for sacrifice and suffering, or sincerity of purpose. What he termed three infatuations were the three most developed channels of upward mobility available in a restricted colonial environment. The non-cooperation, despite getting mass sanction, was tossed around and failed to achieve its objective. But the fearless language that Gandhi used and the mass adulation he received created a climate in the

63 'But the class, to which the first stage of non-co-operation is intended to appeal, is the political class which has devoted years to politics and is not mentally unprepared for communal sacrifice.' Boycott of Goods V. Non-cooperation Programme, 11, August 25 1920, CWMG vol.18: 198.

64 'As I tour the country, I realize more and more that the people are greatly in love with Government schools, practice in law-courts and legislatures.' Three Infatuations, Navajivan August 29 1920, CWMG vol.18: 207.

65 Gandhi's imprisonment in 1922 debarred him from contesting election for Council. His name had been struck off from Inner Temple rolls, disqualifying his eligibility for law-practice. CWMG vol.27: 2
country that bore rebellious premonition. Masses had their sense perception and understood Gandhi’s message in their unique way.66

Gandhi was severe against Political violence and brook no concession. No selfish consideration motivated him as the first casualty to any such conflagration could have been his national leadership. Gandhi was cautious as prior to Congress approval, the most vicious disapproval of non-cooperation programme he had to face was based on the threat of violence breaking out. His earlier Satyagraha on Rowlatt Bills had ended up in the burst of violence and Gandhi had admitted his ‘Himalayan miscalculation’. He firmly believed in the efficacy of non-violent non-cooperation and therefore he needed to assuage the aggrieved concerns of the established politicians. It was also his deep intrinsic knowledge that in situation where violence bore freedom the power instead of going to the masses would concentrate into the barrel of the gun and its bearer, unsettling the agenda of power to people for ever perhaps. The non-violent non-cooperation movement was therefore an attempt to awaken the masses to a sense of their power.67 In the project to achieve power for the people, he was ready to underplay his own role. ‘I wish to see all fanciful notions about me dispelled. I want people to know that I am but a small creature. I see nothing but hammer to the people and to me in my being looked upon as a giant. I shall not mind if people believe that my calculations have been wrong. Instead of their believing that they got anything through my strength, it is much better that they should believe every achievement to be the result of their own tapascharya and self-purification.’


67 Such an understanding was inherent among the nationalist leadership is shown by Subhas Bose’s presidential address at the Maharashtra Provincial Conference, Poona, on 3 May 1928. He said: ‘Mass consciousness has been roused in India, thanks to the extensive and intensive propaganda undertaken during the non-cooperation movement; and the mass movement can not possibly be checked now. The only question is along what lines this mass consciousness should manifest itself. If the Congress neglects the masses it is inevitable that a sectional—and if I may say so, anti-national movement will come into existence and class—war among our people will appear even before we have achieved our political emancipation. It would be disastrous in the highest degree if we were to launch class war while we are all bed-fellows in slavery, in order that we may afford amusement to the common enemy.’ “Democracy in India” in The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Edited by Sisir K. Bose and Sugata Bose, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997. p85.
But ironically the content of his appeal focused more at the abstract notions of identity, self-respect, honour, dignity, justice etc.\textsuperscript{68} These were inspired from the insult of Rowlatt, wounded honour of Punjab, and the betrayal of Khilafat—subjects of concern more for ‘politicized class’ than for millions of masses who were more or less perceived to be ‘dumb, driven cattle’.\textsuperscript{69} The crux of political demagoguery during non-co-operation was drawn from the hurt sentiment of national identity which catered more to ‘politicized class’. For the masses there was the regenerative agenda under the generic term of constructive work which included spinning and weaving. It was only during later movements that Gandhi would openly incorporate the issues that really mattered at the grassroots and to the masses.

Given Gandhi’s moral call, inevitably, a simple garment of Khadi got burdened by the conflicting mores of economics and morality. In someway he always equated Khadi wearing with virtue and purity. It got identified as the fabric of morality, its donning conveyed virtues in the wearer. How fair was the idea of investing Khadi with value-loaded meanings? People were perturbed by the hypocrisy of those who wore Khadi and brandished their moral superiority. The wrongful and self-serving exploitation of Khadi’s moral attributes made others question the validity of investing excessive attributes to it. The generated national sentiments would have been held at ransom by those who used Khadi as ‘a cloak for their deceit’. For Gandhi, however, anyone taking to Khadi served the ‘greatest economic necessity’ irrespective of the wearer’s instinct. The attributes of Khadi would have jeopardized its economics.\textsuperscript{70} Gandhi therefore was quick to point out that divesting Khadi of its moral content by those who abused its attached conception was a transitional problem when Khadi was beginning to gain an acceptance. ‘It is enough if the aversion to Khadi disappears and beauty is seen even in Khadi. Just as it would not be right to attribute

\textsuperscript{68} ‘Speech on Non-co-operation’, Madras, August 12 1920, CWMG vol.18: 145-8.

\textsuperscript{69} ‘Non-co-operation is an attempt to awaken the masses to a sense of their dignity and power. This can only be by enabling them to realize that they need not fear brute force if they would but know the soul within.’ ‘Advice’, YI, December 1 1920, CWMG vol. 19: 56.

\textsuperscript{70} ‘A friend draws attention to the fact that many who have adopted the khaddar costume are using it as a passport for arrogance, insolence, and, what is worse, fraud. They simply use the khaddar dress as a cloak for their deceit. The use of khaddar represents nothing more than a most practical recognition of the greatest economic necessity of the country. Even a scoundrel may recognize this necessity, and has, therefore, a perfect right to wear it. Notes: Abusing the Khaddar, YI, February 9 1921, CWMG vol.19: 337.
trials it was found to give the same results as the Ashram model. Maganlal Gandhi revised his opinion about it and said that, after further trials with it, he had found it useful. The model cost only one and a half rupees. Gandhi also advised Maganlal to consider the size of the Punjab spinning-wheel which seemed to be the ideal wheel to him. Gandhi was astonished to see the results Punjabis obtained. He marveled at the specimens of fine cloth. He saw a spinning-wheel of the weight of ten rupee coins, about a quarter pound that produced extremely fine yarn.43

An improved spinning wheel with many spindles was exhibited at the Ahmedabad Congress in 1921. It was perhaps most successful of the all efforts hitherto made. Gandhi however was cautious and warned the public to not waste their energy and time waiting for a ‘revolutionary Charkha’. Instead, he called for all the energy to be devoted towards making ‘the ancient pattern more durable and cheap and portable.’44 But that did not exclude innovation or scientific quest. Maganlal was told to ‘find out the difference between the method of spinning which Lakshimidas teaches and that which you do, and adopt the one which is scientific.’45

In September 1921, a spinning-wheel exhibition was held in the National College, Calcutta. There were about fifteen types of new spinning-wheels. The ingenious devices they displayed were endless. A good many young men had been putting their talents to good use. Some of the spinning-wheels were beautiful indeed. Some were very small, so small that one could carry in a little box. One could be put in a chest while another was fitted with a musical instrument. Yet they lacked capacity to match the conventional type in producing yarn. Only consolation from the spate of spinning wheels that were being exhibited all across the country was that the spinning-wheel had now become popular and that improvements in the existing type were exercising the ingenuity of innumerable engineers.46

43 Latter to Maganlal Gandhi, April 2 1921, CWMG vol.19, 499
44 Notes: New Spinning Wheel, YI, January 19 1922, CWMG vol.22,226
45 Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, March 16 1921, CWMG vol.19,439
46 Bitter Experiences in Calcutta, Navajivan, September 18 1921, CWMG vol.21, 141
Conclusion

Non-cooperation emerged out of Khadi movement and not the vice-versa.\(^47\) The campaign's citadel was self. By transforming self one could transform one's social positioning.\(^48\) It included as much sartorial as ideological transformation. 'Swadeshi is your duty. Wear Khaddar. Non-Cooperation consists in doing all this', Gandhi spoke at Benaras.\(^49\) Non-cooperation was a programme of simultaneous dismantling of institutions propping up foreign rule, and to replace them with indigenous ones.\(^50\) If boycott of institutions affiliated with British rule was its destructive part, Khadi was its constructive agenda. It was a political movement demanding Swaraj. But Swaraj was not to be a project sponsored by a select few. It was to be an enterprise in which millions were to participate. In this enterprise therefore was required awakened self rather than sword. 'Do not draw the sword. Sheathe it. The sword will only cut our own throats.'\(^51\) If it was sword that won Swaraj, majority Indians must remain 'dumb, driven cattle'.\(^52\) Any such route that led to violent capture of the governing apparatus entailed permanent subservience of non-participating majority to the violent minority. Those advocating violent overthrow desired centralization of power in their being. 'Of course they will not admit this charge. They do not even know that their activities are bound to have this result.... By our experiment in non-violence, we show even to the poor that, if they choose, they can display the same strength of their soul as an emperor can through his.'\(^53\) The enfranchisement of the millions of Indian was possible if the necessity and the value of non-violence is recognized. If Indians resort to violence, it shall lead to greater slavery and misery.

That is why spinning was the alternative to sword. Spinning wheel was the weapon of non-violence. In a letter to Andrews, Gandhi asserted that only a re-

\(^{47}\) An Autobiography, Part V, CWMG vol.39: 383

\(^{48}\) The immediate aim of the non-cooperation movement was not 'protest but purification. Through self-purification, purification of the other party'. 'Discussion aboard the Gurkha', December 16 1920, CWMG vol. 19: 130.

\(^{49}\) Speech at Public Meeting, Banaras, November 26 1920, (CWMG vol. 19: 33)

\(^{50}\) Quoted in Nanda, B.R., In Gandhi's Footsteps: The Life and Times of Jamnalal Bajaj, p57.

\(^{51}\) Speech at Public Meeting, Banaras, November 26 1920, CWMG vol.19: 33

\(^{52}\) Notes: Advice, Yf, December 1 1920, CWMG vol.19: 56

\(^{53}\) My Disappointment, Navajivan, March 5 1922, CWMG vol.23: 9

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all virtues to Khadi, so also we should not be shocked when a person wearing Khadi disgraces Khadi by his misbehaviour.\textsuperscript{71}

All the nationalist effort and campaign did not lead to material progress which was the bed-rock of the Khadi movement. Moral progress it had undoubtedly achieved.\textsuperscript{72} To rate the Khadi movement on the scale of cloth production and consumption would be futile. Its material progress can not be gazed vis-à-vis total cloth production in the country. Or by the standard of its success at import-substitution. It has to be measured within the whole gamut of issues that took birth with the inauguration of the non-cooperation movement. What was the report-card of the programmes of non-cooperation movement? Materially they too would abysmally fail but morally as Nehru wrote would have wide-ranging and overwhelming impact. From that standard, the material progress of the Khadi was none the less inconsequential. By the time movement of the non-cooperation was launched in August 1920, the Swadeshi movement had already taken deeper roots in ‘Punjab, Madras and the Bombay Presidency’.\textsuperscript{73} Other states and regions joined in greater magnitude and with greater enthusiasm. In December 1921, Gandhi claimed that Bihar which had been unknown to Wheel and Khadi just eighteen months ago when the movement for Khadi was launched now had habitual wearers and spinners.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{71} ‘I would certainly say that one cannot show perfect patriotism unless one uses khadi, but it cannot be denied, either, that a person wearing khadi can be a C.I.D. man and that another not wearing khadi, either because he is too poor to do so or because he has not come to have faith in khadi, may yet be a patriot. Hence, we need not assume that a person wearing khadi is necessarily a patriot. We may believe that a person wearing khadi is likely to be a follower of swadeshi. It is enough if the aversion to khadi disappears. Just as it would not be right to attribute all virtues to khadi, so also we should not be shocked when a person wearing khadi disgraces khadi by his misbehaviour.’ ‘My Notes: Black mixing with white’, \textit{Navajivan}, February 10 1921, CWMG vol.19: 345.

\textsuperscript{72} ‘My observations lead me to the conclusion that whilst the inauguration of the three vows and swadeshi stores have greatly stimulated the swadeshi spirit, it is no longer possible to advocate the taking of any of the three vows or the opening of new swadeshi stores for the sale of mill-made cloth. The result of the propaganda has been to send up the prices of yarn and cloth rather than increase production. The gain therefore is merely moral and not material.’ ‘Swadeshi’, \textit{YI}, September 8 1920, CWMG vol.18: 238.

\textsuperscript{73} ‘Swadeshi’, \textit{YI}, September 8 1920, CWMG vol.18: 238.

\textsuperscript{74} ‘Notes: Response from Bihar’, \textit{YI}, December 22 1921, CWMG vol.22: 79.
Khadi Movement had caught the imagination of the people but it still needed 'a little effort, a little organizing agency and a little sacrifice'.

As the movement progressed, demand for wheels from all over the country poured in. It was a sign of success of Gandhi's sustained propaganda; it also was an evidence of its limitation. If the whole country was to look to Ashram for the wheel, it would be contrary to the principle of decentralization. Gandhi's emphasis on the technological simplicity of the wheel was drawn from the need to give impetus to the village manufacturing. It also very pertinently showed that the political activism of the time had yet to touch the artisan class of the country.

Much work was certainly done. Khadi had become popular and even fashionable. In many places the quality had also improved. There were many more spinning-wheels working, many new looms had been made. It could have been termed satisfactory. But Gandhi was not satisfied as the achievement was dismal as a war measure. He put the onus for the fiasco on the consumers. The consumer had been satisfied with a partial boycott. Most discarded only their caps. Neither the consumers helped manufacture. Only poor took to spinning. Women presented greater difficulty. They could not reconcile themselves to the change as readily as men. Gandhi did not expect dealers/merchants/mill-owners to court bankruptcy or forego profits for the country. 'It is foolish to expect any big sacrifices from the mill-owners. They will be the last, not the first, to wake up, and we should conduct our struggle on that assumption. To blame them on this ground is to blame human nature.' Therefore he exhorted the consumers to spin and adopt Khadi even if that meant bearing with heavy, unattractive clothes and paying disproportionately high price, if that so, for Khadi. Still Gandhi was hopeful. His hope was drawn from the overwhelming enthusiasm for Khadi that he witnessed while on his whirlwind tours. His assessment ended on optimistic note. Given little more time, it would be possible to organize the

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75 'The cleanest and the most popular form of swadeshi, therefore, is to stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving and to arrange for a judicious distribution of yarn and cloth so manufactured.' 'Swadeshi', YI, September 8 1920, CWMG vol.18: 239.

76 'The Spinning wheel Movement', Navajivan, February 6 1921, CWMG vol.19: 325.

77 'In the name itself, "khadi", there is no magic. The magic lies in its virtues. In appearance, too, it is not very attractive. We would have readily taken to hand-spun and hand-woven cloth if, instead of looking like khadi, it had the softness and the finish of muslin.' Pitfalls in Swadeshi', Navajivan, October 6 1921, CWMG vol.21: 255.
network, Gandhi inferred. That process would give India her much needed strength and tenacious resolve. 'And when we have found ourselves able to become self-contained without state aid regarding our cloth supply and have solved what had appeared to be an insoluble problem for the poverty of India, we shall have confidence in our ability to manage our own affairs.'

'Khadi has become much more popular and even fashionable. But the consumer has been satisfied with a partial boycott. He has given up his cap chiefly. In the matter of swadeshi the women presented greater difficulty. They could not reconcile themselves to the change so readily as men.' '30th September', YI, October 6 1921, CWMG vol.21: 253.