CHAPTER III

Swadeshi Ideology and the Working of Gandhian Politics in Andhra
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One of the questions that arises in any discussion on the handloom industry in India is the impact of foreign competition particularly the British on Indian handicrafts. This question is sought to be answered in this chapter by a detailed examination of the data relating the Andhra handloom industry. This sector was affected not only by cataclysmic economic changes that were wrought in the first half of the present century but also significantly by the nationalist movement and (in particular) the Gandhian ideology. This study is an attempt to explore the linkages between the Gandhian ideology, the Indian economy and the handloom production in Andhra.

The concept of Swadeshi as developed by Gandhi to become a major weapon in his anti colonial strategies had both political and economic dimensions. For Gandhi, Swadeshi centered around handspun khaddar and extended to everything that could be produced indigenously by the rural masses.

Swadeshi as a concept has been defined aptly by Sumit Sarkar in its specifically economic aspect as "a sentiment closely associated with many phases of Indian nationalism— that indigenous goods should be preferred by consumers even if they were more expensive than or inferior in quality to their imported industries and that it was the patriotic duty of men with capital to
pioneer such industries even though profits initially might be minimal or non-existent.\textsuperscript{1}

As against this definition, an imperialistic definition terms \textit{Swadeshi} to mean anything from the perfectly legitimate and commendable encouragement of Indian industry to the complete exclusion of foreign and especially English goods by a national and often forcible boycott as part of a political campaign against British rule.\textsuperscript{2}

The concept of \textit{Swadeshi} had a dual aspect to perform under the leadership of Gandhi: One, an ideological aspect and another an economic one. The problem of handloom industry although in essence was an economic one, had in reality two components: One 'human' and the other 'functional'. The human element consisted in fact, of a large number of people who were solely or mainly dependent on the hand-woven industry for their livelihood and were suffering from certain disabilities and hardships. The functional aspect was concerned with the situation wherein methods of producing handloom fabrics and their marketing during the nationalist phase became increasingly, uneconomic, unprogressive and was generally seen as unorganized.

This is linked up with the question of how Gandhi himself developed the idea of \textit{khadi} gradually. Earlier, his aim of providing only employment which would earn the weaver a minimum of three \textit{pies} a day, to the final stage of the weaver forming the \textit{apex/pinnacle} of the \textit{samagra seva} movement, is discussed in detail. What was the primary and final impact on technology or on the economic sub-structure and finally what was the ideological base

\textsuperscript{2}For further details see, Valentine Chirol, \textit{Indian Unrest}, Delhi, 1979, p. 254.
of Gandhi’s 'charisma? How did he resolve the various contradictory forces and their interplay during the period 1920-50? For example, the complex competition between the mills and the handloom, the All India Spinners' Association (hereafter AISA) Vis- a-Vis the Co-operative societies and between the dallals, middleman and the Congress?

With Gandhi’s entry into Indian politics after the First World War, a gauntlet was thrown not only to Hindu orthodoxy but also to the British authority. But shrewdly, he stressed political issues when he launched his Satyagraha campaigns against the imperial rule and raised social issues during periods of political dormancy. The khaddar movement also was in its full swing and had its most lasting impact during the periods between the two major movements, (i.e., Non Co-operation and the Civil Disobedience). Therefore, what is observed is that both for his political and social reform campaigns Gandhi tried to reconstruct tradition so as to the cause of reform. This could be mainly achieved, primarily due to his deep understanding of the nature and mode of discourse and structural constraints of the Hindu tradition. Traditional concepts such as 'satya', Swadeshi, 'bramhacharya' were imparted new meanings by Gandhi and thereby redefining the traditional institution. This transmutation of traditional concepts enabled him to make social and political campaigns intelligible to the teeming masses who could scarcely have been reached by an entirely new rationalist or modern terminology. Some of his interpreters claim that as a method Satyagraha itself contain positive elements of coercion’. The tools of Non Co-operation, boycott and strike which

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3 For a discussion on Gandhi as an essentially social and political reformer with a deep vein of humanism for whom ideas were merely tools for achieving certain given ends within a certain ethical framework, see, Bhikhu Parekh, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi’s Political discourse*, New Delhi, 1989.
were used in *Satyagraha* involved elements of compulsion which may have affected a change on the part of the opponent which is actually against his will.\(^4\)

Recent studies by the subaltern historians on Gandhian politics stress that, 'local subcontractors representing the lower middle class used long standing ties of domination to assemble the subaltern, that the peasants who responded to Gandhi's message put their own interpretations to it, and that their agitations and protests often threatened to go far beyond effective control of Gandhian leaders.\(^5\) Modern historiography has increasingly revealed the fact that the masses had their own politics, their own ways of resisting British rule and it was within these limits that they tried to adopt the message of Gandhi, with the variations over geographical and social space.\(^6\)

Weavers as a social community in parts of the subcontinent had their own images and interpretations of colonial authority and myriad ways in which these workers moulded their actions and dynamics of functioning. This is precisely what is explored in this chapter. What is significant to note is the meticulous details of the methods in which Gandhi was able to forge political linkages on local and on regional levels. Recent writers stress that Gandhi was able to fuse the traditional Hindu image of saintliness with the


Another view projects Gandhi's modern values as being ensconced in a traditional garb, "a re-reading of Indian culture in a totally ahistorical way, but extremely creative fashion."\footnote{8}{For further reference on this see, Irfan Habib, "Gandhi and national movement", Social Scientist, Vol. 23, Nos. 4-6, April-June 1995, pp. 3-15.} Ashis Nandy takes the argument further to explain Gandhian views by saying that his stress on austerity and pacifism did not come so much from the traditional Indian principles of renunciation and monism as from a deep seated early Christian belief in the superiority of the culture of the victims of oppression and from an effort to identify with the more humane cultural strain within a oppressive system. "All his life Gandhi sought to free the British as much as the Indian from the clutches of imperialism and the brahmins as much as the untouchables from caste system". He concludes that such a position was very much akin to forms of Marxism and Christianity.\footnote{9}{There is another facet to this argument. In retrospect, we see that Gandhi innovated a novel technique of revolution with which on one hand he undermined the might of the imperial raj and at the same time preached love to this imperial opponent. This thought of Gandhi can be traced back to his early foundations built by his reading of the Bhagvad gita. Though it is observed that some of his views also stemmed from western thought, Gandhi was thoroughly disillusioned with western civilization and all that it portrayed. Gandhi's views on this were set out in one of the articles in the Hind Swaraj in 1909 and Indian Opinion, 2 October 1909; See his Collected Works, (hereafter CW), Vol. X, p. 389. See also Ashis Nandy, "Oppressed and Human Liberation: Towards a post Gandhian Utopia", in Thomas Panther Kenneth Deutsch (ed.). Political Thought in Modern India, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 347-59.}

Having argued that the decay of indigenous industries lay at the root of Indian poverty, the nationalists naturally made reorganization, rehabilitation and modernization of handicrafts an important part of their programme for checking further regression
in the material conditions of the people and for the economic revival of the country.\textsuperscript{10} Gopal Rao Deshmukh of Poona was the first Indian public man to advocate as early as 1849 in the columns of the \textit{Prabhakar} the use of Indian products in place of imported ones.\textsuperscript{11}

By the 1870s the concept of \textit{Swadeshi} started gathering a momentum- with emphasis on the promotion of the use of indigenous manufactured goods. In 1872 M. G. Ranade delivered a series of public lectures at Poona on economic issues propagating the use of goods produced in one's country even though they may prove to be dearer or less satisfactory than finer foreign products.\textsuperscript{12}

This agitation for \textit{Swadeshi} was given a fresh lease in 1896 when the whole country protested against the countervailing excise duties on Indian cloth and received a fresh impetus after the partition of Bengal in 1905. The view stressed was that Indians should unite irrespective of their religion or other differences and "wake up to the national cause by abjuring the use of Lancashire cloth."\textsuperscript{13} Interesting and significant to note, was the fact that the notion of protecting indigenous handicrafts against the severe competition with native machine manufacturers found no place in this phase of \textit{Swadeshi} agitation.\textsuperscript{14}

By 1907-08, the emphasis on \textit{Swadeshi} efforts was beginning to shift away from industrial production towards banking, insurance and inland trade where profits seemed much easier to make and capital correspondingly less shy. Therefore, \textit{Swadeshi}


\textsuperscript{12}Bipan Chandra, \textit{The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India}, p. 129.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.
ideas as propagated from mainly the economic point of view did not gain the support of every sector. The industrialist class for example, was opposed to these ideas of Swadeshi clashing with their entrepreneurial needs and they found it to be an unnecessary waste of public energy and this discontent found expression in their lack of total support to the movement.\textsuperscript{15}

The nineteenth century therefore increasingly witnessed the demand for rapid industrialization as a compensation assuming national proportions all over the country. No single newspaper or public worker denied the advantages to be gained by promoting Western technology in India.\textsuperscript{16}

As early as 1900 there was only one voice raised against this mad rush to industrialize. Satish Chandra Mukherjee the Editor of the \textit{Dawn} had the foresight to visualize that it would produce small, highly organized minorities of the capitalist class that would reduce the millions of workers into mere machines and wage slaves and lead the workers to combine in gigantic labour organization that were bound to be permanent social and political dangers in a country as vast as India. The remedy lay, he propagated, in organizing villages on a corporate basis confining it to a few enterprises like engineering projects, mines, railways, etc.\textsuperscript{17}

Along with these indigenously sprouting ideas, the War of Independence of the U.S., and the French revolution inspired the youth of India to react more strongly on the corroding effects of colonial rule on the national character.\textsuperscript{18}

This was also a period in which the three major potential streams emerged: Moderates following constructive Swadeshi,
political extremists using extended boycott and side-by-side the growth of the terrorist movement. By July 1905, the creed of atmasliakti/self reliance filled the air of Bengal. With Swadeshi schemes of textile mills, improved handlooms, river transport concerns, match and soap factories, earthenware factories, tanneries, etc., national education through muffassil schools (Aug. 1906), the Tarakanath Palit Society for the promotion of technical education and efforts to translate Rabindranath Tagore's Swadeshi samaj into practice became the highlights of this age.\textsuperscript{19} The chief centres of economic thinking were founded by Gopala Krishna Gokhale, the Servants of India Society and in Bengal, The Dawn Society which inspired not only a first class institute for higher technical education at JadHAVpur near Calcutta, but was known for its pioneering works in modernized industry and commerce. This gave an added impetus given to this movement.\textsuperscript{20}

One of the most appealing arguments used by the Indian nationalists to defend and popularize the concept of Swadeshi was that since the Government of India had refused to give them the much needed protection to the growing industries of India, the people themselves should undertake to provide protection through the vigorous campaigning for Swadeshi goods.

Therefore to sum up the nationalist attitude prior to 1905: was one of a "compound of general indifference, positive hostility to measures as the factory acts, which were felt to be threatening the interests of the nascent Indian bourgeoisie and sympathy for Indians working in British owned factories, mines and

\textsuperscript{19} Sumit Sarkar, \textit{The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal}, p. 33-36.
\textsuperscript{20} Shib Chandra Dutt, \textit{Conflicting Tendencies in Indian Economic Thought}, Calcutta, 1939, p. 12.
Coming to the 1905 Swadeshi movement, one sees, its economic aspects had two national objectives: (i.) economic self reliance and (ii.) employment for the people. On Aug. 7, 1905 the leaders of Bengal assembled in a public meeting at the Calcutta Town Hall under the presidency of Maharaja Mahinder Chandra Nandy. It was resolved to declare a "general boycott of British goods as a practical protest against the proposed partition," after the manner in which the Chinese boycott of American goods had been done. "We" wrote Surendranath Banerjee in 1906, "must be Swadeshi in all things, Swadeshi in our thoughts and ideas and aspirations- Swadeshi in our educational methods and development." The genesis, growth and economic aspects of Swadeshi have been reviewed with the specific purpose of understanding its transformed role under the influence of Gandhi after 1905. It was during the last phase of the Swadeshi movement - Gandhian phase (1920-47), that the Congress became truly national in its complexion and its composition changed from that of a western educated minority group to a mass organization with swaraj as its only and ultimate goal. A search had begun for a particular path that would preserve the virtues of an Indian traditional society but combined with methods that would solve is economic problems.

The solution to this was given in The Dawn of April 1900

See Bipan Chandra, The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India, Chapter on 'Labour'.


Pyarelal, Mahatma Gandhi: Early Phase, p. 152.

Haridas Mukherjee and Uma Mukherjee, India's Fight for Freedom, Calcutta, 1958, p. 198.

A.Krishna Swamy, 'The north and the south in Indian history during the national movement', cited in S.P. Sen (ed.), The North and the South in Indian History: Contact and Adjustment, Calcutta, 1976, p. 194-195.

This point is borrowed from Sumit Sarkar, The Swadeshi Movement, p. 104.
which explained that the remedy lay (i.) first in organizing most of the industries on a family handicraft basis confining large scale capitalist industry to only a few exercises like engineering projects, railways, etc., (ii.) second by organizing a corporate ethical life. "By giving to each class a fixed reorganized and independent place in the social organism (sic) but all cooperating in such ordered CO-ordination as to work for the advantage of whole as to further the spiritual evolution of each ascending grade and of the whole Indian society."  

To put this very theory in practice came Gandhi, entering the threshold of politics in the first quarter of this century. His rise to power was made possible by events that put an end to the isolation between the different layers of politics. The situation that was prevalent was, where various groups were not longer satisfied with political or the economic mode which they were accustomed to. The years between the World Wars saw the breakdown of various such barriers, making it both possible and profitable for previously latent groups to erupt and give their support to Gandhi in Indian politics. Simultaneously the earliest terrorist organization in south India also sprouted in Bezawada, established by M.C. Nanjunda Rao, a close associate of Subrahmania Bharati. They not only provided financial assistance but also vociferously wrote in a journal Bala Bharata', (Young India) an English language monthly that was edited by Bharati.  

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Gandhi not only helped the masses to find a standard living wage but also an opportunity for cultivating self-respect by throwing off the symbol of slavery from their backs and gave the craftsmen "a creative joy through the exercise of his credit which forms the true index of civilization."\(^{30}\)

*Khadi* therefore was a programme implemented by Gandhi, a programme remarkable as much for its political importance, as for its continued contemptuous dismissal of foreign domination on economic grounds. It was the first of a series of steps to rehabilitate the under employed rural masses. The role of *Swadeshi* and all that it entailed, i.e., from its finer finish, quality and colour of domestic cloth to a pride in its productive system and in its own land and culture were all highlighted, thus giving a major impetus to this domestic industry.

Just as centralization and divisions of processes were the law of a large scale industry, the effective centralization and integration of processes was the key note of the institution of the All India Spinners' Association (AISA) established in 1925 under the leadership of Gandhi. The concrete work of AISA could be noticed under several heads: (i.) Production and sales, effective marketing of the products by hawking and exhibitions (ii.) Improvement in the quality of raw material and cloth, and lastly, (iii.) reduction in the cost of making and its price.\(^{31}\) *Khadi* presented a competition in three phases. One of spectacular flourish, one of sad decay and one of optimistic revival. Each of this coincided with a major historical period. The revival of the *charkha* took a different meaning altogether during the modern period. Converted into a symbol of


\(^{31}\) Richard Gregg, *Economics of Khaddar*, Madras, 1931, p. 177.
Swadeshi, it represented the willingness of the people to labour and sacrifice for national freedom.

In Andhra, a number of Gandhian ashrams were set up and functioned up to the late fifties through the All India Spinners' Association. (The Andhra branch of the Spinners' Association had its head quarters established at Masulipatnam). The main ones which carried on active propaganda were the Pinakini Satyagraha ashrama, at Pallepadu in Nellore district, Gautami Satyagraha ashrama at Sitanagaram, of east Godavari district, Ananda Niketan ashrama at Chalgallu in west Godavari district, Gandhi swaraj ashram at Polavaram, of west Godavari, Gandhi ashram at Komavallu of Gudivada, Krishna district and the Grama Swarajya peetham, at Jogganapalem of the west Godavari district.32

Active efforts to throw off the yoke of slavery in Andhra were initiated by stalwarts like Kandukuri Veereshalingam, Chilakamarti Lakshmi Narasimham, Unnava Lakhsmi Narayana, Maganti Bapineedu and others who worked in ameliorating the lot of the masses in rural Andhra. On his visits to Andhra in 1921, Gandhi was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of its people who seemed to be breaking all past records for displaying courage and a genuine patriotic spirit. The real glory of the people lay in the skill and the deftness applied to the handicrafts and especially to the manufacture of exquisite textiles, cotton and silk fabrics. Confessing that up to 1908 he had no chance of seeing a handloom at work or a spinning wheel, he insisted that, "one needed a

32 The Pinnakini Satyagraha ashrama was started by Digumarti Hanumantha Rao, on the banks of river Penna at Pallepadu in Nellore district. Earlier, he was a member of the Servants of India society but resigned their membership to begin this ashram. See for further details, Jaya Annapurna, The role of Gandhian Ashrams in the Indian Freedom Struggle with special Reference to Andhra Area 1920-1947, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, O.U. 1988.
weaving expert to teach us to weave before we could work the looms".  

At Bezawada, where the All India Congress Committee met at 1921, Gandhi discovered that in Andhra women grew cotton in their backyards, cleared, carded it and spun it with slivers. He also discovered that in Andhra the marriage custom required a yoke to be placed on the shoulder of the bridegroom. Besides a charkha was presented as gift to the bride. These customs symbolized that the bride and the bridegroom were to plough the land and spin the yarn. Figuratively they implied that the two co-existed. Gandhi was elated when he made this discovery for it confirmed his definition of khaddar.  

Giving his clarion call at Kakinada, Gandhi proclaimed, "the spinning wheel, its revival constitute notice in England, France, America, Japan, and other country that India cannot be subdued for its exploitation. It sends across the seas a message to the other nations of the world that India is determined to be absolutely self-contained and independent for her food and clothing."  

In the taluks of the prosperous delta regions most of the protest emanated from regions which were subject to the rising

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33 See S.R. Bakshi, Gandhi and Ideology of Swadeshi, Delhi, 1987, p.43.
34 Carding is a process next to ginning. The big carding bow was in use in the initial stages, but in the Sabarmati ashrama, a new type of carding instrument was designed which was not only an improvement on the bigger one but also had the advantage of being of medium size. Carding and making slivers was possible with this instrument at the rate of 10 tolas per hour. During the 1930-32 movement when workers began to propagate carding and spinning, a smaller and easily portable carding instrument was needed. The medium carding instrument had to be hung from a bow while carding, and this also required considerable space. Therefore, another smaller carding instrument was made which could be held in the hand while carding. The carding capacity of this hand carder was about 5 tolas per hour in the 1940s, spinning yarn upto about 30s to 40s counts of yarn.

economic pressures. Bhimavaram, Tanuku, Narsapuram and Tadepalligudem taluks of the west Godavari district, Ramachandrapuram and Amalapuram taluks of the east Godavari and Bandar, Divi and Gudivada taluks of the Krishna district were most prone to nationalist activity. Simultaneously popular demand for land aggravated the land prices and population increase in these taluks acted as a catalyst to the existing economic problems. The apparent post war prosperity attracted people from upland areas to flock to the deltas causing unprecedented density in the coastal regions of Andhra in the 1930s. Economic and social conditions further reduced the average size of land holdings in the district and further depressed the conditions of the local landholders. To represent and to ameliorate the present economic conditions Prakasam and Danda Narayanaraju voiced discontent on the land revenue issue by advocating the use of peaceful and legitimate methods to combat the land revenue proposals.37

Simultaneously, another alternative view to this group was also gaining support in the Andhra Congress camp. Konda Venkatapayyiah and Venneti Satyanarayana whose influence was strong in the Godavari district of Andhra believed in indulging in agitational politics as a means to gain their ends.38 Andhra khaddar offices were later torn between rival groups loyal to Venkatapayya and Pattabhi Sitaramayya.39 Venkatapayya also stressed on resolving ways and means of pushing the spinning franchise laid down by the Congress. Out of Rs. 50,000/- allotted by the All India

37See K. Prakasam, Na jeevita Yatra, Hyderabad, 1927 (translated from Telugu).
38The Hindu, 10 July 1928, reported that at the Andhra provincial congress committee, Konda Venkatapayya spoke vociferously for organizing a vigorous no rent agitation in the Kistna-Godavari on the lines similar to the one organized at Bardoli.
Congress Committee for this purpose, the Andhra leaders decided to ask for a contribution of Rs. 5,000/- out of it.\(^{40}\)

Gandhi planned that for every ten new spinning wheels introduced there must be one additional handloom pit or improved fly shuttle supplemented at the same time and this should be done without any loss of time. Otherwise there would be so much of pressure on the existing handloom that hundreds of *khandies* of handspun yam would be heaped on the handloom weaver who naturally preferred mill made yarn - it being easier to weave.\(^{41}\) Thus with all the advantages of capitalist production went all the problems of capitalist competition.

Konda Venkatapayyah proposed to begin the experiment in the Sevagram village by first commencing with the youth in the village and then trying to develop all other activities of the village as a whole later on. He proposed to create facilities for every qualified yarn produced in the village to secure the following articles in exchange for a hanks of yarn (640 rounds) as per the following scale.

**Table 3.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Articles to be given in the exchange for a hank of yarn</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice 60 tolas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wheat 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red gram 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black gram 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green gram 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millet 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jowar 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddy 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ragi 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salt 120</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The yarn thus received was to be converted into cloth and exchanged at eight yards per each paddy bag at two railway

\(^{40}\)See ‘Spinning franchise accepted’, *The Hindu*, 20 Jan. 1925.

maunds or its equivalent local production.\textsuperscript{42} The vernacular writings emphasized Professor Prafulla Chandra Ray's ideas in vernacular writings where he stressed on the need to making money through gruha raatnams. He spoke saying that, even a feeble woman or poor person could ply it and barter goods especially clothes to the elite in the villages thus in turn emphasizing the need for domestic industries.\textsuperscript{43}

The \textit{khaddar} movement that swept India in the first quarter of the twentieth century awakened industrial and commercialisation in India and gave a fillip to the promotion of \textit{Swadeshi}. The realization of the fact that the nation was sustaining enormous losses by the import of cotton goods from Britain and other foreign countries as advertised in the vernacular papers compelled the weavers of Andhra to pay particular attention to its indigenous industry. Its appeal depended on certain advantages, for example, it neither required large capital not costly implements to put into operation. The cost of setting up a modern yarn mill of 20,000 spindles in India cost approximately Rs.1,660,917/-. This sum if invested in \textit{charkhas}\textsuperscript{44} at Rs. 5/- each which would provide 3,32,183 hand spindles instead of 20,000 mill spindles and the production of yarn would be at least eleven times greater than that of the mill production.\textsuperscript{45} It did not require any higher skills of intelligence than the poverty ridden masses of India possessed, required very little exertion and needed no fresh introduction as it was the traditional sector existing since so many years. It was also

\textbf{Jamnalal Bajaj, Khaddar work in India, Bombay, not dated, (internal evidence suggests 1930), p. 93}


For the description and working of the \textit{charkha}, refer to fn. no. 7, Chapter I, Introduction.

Reported in, 'Mills versus the spinning \textit{wheel}', \textit{Young India}, Sept. 1925.
independent of monsoon conditions and not opposed to social and religious susceptibilities of the people.

Therefore, what is significant to note was that the spinning and weaving industry not only benefited the weavers socially and morally but also provided a most immediate way of fighting the immediate famines and in the long run the foreign competition.46

The Report of the Indian Industrial Commission of 1919 also stated that the tenacity of the handloom is attributable in part to "the great number of types of cloth of which slow moving Indian custom decrees the use, to the fact that the demand for many of these is on a small scale, while the types themselves are so special as to render it difficult for this powerloom to produce them at profit."47

The Madras Presidency at the turn of the century catering as it did to the rising new demands for textiles and oil seeds particularly emerged in an extremely favourable economic situation. Agricultural marketing, exports and imports of industrial goods and raw materials, mobility of labour and in fact the supply of essential articles of non-local nature such as yarn to weavers, iron to ryots, kerosene, tobacco to the general population, all had

Emphasis with first hand information on this was given by Subhalakshmi whose village in Andhra Pradesh plied the charkha in difficult times in the first quarter of the present century (private interview). To elaborate further on the argument, that famine migration also reveal an increased mobility is argued in the study by David Hardiman, who defers to argue otherwise. According to him, the argument that increased migration during famines reveal an increased flexibility is hard to accept, as, in times of famine the stark choice for the peasant has always only been, between migration or starvation. Therefore, he concludes, the concept of flexibility needs to be worked out more rigorously before it can be applied. See, David Hardiman, "Rejoinder to Neil Charlesworth, The roots of rural agitation in India, 1914-47, A comment on Charlesworth's reply", journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 8, No. 3, April 1981, pp. 118-121.

been linked to the availability of good means of transport and communications. Better means of communication and transport opened up wider vistas of trade and commerce and English education by which the educated not only increased their economic and political awareness but also received better access to Government jobs.

This was reflected in their increased participation and active role at the grass root levels in the form of district conferences convened in Andhra from 1892 onwards. Moreover, it held the credit of being the first of its kind in the Madras Presidency. Later on, district conferences were held regularly at Kakinada, Godavari district etc., to discuss the prevailing political and economic issues being primarily attended by the agricultural occupational groups.\(^{48}\)

With this impetus, production of *Swadeshi* cloth gathered pace as the early *Swadeshi* movement progressed registering by 1907-'08, a 22.64% increase over the total production over the total production for 1905-06.\(^{49}\)

See below Table 3.2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production of <em>Swadeshi</em> cloth (in crore yards)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1905-06</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The All India Weaving Competition that was held at the premises of the School of Arts Madras, showed beyond doubt that except in the case of solid bordered cloth, the Madras fly shuttle handloom were capable of turning out at least double the quantity of cloth that could be woven in the ordinary country loom and the

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\(^{49}\) G.O No. 85, Judicial (Confl.), 20 Jan. 1909.
desired improvement could be woven on the ordinary country loom and that the desired improvement could be affected by attaching the fly shuttle slay to the existing pit looms at the cost not exceeding Rs. 120/- per loom. It was also discovered that there were several labour saving appliances for pirn winding, warping etc. which could be introduced with advantage.50

The Government of India for the Madras Presidency while apparently appearing sympathetic to the first phases of Swadeshi , vigorously opposed all boycott activities using its might to control all violence which might occur within the boycott movement. The Government also undertook steps to avoid the British goods from being boycotted by altering the trade law so that all articles manufactured outside India were marked by "foreign made"- as an attempt to disguise its origin which was originally manufactured in Britain.51

Protesting under the caption, war on khadi topees (Maulana Azad was arrested at Vizagapatnam) the students in response vociferously protested by wearing khadi caps and were suspended on 23 October 1921. At least fifteen of the debarred students took to Swadeshi propagation by door-to door selling khadi cloth. Vasanta Rao Bucchi Sundara Rao (1887-1937), an active local leader reported this episode in Young India fanning Telugu sentiment and pride for freedom. Dr. Nageshwar Rao, Dr. Chodimella Syamala Rao, Dr. M.S. Venkateshwarulu from, Vizinagaram Missula Virvenkata Satyanarayana (Pandaranki), and Rachakonda

50 R.M.Diwan Bahadur, P. Rajaratna Mudaliyar Avargal, Note on Industrial Development and technical education relating to the Industries conference held at Ootacamund in September 1908. See its Enclosure.
51 Krishna Patrika, 5. April. 1908.
Venkateshwarulu (Vizagapatnam) etc., were the most important of the freedom fighters of Andhra.\textsuperscript{52}

The Non Co-operation movement led by Gandhi in 1921 encouraged peasants in Guntur and Cuddapah districts to violate the forest laws and to start the no-tax campaigns. In 1921 it was recorded that there was absolutely no sale of loom cloth outside the district of Guntur which incidentally had the highest concentration of \textit{charkhas} and in most of its villages more than 50\% more \textit{khaddar} was made by themselves. In some of its villages the percentage was as high as 95\% in 1921.\textsuperscript{53} The Guntur cloth and fair shopkeepers, without any exception signed a statement not to import foreign goods and the weavers not to weave foreign \textit{yarn}.\textsuperscript{54}

A contemporary writing during this period declared, that the "revival and protection of a dead art, the regeneration of lost craft, remodeling of Indian homes, the re-clothing of India by India's own hands -- this is Alpha and Omega of \textit{swaraj}". Further elaborating she wrote, "the battery of spinning wheel alone can bring about a bloodless moral revolution which will withstand the doubly destructive physical and moral machine power of England -- the manufacturing power of India lay not in her looms but in her spinning \textit{wheels}."\textsuperscript{55}

Substantial work was done in Ongole \textit{taluk} in the manufacture of \textit{khaddar}. Kota Vishwanathan and Kappara Narasimham did good work in the propagation of \textit{khaddar} in Chekurupadu, Madduluru and Uppugunduram of the Ongole


\textsuperscript{53} D. Narayana Rao, \textit{Report on the survey of the cottage Industries in the Madras presidency, Part II, Guntur district}, Madras, 1929, See chapter on Handspinning".

\textsuperscript{54} Refer to, Ramachandruni Venkatapayya’s article, Ongole Taluka lo Bahumukha Jateeya \textit{Chaitranyamu}, cited in Gundlapalli Audinarayana Shashtipurti Sanchika’, Ongole, 1972, (Telugu) p. 122 (trans).

\textsuperscript{55} Sarla Chaudharani, \textit{At the point of the Spindle}, Madras, 1921.
taluk. In 1922, possibilities of establishing a khaddar factory was explored by Prakasam at Ellore (on similar lines adopted by Nalam Brahmarazu of Rajamundry) with a capital of Rs. 50,000 promised by the Motheys.

In Andhra, the movement was started particularly in Palnad taluk of Guntur district. The villagers organized social boycott of forest and revenue officials in Palnad taluk which was suppressed after the killing of the leader Hanumanthu by the police- thus demoralizing the peasants. The No-tax campaigns at Peddanandipadu of the Guntur district being an important campaigns not only received wide attention but also spread to Krishna and Godavari districts. The Collector of Guntur wrote in his letter dated 10 January 1922, that the village officers were rich and influential men and that, they had their own personal grievance regarding the loss of perquisite resulting from land surveys and settlements and the reduction of village establishments.

Gandhi inaugurating the 'Tilak Jateeya Vidhyalaya' in Stonehousepet in Nellore exhorted the people to concentrate their attention and energy on the attainment of swaraj, which could be sought only through spinning and weaving which were the central factors of the Congress resolution. The AICC which met at Beawada on 31 March 1921 passed a resolution appealing to the people to concentrate on three items- one of them being the introduction of twenty lakh spinning wheels spread in all its towns. To achieve this objective the Congress leaders of Andhra worked

56 For further details on this see, "Prakasam on Khaddar", The Hindu, 17 July, 1922.
58 The Hindu, 12 April 1921.
incessantly with Gandhi at the helmshead and the response seen phenomenal. Twenty lakh *charkhas* were installed within the scheduled time.\(^{59}\) The first half of 1921 itself, the Congress committees were established in many villages with an impressive local Congress membership. *Khaddar* was becoming a cultural and political symbol in the countryside. Even in the remote villages pracharakas were engaged to spread the Congress creed among the masses. With this, not only were the peasants drawn into the fold of the national movement but their political consciousness was heightened.\(^{60}\)

The votaries of *khadi* culture were not limited to a particular area. For example Joshua Appa Ramamurthy a resident of *Somapeta* (Srikakulam district), rendered remarkable service in propagating *khadi* and boosting sales in the west Godavari district. As if to repay the debt for the cause of national service Gadi Balarama Das (1898-1934) belonging to the west Godavari became a resident of Vizinagaram and spent almost Rs. 25,000 for the free distribution of *charkhas*. Similar was the monetary magnanimity of Yellapanthulu Krishna Murthy (1895-1939) of Srikakulam district.\(^{61}\) As early as 1922 Andhra's two leading merchant families in Rajahmundry and Ellore both sunk half a lakh of rupees on *khaddar* factories.\(^{62}\)

Karunakaran Subba Rao (1898-1943) of *Priya agraharam* Srikakulam district) was a leader who used to spin the yarn

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60 A.V.D. Sharma, *Khaddar Movement*.

everyday as an affirmation of his patriotic zeal. If Yeedu Thaviti Naidu (1901-1941) of Lovaru Kola (Srikakulam district) produced cotton in his fields and spun the same on his own charkha, Karneni Rama Dasu (1901-1943) of Mamidipalli, Somapeta taluk (Srikakulam district) vowed to wear cloth of khadi spun by him alone. These Congress leaders were not only shining examples in Andhra, but also vastly motivated the teeming masses to the Gandhian ideology. It would seem that the Provincial Congress Committees had many members from the dominant peasant communities who were involved with the Swadeshi movement and were mainly the newly commercialised classes, increasingly involved in cash economy and having new access to western education. But this tendency was not universal. For, in some areas the Congress was not considered the vehicle for this class of rural rich communities but the preserve of provincial elite who sat above all; or at all events away from them. In the Madras Presidency, it was on this issue that the Justice party traded in opposition to the Congress in 1920s and 1930s.

It is opined that Non Co-operation was not simply a protest against tax and Government intrusion but was also in response to important factors in local politics. In Bezawada local merchants and lawyers made a bid to destroy the power of a low caste merchant and contractor who had controlled the municipality by dubious mean for a decade. In Ellore the Motheys family which was in command in the town since at least 1860s, were turned out and the municipality machinery was used to attack and ruin the

63 See A.V.D. Sharma, Khaddar Movement.
Motheys' local empire. Therefore, what is observed is that agitations and faction fights were nothing new in urban politics of Andhra. Urban growth and its concomitant upsurges propelled local politicians from provincial and national level politics.⁶⁵

A vernacular paper reported that even after the Non Co-operation had started in earnest, doubts were expressed by certain groups on adopting handspinning and weaving as forms of boycott and expressed doubts on its credibility in giving freedom.⁶⁶

As if to offset these apprehensions, Gandhi on his visit to the Presidency declared that "under the grinding stones of slavery and foreign language and civilization we have lost our native intelligence to see that this is the only solution of the problem of unemployment". He then exhorted Indians of every caste irrespective of religion or any other barriers, to provide work and food to the numberless spinners and weavers. "I can give you my full assurance that if the whole of India was to take to (sic) alone and carry out the boycott of foreign cloth, there would be no problem of unemployment, a problem, which is engaging the best minds of the country..."⁶⁷

The views presented in the vernacular papers received further leverage when the total circulation for all the Telugu newspapers increased in 1901 from 16,023 to 37,000 in 1911.⁶⁸ Even in the tribal regions publication of a bulk of literature known

⁶⁵ See C.J. Baker, 'Non-cooperation in south India' in Baker and D.A. Washbrook (ed.), South India, passim.
⁶⁶ Swaraj by charkha Andhra Patrika, 1922, and Report on English papers examined by the Criminal investigation Department, Madras and on the vernacular papers examined by the translators to the Government of Madras for the week ending 5 July 1919, p. 432.
⁶⁷ This was the essence of Gandhi's speech at the inauguration of the khadi exhibition which was adjunct to the congress at Madras. See Indian Review (henceforth I.R ) Vol. 29, No. 1, 24 Dec. 1928.
⁶⁸ Census of India 1911, Madras, Vol. XII, Part I, See particularly the report on the table on number and circulation of newspapers in Madras presidency, Madras, 1932, p.134.
as "Tribal songs of Gandhian times" advocated not only constructive programme but breathed the spirit of freedom and nationalism. Among the tribals in the agency areas, Kammayya of Madugalla was the first man to introduce charkhas. Kolluru Satyanarayana Gupta (1891-1938) of Madugulla, Chintikinda Suryanarayana (1888-1947) and Nula Venkamba (1886-1938) of Vizinagaram and Potnuri Swami Baba (1884-1982) of Narasannapeta (Srikakulam district), besides many others rendered yeoman services in the cause of the khaddar movement in north Andhra regions. The leaders did not restrict their activity merely to writing songs but these were sung regularly through the institutions called the Bhajan mandalis. For example, this song propagating the weaving of khadi:

*Dress we in Khadi pyjama*
*tolerate we no servitude*
*serve we never as Habsis bonded servant*
*tolerate no servitude*
*serve we our mother*
*serve we never our mother in law*
*tolerate no servitude.*

Another poem eulogizing spinning was very popular during the Gandhian phase of nationalist movement and at the tip of every layman's tongue:

*Unbroken is the thread from the spinning wheel*
*broken could be the iron shackles and gold ornaments*
*thousands of guns could be defeated*
*but not this kaccha safar thread.*

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69 For details, refer A.V.D. Sarma, 'Khaddar movement in...
Andhra had seen the tradition of nationalist literature since the early *Swadeshi* days. Poets like Chilkamarti, Ramaswamy, Magnipudi Venkateshwariah and several others wrote poems on mother India. Garimella Satyanarayana whose prominence as a popular poet in Andhra coincided with the Non Co-operation movement of 1921-22, wrote his famous composition, *maa koddu ee tella dorathanamu*.. His fame also grew with his thought provoking songs and poems (*padhyalu*) on boycott of foreign cloth, emancipation of the country from foreign rule, the *raatnam*, etc. See appendix D. Unnava Lakshmi Narayana wrote his novel *Mallapalli* and Gurram Jashua the first *dalit* poem in Telugu emerged during this period. Their literary genre was used as a dynamite against the Government. Each word was patriotic, sentences and punctuations rebelled and struggled for free India. Meanwhile, the editorials of the *Andhra Patrika* warned India time and again to be on her guard and stick hard to the vow of boycott of all foreign cloth. (See appendix E for an example of *khaddar* publicity which was carried out regularly in the vernacular newspapers). Not only the vernacular writings but poetry, theatre and drama also inspired the masses of Andhra. Also, paintings by prominent nationalists like, N.Venkata Rao from Vinukonda, Gurram Mallaiah, S. Eswariah from Nellore, Bucchi Krishnamma, Chamakura Satyanarayana, W.Aryadasu whipped national

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72 For details on Garimella see Appendix, on how his poems amplified the patriotic mood of the people of Andhra. See Preeti Kumar (ed), *Garimella’s Heart of India*, Hyderabad, 1994.

73 Not only the *Andhra Patrika*, but also the *Krishna Patrika* among other vernacular newspapers carried vociferous editorials in praise of *ahimsa* of Gandhi and compared the *charkha* to 'Raksha tantralu'. It condemned mechanization, colonialism and castigated these as having no roots in the country and which would only lead to 'Atma Nashana' and 'Ashanti'. See, *Krishna Patrika*, 11 Jan. 1941.
sentiment by their powerful portrayal of Indian traditional crafts and industry (see appendix F).

Fired by vernacular papers an intense agitation was resumed to boycott the Duke's royal visit in 1921. On 26 Jan. 1921, it was reported that the procession boycotting the Duke Cannought's visit extended to about 56,000 people. Most of the shop keepers closed shops and except public offices and English firms there were no response to the foreign visit in the Madras Presidency. Another meeting of the AICC was held on 25 Jan. 1925 at which Bulusu Anjenayaulu presided. It was decided at the meeting that a fair subscription should be sent regularly and a portion of distribution of the net realization for a fair collection from the district, town and village Congress committee should be fixed in April.

The table below reveals that the main market for Indian yarn was foreign lands (mainly China). In 1902-'03, there was an increase in the amount of twist and yarn exported over the previous years. 97% of the amount was consumed by China. India was gradually recovering from the disturbances of 1900-01 with the establishment of normalcy in the country, and likewise Indian trade also began to improve. The next year the exports fell to a rock bottom level. The trade in twist and yarn which recovered in a remarkable manner in 1900-01 was again disorganized by the high

74 What was significant to note, was the change in the attitude of the shopkeeper, for example, during the anti-partition agitation in Bengal in 1905, some Bombay mill owners not only charged high prices for their goods but passed off Japanese as 'Made in India'. See Modern Review. Vol. xiii No. 4, April 1928, p. 512 and see M.K. Gandhi (ed.), Young India 1919-31, 26 Jan. 1921, Vol. iii, Ahmedabad, 1981.

prices of cotton: See the all India figures given below for the import and export of yarn:

See Table No. 3.3:

**Imports and Exports of Yarn (in lakhs of rupees)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902-03</td>
<td>77.97</td>
<td>17.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-04</td>
<td>65.30</td>
<td>5.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-05</td>
<td>82.40</td>
<td>15.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(period of revival)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-06</td>
<td>89.29</td>
<td>19.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(price of raw materials fell and exchange was favourable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-07</td>
<td>99.44</td>
<td>17.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>105.99</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-09</td>
<td>109.99</td>
<td>17.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909-10</td>
<td>76.78</td>
<td>28.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-11</td>
<td>98.86</td>
<td>23.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(decline due to competition from China and from both local and Japanese producers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-12</td>
<td>104.49</td>
<td>26.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912-13</td>
<td>111.59</td>
<td>33.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>122.49</td>
<td>31.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaking of the coastal districts, Andhra, possessed unique facilities for *khaddar* production and stood ahead of nearly all other provinces in production with possible exception of Punjab. In 1922 at Kakinada a Ladies Congress Committee under the leadership of D. Subbamma was established and did commendable work in buying cotton, making slivers and in distributing a number of spinning wheels for yarn. 432s counts of fine yarn, the highest in the country during the Non Co-operation movement was spun by Golla Kota Kamalamani of Rajahmundry. Her achievements were acknowledged by Gandhi and a medal was awarded to her in 1924.

Added to the Gandhian initiative private enterprise also became largely responsible for the progress that Andhra made in *khaddar* production. This was seen especially after the adoption of

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the *khaddar* programme by the AICC at Bezwada where tremendous response was elicited against the colonial rule and unstinting support given to handspinning and weaving in all the coastal regions. The change in the attitude of handloom weavers was seen in their adoption to the 1,17,781 charkhas introduced by the Congress Provincial Committee in 1921 all over Andhra which exceeded the number of last year. Their weaving became more close and artistic and the largest width being of 54 inches and the 60s-100s counts of yarn began to be now increasingly woven.\(^78\)

In the Godavari district, the annual production of *khaddar* rose to Rs 16,000/- worth taken from the Congress fund and sold locally by the 14 *khaddar* organizations and depots situated at Ellore, Vasantavada, Dedhuluru, Tanuku, Polanur, Bhimavaram, Narsapur, Yellanilli, Nidadavolu, and Devarapalle\(^79\) Nellore district did not produce much of cotton and the AISA made alternative arrangements to receive the supply yarn from Kanupur and fifteen other villages a radius of five miles.\(^80\) The result of all their efforts was a remarkable decrease in the cost of production seen especially in Andhra, Tamil Nadu and Punjab. In 1930 a 50% reduction was witnessed over what it was in 1920 and 25% over what there were in 1922.\(^81\)

The immense response could be attributed to the vernacular newspapers which fanned the patriotic spirit in the people, propagating that, the wearing of foreign cloth is a index to show that the wearer is a slave having no manliness.\(^82\)

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\(^78\) *Ibid.*

\(^79\) Tuni, from the east Godavari district like the west Godavari had only 600 acres of land under cultivation and therefore not sufficient yarn was made available. D. Narayana Rao, *Report on the survey, Kistna and West Godavari district*, p.2.


\(^81\) Richard Gregg, *Economics of Khaddar*, p.177.

\(^82\) *Vinodhini*, 22 March 1922.
Swadeshi for Gandhi meant as though "the wearer of khadi was ... like a man making use of his lungs".\textsuperscript{83} "It is the greatest delusion to suppose that the duty of Swadeshi begins and ends with merely spinning some yarn anyhow and wearing khadi made out of it. Khadi is the first indispensable step towards the discharge of Swadeshi dharma to society. A votary of Swadeshi will carefully study his environment and try to help his neighbours whenever possible by giving preference to local manufacturers even if they are inferior grade or dearer in price than things manufactured elsewhere.\textsuperscript{84}

With the imprisonment of Gandhi, the Non Co-operation movement would have decreased, but for the volunteers who set up popularizing the use of khaddar. The resolution of the Bombay piece goods with merchants that they would not import foreign cloths any longer, caught the layman's attention inspiring enthusiasm which resulted in an increase in sales of khaddar.\textsuperscript{85} Estimates of the value of khaddar sold in the districts of Andhra in 1925 are given below reaffirming the point that there was a definite increase in their sales in these years.\textsuperscript{86}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Sale of Khaddar (value in rupees)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganjam</td>
<td>40,000 for one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vizagpatnam</td>
<td>17,000 for one month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kakinada</td>
<td>1,000 for one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuni</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Krishna</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Krishna</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guntur</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadipatri</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{83} Arunachalam, \textit{Khadi Economics}, pp. 20-22.
\textsuperscript{85} Owing to the boycott of foreign cloth in India half the looms of Manchester, (it was reported) were lying idle and the spite of the workmen of England was directed towards the Indian capitalists which was on the increase. See Krishna Patrika, 18 March 1922 and 1 April 1922.
\textsuperscript{86} Konda Venkatapayya, 'Khaddaru', \textit{Krishna Patrika}, Varshika Sanchika (Annual Volume), 1925.
The establishment of the *khaddar samasthan* in Andhra founded on 18 April 1927 to carry out constructive work was started by Uppuloori Venkatakrishnayya. It aimed to eradicate untouchability, promote agriculture and indigenous industries of ginning, carding, spinning, weaving, rice pounding and trade to be encouraged on a barter system. However, *khaddar* industry was still not seen as a good business proposition but as a part of the national life. A programme of *khaddar yagnam* to propagate peace and a solution to the question of untouchability commenced from 24 Sept. 1932 in Bezawada. Their main weapons being *ahimsa* as against machine guns and war ammunition prove the point that to a large extent the response was due to mainly the sentiment of patriotic spirit.\(^{87}\)

The 1926-27 Andhra report for the AISA recorded that improvement in yarn quality and an increase in its demand by larger sections of people who had until then stood unaffected by the movement. To prove this point are the figures of production and sales of *khadi* which showed fluctuations but along with it also witnessed a steady consumer demand. The prices of Andhra were reduced by 9% over the years 1925-76 and 7% to 8% in Tamil nadu, showing local production in the country really increased by a significant two lakhs over last years' production. To inspect and check the handspun *Khadi* cloth brought into the market a *charkha* census was taken.\(^{88}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Cardages</th>
<th>Spinners</th>
<th>weavers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>11,654</td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil nadu</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>16,348</td>
<td>1264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
<td>83,339</td>
<td>5,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{87}\) *Report of the 25 years of contact with Mahatma Gandhi with the Khaddar Samasthan*, West Godavari district, 1951, p. 33.

\(^{88}\) *Annual Report of the All India Spinners Association for the year-1926-27*, Part II, Annual Report, Andhra branch, Masulipatnam, 1927.
During this year Sri K Lakshmi Doss Purushottam the leading industrialist toured throughout the Presidency demonstrating the art of spinning and carding by means of improved yarn. Reacting to his tour, Andhra now began putting in extra efforts to improve yarn by constant yarn strength tests' -the result being an increase in weaving threads by over 25-35% over last year. Bezawada, Guntur, Nellore, Berhampore and other municipalities and many local boards took larger interest in the movement during this period and introduced the charkha and taklis in schools. The Kakinada Municipal Board began giving first priority to appointment of teachers who knew how to spin and weave and also allocated awards to publicize khaddar in schools. The villages served in Andhra by the AISA also showed an improvement over last year's figures:

Table 3.6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages toured</th>
<th>1926-77</th>
<th>1927-28</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2831</td>
<td>2655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consequent to the Dandi march of Gandhi, khadi became even more the symbol of struggle and as a results of phenomenal demand for khadi became increasingly manifest. The AISA reported that the demand was so great that there was an unprecedented rush for khadi even before the date or week of the salt law was fixed and stocks all over the country were thoroughly depleted. As the arrangement for production and distribution were not adequate to

89 The 'yarn strength test was based on a system of payment of yarn price in accordance with a schedule based as the various grades of strength of the various counts of yarn, Annual Report of All India Spinners Association for the year 1925-26, P.12.
90 Krishna Patrika, 5 July 1924 and 12 December 1925.
91 Annual report of the All India's Spinners Association, 1927-28, Andhra Branch, Masulipatnam, 1928, p. 12.
meet the new and rising levels of demand, Gandhi advised that *khadi* be sold in exchange for yarn only.\(^92\)

Table 3.7.\(^{93}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Khadi statistics</th>
<th>No. of weavers</th>
<th>Total monthly output</th>
<th>Cost per yard</th>
<th>Sales price</th>
<th>Total monthly charges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra pattusali (in rupees)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>1-9-0</td>
<td>1-9-0</td>
<td>Rs.70/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khadi weaving Assoc., Vizagapatnam Dist.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,936-6-0</td>
<td>1-6-0 to 0-7-0</td>
<td>1-15-0</td>
<td>1-0-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the first time in 1929, the 'back to the villages' movement in Andhra held by the All India Students Conference in Bezawada decided that the youth during their school career itself should go to the villages periodically and try to develop the *khadi* spirit. The *khadi* spirit envisaged three major aims: spinning and weaving and better environment and a patriotic spirit in the village thus promoting a socio-economic outlook. The students participating actively in following the broad guidelines of the Congress ideology tried to adapt it to the rural villages of Andhra and the value of *khaddar* was projected in the following manner:\(^94\) Table 3.8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People involved in the process</th>
<th>Value of the Rupee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton producer (Pathi Pandagaru)</td>
<td>0-3-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton seed remover</td>
<td>0-0-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beating out cotton</td>
<td>0-1-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thread maker (nulu)</td>
<td>0-0-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neta (spinning)</td>
<td>0-4-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chakali (washer)</td>
<td>0-0-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seller</td>
<td>0-1-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*12 pies =1 anna
16 annas =1 rupee

\(^92\) M.K.Gandhi, 'Why Khadi for yarn and not for money' in J.C. Kumararappa (ed.), *Gramudyog Patrika*, Part I, 1939-1946, Madras, 1971', pp. 352-54. The *Krishna Patrika Sanchika* estimated that one *mannugu* (quintal) of *pathi*, (cotton) seeds required 12 hours to be separated and the coolies were paid, Rs. 0-8-0. From one *mannugu* of *pathi*, approximately 13 pounds of *pathi* (cotton) could be extracted/procured and this cost the labourer Rs. 2-8-0. About 12 1/2 pounds of *dudhi* made of 10s counts of yarn and worked for 400 hours cost the labourer 2-6-0. Altogether, if the labourer worked for 420 hours, he earned, 2-6-0 and if 420 members worked for one hour, they earned for 30 days altogether Rs.150. Therefore, the editorial summarized that working on these principles of Gandhi, the people of Andhra were encouraged to spin and publicise the weaving of *khaddar*. Lakka Subba Rao, "Teermanalu", & "Khaddaru", *Krishna Patrika, Sanchika*, Vol. 23, No. 25., July 1924, (Reproduced on 5-7-1924 and 12-12-1925).

\(^93\) "Khadi statistics", *Young India*, 9 Dec. 1928.

\(^94\) *Krishna Patrika*, 5 October 1929.
By this estimate it was proposed that the revenue did not go out of the country. If cloth was exported in the form of brocades, the producer received 0-3-9 but, in exchange the other's did not profit but the middlemen got his share. In the Godavari district the official writer of the District Gazettes reported that," in the days of the East India company the exportation of cloth from the district was very large. Some seven lakhs of rupees was paid annually by the company for local fabrics and in some years the figure rose above 10 lakhs and in one year touched 14 lakh of rupees. The abolition of the company's cloth trade had almost prejudice effect on the weaving industry and so on the prosperity of the districts as a whole. But the ceaseless efforts in the face of many difficulties of over a decade and the industry is showing signs of a new life and the past glory of the people is being gradually revived.95

Further stimulus was given to the Swadeshi campaigns launched by Gandhi and by the grant of tariff protections in the mid-twenties. Between 1900-1947, the next growth of loom capacity greatly exceeded that of spindles. While the stock of spindleage almost doubled, that of loomage increased three fold and more than 150,000 units were added. This structural change in the cotton industry meant that the demand for losses remained relatively high and so also the boycott during the difficult inter-war period.96

Gandhi however, was not very pleased with the performance of the Andhra during the later Non Co-operation period. Figures revealed that Palnad in Guntur district where special designs were used in the border called Kuppadam border

95 See the Harijan, Vol. 1, No. 38, 5 Jan. 1933.
96 This observation was made by three authors: namely Collin Simons, Helen and Robert Kirk, 'Machine manufacture in a colonial economy, The pioneering role of George Hatterseley and Sons limited in India 1919-43, IESHR, Vol. 20, 1983, pp. 277-315.
sarees, the weavers used yarn which was admittedly foreign but used in the name of 'pure sarees'. Second, as seen among the 3,3179 persons who were enrolled in the AISA only 1231, i.e, 36% paid their quota of yarn to date. Assam with only 1% full of subscribers came last on the list of Andhra being the next offender with 24% and Burma topped the list with 835 but it was not a surprise, as it had only six members to start with.\(^97\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Enrolled members</th>
<th>Full subscribers</th>
<th>% who paid their quota of yarn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamilnadu</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What can be concluded from the figures is, to sum up, sustained efforts at regularity in spinning and weaving was lacking in the twenties in the Andhra region. However, the fact remains (when we compare the earlier two tables)—that there was rapid development of the AISA organization *per se* in its activity to gather more and more villages under its fold. The figures from 1926-30 indicate on the average, about 100 villages in Andhra were included every year in this organization.

Due to an increase in demand, quality suffered and many new organisations sprang up in competition for yarn and a proper distribution of areas between producers could not be made during these years - the economic depression set about the middle of 1930 had its toll on the fall of cotton and on all agricultural production. Though this encouraged villagers to take up spinning, thus rendering an increase in production, there was a consequent fall in demand thus curtailing any increase in sale value.\(^98\)

\(^97\)M.K. Gandhi, "Tell tale figures", *Young India*, Feb. 4, 1926, and also refer to *Young India*, 26 Aug. 1926.

Between 1926-30 the produce market lost its extraordinary buoyancy. The full effects of the world wide economic depression began to be felt by Indian peasants and artisans by the middle of 1931, although agricultural prices began to fall from the beginning of 1930. Gundavalli Ramabrahmam, an ardent congressmen and an enthusiast of the peasant movement organized the Andhra peasant protection conference in Tenali -- the seat of the most successful Congress picketing campaign in May-June 1931. This organized resistance was the first of its kind in the whole of India to put forward the revolutionary demand for (i.) a moratorium for all agricultural debts and (ii.) resistance against the unjust imposition of 18 3/4 % enhancement of land revenue in the Kistna Godavari districts.\footnote{Not only this, but the pressure of banks upon rural moneylenders, merchants and big landlords for the repayment of their loans became oppressive and the number of applications to courts for temporary imprisonment of debtors increased alarmingly. See N.G. Ranga, \textit{Fight for Freedom}, Bombay, 1968, p.134.}

Therefore, to sum up, upto about 1930, the rural rich had invested excess cash mainly in land, rural money lending and trade and agro-industries etc. were hard hit with the the collapse of the rural credit system and falling of agricultural processes from 1929. This meant that they no longer remained profitable investments. The depression created considerable "impetus for the shift of capital entrepreneurship and artisan skills from country to town". There was therefore a considerable increase in investment in joint stock companies in Madras Presidency in the 1930s and much of this new investment was in agro-based processing industries, but in contrast to the small oil mills built by rural capital earlier, now it was flowing into larger enterprises especially sugar and cotton mills.\footnote{For further details on this see, Christopher Baker, \textit{Politics of South India 1920-1937}, Cambridge, 1976, \textit{passim}. For an elaboration of the depression period in}
What is stressed is the fact that the working class, the left leaders and the artisans class were convinced that the national movement was representing the political and economic urges of the Indian people and therefore these classes should in turn, strengthen the anti-imperialist struggle. Consequently, between 1928-39 there was a closer relationship with mutual co-operation between the industrial working class and Indian national movement in the Madras Presidency.¹⁰¹

For the first time since its inception of the *khadi* movement, figures recorded in 1932 showed a decrease in production as compared with the previous year—though there was an improvement in the quality of yarn. The number of threads in the work increased from 32% to 38% per inch for the lowest count yarn and for the higher count it increased up to 40 to 50 threads according to the fitness of the yarn. In Andhra new varieties were introduced in Chicacole, Purtigadda which turned out better medium cloth in 20 counts of yarn and Masulipatnam brought out improved designs of coating and shirtings.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ From 1935 onwards three leftist parties became prominent in Andhra. The Communist party, the Congress Socialist party and the Radical Humanist party of M.N. Roy. Puchapalli Sundarayya was the earliest organiser of the Communist movement in Andhra. Literary journals like the 'Udayani', edited by Kompella Janardhana Rao and 'Pratibha', edited by Siva Sankara Sastri created not only a new school of Telugu poetry but also challenged the traditionalists through this genre of writing. The Socialist party established its unit at Vijawada in June 1934 with Acharya N.G. Ranga as its president and Madduri Annapurnayya as its secretary. They waged many a successful struggle against the *Zamindars* of the coastal Andhra region. On this issue the *kisan sabhas* of N.G. Ranga, scored a point, as it is seen that in practical politics, the Gandhian leadership was reluctant to take up peasant demands vis-a-vis colonialism as part of the national liberation struggle. But by the end of the 1930s the anti-imperialist issue was the common strand between these different groups of Indian nationalists. See, the various oral evidence of left leaders and of the working classes representatives in Reddy Prasad Reddy, ‘Zamin ryots and the Prakasam Committee, An analysis of the context of recommendations’, in *Proceedings of the Andhra Pradesh History congress*, iv session, Nellore, 1991, pp. 139-46.

¹⁰² From 1935 onwards three leftist parties became prominent in Andhra. The Communist party, the Congress Socialist party and the Radical Humanist party of M.N. Roy. Puchapalli Sundarayya was the earliest organiser of the Communist movement in Andhra. Literary journals like the 'Udayani', edited by Kompella Janardhana Rao and 'Pratibha', edited by Siva Sankara Sastri created not only a new school of Telugu poetry but also challenged the traditionalists through this genre of writing. The Socialist party established its unit at Vijawada in June 1934 with Acharya N.G. Ranga as its president and Madduri Annapurnayya as its secretary. They waged many a successful struggle against the *Zamindars* of the coastal Andhra region. On this issue the *kisan sabhas* of N.G. Ranga, scored a point, as it is seen that in practical politics, the Gandhian leadership was reluctant to take up peasant demands vis-a-vis colonialism as part of the national liberation struggle. But by the end of the 1930s the anti-imperialist issue was the common strand between these different groups of Indian nationalists. See, the various oral evidence of left leaders and of the working classes representatives in Reddy Prasad Reddy, ‘Zamin ryots and the Prakasam Committee, An analysis of the context of recommendations’, in *Proceedings of the Andhra Pradesh History congress*, iv session, Nellore, 1991, pp. 139-46.

The Census of 1931 taken for the Madras Presidency revealed an increase of 15% in the number of handloom here over the figures of 1921. These looms were engaged in weaving Madras 'kerchiefs and lungies for export to West Africa and the straits as well as other articles for home consumption.\textsuperscript{103}

At the all India level, Mr Bhulabhai Desai added that, in 1928-29, the imports on textiles amounted to 67 crores but in 1930-31 the imports dwindled. During the Satyagraha campaigns in 1930-'31, the imports further declined to Rs. 32 crores and it went further down to 24 crores in 1931-32.\textsuperscript{104} Administrative reports for the year 1935-36 recorded that exports from this Presidency declined from 26,335 tons valued at Rs 174.35 lakhs in the year 1934-35 to 13,000 tons valued at 9,707 lakhs in the period 1935-36 representing a decrease of 47.6% in quality and 44.3% in value in general.\textsuperscript{105}

Representing a deputation from Andhra, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Sitaram Shastry and Narayana Raju met Gandhi in 1934 and their planning intensively covered the science and economy of khadi organization, such as, its introduction at the present stage of the democratic principle of Khadi and its production and sale.\textsuperscript{106}

It was discovered that there were a number of Harijan families were subsisting on the spinning of coarse khadi and this class was fast dying out. The AISA organization came out to their rescue and the demand for their own use came to be increasingly in demand now.\textsuperscript{107} Only the surplus came to be sold outside the

\textsuperscript{103}Report of the Department of Industries, 1931-32, Madras presidency, Madras, 1932.
\textsuperscript{104}See for further details Indian Review, Vol. xxxv, No. 9, July 1934.
\textsuperscript{105}Report of the Department of Industries for the year 1935-'36, Madras, 1936.
\textsuperscript{106}Harijan, 21 April 1934.
\textsuperscript{107}See Copy of letter dated 23 Dec. 1933 from the District Magistrate, Kistna to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, being a report on Mr.
district of its manufacture and this transformation of thought process of a self sufficient independency within a village directly contributing to reviving nationalist spirit among the weavers community. M.P.Gandhi in his monograph on, "The Indian cotton textile industry" calculated that, out of the total consumption of cloth in India in 1930, the Indian mills contributed 575 million yards of cloth whereas the imports contributed to 16% only. "If the Congress were as determined as it projected itself to be, then it should not prove difficult to produce the 16% of cloth that was imported out of the country."\(^{108}\)

In the *Harijan* of April 27, 1934 Gandhi sought to explain the working and sale of *khadi* manufacturers. According to him, *khadi* should be sold in its place of manufactures and not be exported outside the village or district and their sales would be regulated by the demand from town dwellers by the propaganda that it received in other regions. In the long run this would bring about greater bond between ginners, carders, spinners and weavers. But it was also recognized by Gandhi that *khadi* had to work against almost settled prejudices among the villagers, against the unscrupulous competition without the protection and against the prevalent opinion of the so called experts in the science of economics, and against even the demand for *khadi* weavers for progressively cheaper *khadi*. It was therefore it was largely a question of developing a *khadi* mentality.\(^{109}\)

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\(^{108}\) Gandhi’s tour in that district, *Under Secretary’s Safe Secret Files*, No. 862, 20 Feb. 1934. Also refer to the *Harijan*, 27 April 1934, p. 85.

\(^{109}\) Gandhi observed that the fly shuttle bought by Narayan Vanam of Chittoor district was exhibited and enquired of the owner of how much of its worth was bought and sold. In response it was seen that worth only Rs. 50/- to 60/- was ultimately sold. Even though the clothes were of good quality neither the rich nor the educated could be induced to buy it even to mark their appreciation of the *Swadeshi* enterprise! *CW*, Vol. 23, 1922-24, p. 10.
The Buy Indian League established at Madras with Mr.T.R. Venkatarama Sastriar as the President, was instrumental during this period in stimulating the spirit of Swadeshi in the country. Not only khaddar exhibitions but focussing the public attention on the cheap marketing facilities of the products of the cottages industries and rural reconstruction programmes was the major aim of this popular organization.\(^{110}\)

Konda Venkatapayya convened meetings above a foreign cloth shop in Guntur and the meeting discussed the need for the use of mill made cloth. Picketing was going on in Guntur as part of the civil disobedience movement and reported to be unaggressive and traders and purchasers were not subject to any form of Coercion.\(^{111}\) Picketers dressed in khaddar marched along the streets and appealed to customers not to buy any foreign cloth. The class of picketers were not only well behaved but also followed the conduct of picketing as Gandhi had stressed. "It is better that foreign cloth is sold than that, in order to prevent its sale we should break the letter or spirit of the settlement."\(^{112}\)

During the civil disobedience movement Andhra also witnessed the growth of Paisa papers: Janma Bhoomi published from Madras by S. Ganesan was the most important paisa paper published in Telugu. It was published twice a week (sunday and Wednesday) and later became thrice a week with Congress ideology and its economic ideals prominently portrayed. Gandeevamu and Devadattam were also paisa papers in Telugu published from Eluru under the editorship of Munnangi Lakshmi Sarma. These papers were most popularly and widely read in

\(^{110}\) Refer to, Indian Review, Vol. xxxv, 5 May 1934.
\(^{111}\) Selected Extracts taken from the Secret Files relating to the civil movement in Andhra, (strictly confidential), Public Department, 21 March 1931.
\(^{112}\) How to conduct picketing’, The Hindu, 21 May 1931.
particularly the coastal Andhra regions. Vernacular writings, picketing and other scant gestures of defiance were seen and long sustained itself in the face of Governmental repression. Also, the civil disobedience movement quickly became a basis of coalescence between various nationalist groups with a broadened social base for action.

Steady progress was maintained until 1930 but the economic depression reduced the purchasing power of the people. Whereas, the salt revenue proved to be immune to depression and agitation another item which proved a good income to the governments treasury was obviously very much affected by both these circumstances. The receipts of custom duty on cotton piece goods which amounted to Rs. 57 million in 1929-30, dropped to Rs. 10 million in the following year. The boycott of foreign cloth by the Indian National Congress as well as Japanese competition with

\[\text{\footnotesize 113} \] From 63 in 1931 to 46 in 1932 the circulation of the number of newspapers in Telugu declined due to the rigorous ban imposed on them by the Government. However this was no reflection on the decline in the importance of vernacular journalism as people still read surreptitiously. See K. Subramnanyam, *The Press in South India*, Madras, 1984.

\[\text{\footnotesize 114} \] There were a few acts of defiance by the unemployed handloom weavers clashing with the police who were then hard hit by the sudden fall in prices of cash crop, See David Arnold,' The politics of coalesence: The Congress in Tamil Nadu 1930-37', in D. A. Low, *Congress and the Raj. Facets of the Indian Struggle*, New Delhi, pp. 266-69. Simultaneously, the anti settlement struggle of Kistna and Godavari districts in 1931, the forest *Satyagraha* in Venkatagiri estate, the anti-zamindari struggle in Kanur Pendyala culminated in the historic *kisan* protection march in 1937 led by communists *kisan* leaders like N.G.Ranga. From Kanchipuram to Madras thousands of peasants marched through the districts of Srikakulam, Vizagapatnam, east and west Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Nellore districts ~ a distance of 1,512 miles on foot and rallied 4,50,000 peasants in 529 villages and received 800 memorandums from local *kisans*. This was mainly to demonstrate the peasant unrest and draw the newly formed congress government (1937-39) to the imperative need for the abolition of the *Zamindari* system and the need to redress the grievance and inabilities arising out of peasant indebtedness. Peasant school consciousness and school for volunteers was established on a large scale with Komma Reddy Satyanarayan Murthy, Challasari Vasudeva Rao, P. Kottiah, P.Sundarayya, Madhuri Anapurnayya, Bhamarapati Satyanarayana, Kaleshwara Rao, P.Timma Reddy and others worked under the leadership of N.G. Ranga. See, M.P.R. Reddi, *Peasant and State in Modern Andhra History*, Kavali, 1986 and see Vahini, 18 December 1938 and 13 November 1939.
British manufacturers contributed to this drastic reduction. In order to slow the tide of cheap Japanese price rates for British products, Indian production encouraged import substitution and the Indian cotton mills which had not been able to utilize their full capacity put in more shifts and increased their output.  

Some compensations for the loss of customs on the larger quantities of earlier imports were gained by way of the higher rates imposed on the remaining imports. Thus, speaking in terms of the Government, one sees, that after an initial slump in income from duties on cotton piece goods, there was a quick recovery evidenced in 1932-33 when the protective duty yielded a revenue of Rs. 6.2 million.

The year 1935 saw pressure from Gandhi, the programme of self-sufficiency and a scheme for wage enhancement with the view of making spinning not merely a subsidiary but an independent occupation receiving full impetus. The year marked a distinct transition in the politics of the AISA in the production as well as distribution of *khadi*. The administrative machinery during this year adopted to serve primarily a goal of self-sufficiency of a family, village, *taluk*, district and province. Gandhi advocated during this year that the desirability of revising the scale of remuneration for spinning and other services connected with the production of *khadi* so as to ensure to the workers the minimum

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115 This was mainly as a result of the Commons' debate on the labour amendment dealing with unemployment on Feb. 13, Mr. Clynes referring to the cotton industry declared that the political policy had a great deal to do with the loss of Lancashire markets in India and China. Also, Japanese competition could not alone be accounted for this huge decline of exports of cotton cloth. He urged the Government to make an impartial enquiry to ascertain how far the threatened wage reduction could make any contribution to cheaper production or better markets. *Indian Review*, Vol. 29, No. 4, April 1928.

requirement of a healthy life. Not only this, but the administrative machinery of the Congress, arranged ways and means to keep the organization without malpractices. A Vigilance Committee was appointed to save it from, "cunning, calculating politicians who newly joined the Congress" and "created amongst primary members... to fight election battles". V. Anantha Rao, the Secretary of the Vizagapatnam Vigilance branch appealed for a "cleanse the Congress campaign" in order to maintain the sanctity of the all India Congress organization from petty mercenary groups.

By 1936, the living wage scheme worked out to be 2 or 3 annas per day which came close to the average income of a field labourer. The system of issuing machine ginned lint to the spinner was now discontinued in favour of supplying kappas (seed cotton) to them. Hand gins were sold at half rates to the spinners and the value recovered in small installments from the workers wages. Similarly, the speed wheels and the spindles were also provided at half the rate to the spinners.

Therefore, the charkhas in coastal Andhra, under the new scheme provided not only a supplementary occupation but added in a substantial measure to agriculture and other income and its utility value could not be denied here. Meanwhile, efforts were made to produce long staple variety of cotton in which Egyptian cotton was famous. India produced 40 lakh bales of cotton- mainly the short staple variety -- known as Bengal cotton. In Andhra it

117 Annual Report of AISA for the year 1933, p. 23.

Given a satisfactory spinning wheel, and well carded slivers an efficient worker spun at the rate of 400 yards per hour. Taking this as the basic speed of spinning, rates were calculated. This it is seen, enabled the spinner to earn the 2-3 annas minimum wage for eight hours of efficient work
was known as *dolaras, umras, salems, cocanadas, Malvas, etc.* By 1940, largely as a result of the indefatigable work of Indian Central Cotton Committee, the production of long *stapled* varieties of cotton began to be produced on a large scale.\(^{121}\)

Competition was rampant during the depression period during which the mill industry experienced decline while *khaddar* began to have a fair stronghold because of not being controlled by external factors. This led to consumption by mill owners to fraud in two ways: (i.) producing spurious *khadi* as genuine and (ii.) the dealers used to go to the *swawalambis* and buy their surplus cloth and their yarn producing by paying cash or giving cheap mill cloth in exchange. Gandhi tackled this problem by getting the mill owners too, involved in the *khadi* programme and with a moral sense of trusteeship. They in turn became so attracted by Gandhian philosophy that large funds of donation were given to Gandhi's *ashramas* in the name of practicing business morality.

A comparative statement showing production in value weight yardage and sales figures for nine months ending 30-9-1936 of AISA branches are given in the table below. They show figures which depict value of cotton in 1936 declining to almost half of its productive value compared to the earlier years. The fall in the sales

By 1940 largely as a result of the indefatigable work of the Indian Central Cotton committee the production of long stapled varieties of cotton began to be produced on a large scale. See *Bharati*, Vol. 9 1932. Similar views are also expressed by Frank Noyce, 'India's Economic Contributions to the War', *The Asiatic Review*, Jan. 1940, pp. 31-38.

It is to be noted that the Cocanada cotton especially was grown in small areas of Guntur, Nellore Krishna, east Godavari and Vizagapatnam districts. The name was derived from the port through which this cotton was exported i.e., Cocanada. The cotton was brown in colour and was classified as *Tharlapadu* red, *(cumbum* and Markapur of the Kurnool district). It has a very light colour and is a short staple variety of about 3/4 " and is sown usually in June-July. Due to the fall in exports of the Second World War, the area under this head also declined. It is relevant during this period, to study that this variety was locally consumed for handspinning and *khadi* work and had a special value for its natural colour, strength and dyeing properties.
is seen mainly due to (i.) rise in price and (ii.) difficulties in securing adequate supplies of suitable varieties experienced by the depots owing to the curtailment of private production. See table: 

Table 3.10:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Value: (in Rs)</th>
<th>Weight: (in Lbs.)</th>
<th>Yardage: (in yards)</th>
<th>Sales: (in Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>53,173</td>
<td>1,02,744</td>
<td>35,733</td>
<td>50,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>25,771</td>
<td>99,499</td>
<td>21,756</td>
<td>40,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>19,720</td>
<td>20,860</td>
<td>11955</td>
<td>20,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>17,427</td>
<td>16,877</td>
<td>13291</td>
<td>16,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>22,14,858</td>
<td>1,88,814</td>
<td>187317</td>
<td>2,00,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>88,537</td>
<td>80,313</td>
<td>131655</td>
<td>108091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>243,370</td>
<td>23,4813</td>
<td>1,41,936</td>
<td>1,96,983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shankar lal Banker had estimated the total production of hand woven and hand spun khadi in the year 1926 for the Madras Presidency was 2,059,835 Sq. yards, valued at Rs 9,16,073, while the sales amounted to Rs. 10,03,365. The number of spinners engaged in the production of khadi amounted to 3,64,873 and the weavers wages to Rs 1,90,426. The total capital of the association invested in the Presidency was Rs 7,89,751 of which 5,75,647 lay invested in stocks at the end of the year 1936. Speaking specifically of the Andhra region statistics collected of production and the sales of AISA and other certified organisations for the year ending June 1938 are given below: Refer to the AISA Report for the year 1938.

Table No. 3.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Value (in Rs)</th>
<th>Sq. yards (in Rs)</th>
<th>Sales (in Rs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>196967</td>
<td>77317</td>
<td>4394511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>7437822</td>
<td>2931441</td>
<td>544705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

122 Compiled from The extracts from the brochure issued by the A1CC, All India Khadi and Swadeshi Exhibition Guide, 19 December 1937- Jan. 15, 1938, Congress House Madras, 1940.

123 Refer to the AISA Report for the year 1938.
Conglomerating Gujjula Rajiah’s conclusions (see chapter II.) and the figures given above of a proportional increase in the overall share of textile employment in Andhra, one can in support of this conclusion, attribute it to the response meted to the Gandhian ideology which was the reigning spirit of the age. A basis of 3 annas spinning wage for 8 hours sufficient spinning was promoted by January 1939. Due to favourable political conditions and the prevalence of famine in some provinces khadi production became quicker and output increased over the year 1938, being as much as 78% in 1939.\textsuperscript{124}

Therefore, though one observes that the handloom weavers in Andhra received a certain set back in some years, these workers showed enough resistance and skill to adopt to the changing economic structure. They took advantage of this very fact of diminution of imports to further their interests, consolidate and expand production. The preoccupation of Indian mills geared to the military supplies, with little possibility of adding to mill machinery in any way enabled the handloom industry to expand production especially in the field of women's garments by taking advantage of the cheap and brilliant dyes imported from Germany.

By 1940, the ultimate in the concept of self-sufficiency was seen. Self sufficiency in Gandhian terms were of two kinds. First, working for cloth for their own use as part of their wage and second, real self sufficiency by which spinning is done not for wage but for the spinners' own family use. In 1940, the council defined self sufficient people as habitual and full khadi weavers who regularly spin at least 7½ hanks of yarn per month for their use.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{124}ibid.
\textsuperscript{125}Annual Report of the year ending 1940.
The year 1930, as already observed, had witnessed a similar mass enthusiasm for spinning in Andhra though it was short lived. Now as the underlying ideology had entered deep into the minds of the people, they worked strenuously towards the goal of swaraj. In evidence see the sales on the occasion of 'Gandhi Jayanthi' on October 2nd 1940.\(^{126}\)

See Table 3.12 below:

| All India Figures on Oct. 2, 1940 (Value in Rupees) |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| **1940** | **1939** |
| Andhra | 62,410 | 50,369 |
| Bombay | 1,83,555 | 1,39,034 |
| Bengal | 22,358 | 15,027 |
| Bihar | 173,344 | 139,157 |
| Burma | 10,762 | 9,520 |
| Central provinces | 56,207 | 29,576 |
| Gujarat | 2,55,670 | 1,66,563 |
| Karnataka | 11,390 | 12,777 |
| Kerala | 7,323 | 9,059 |
| Punjab | 53,896 | 4,453 |
| Tamil Nadu | 19,583 | 14,000 |

The Harijan in 1940 estimated that 633 1/4 crores of rupees of square yards of cloth was being consumed annually in India, supplied by foreign sources 63 crores, Indian mills 409 crores, handwoven cloth woven from foreign and home mill yarn was 160 crores and woven from khadi 1 1/4 crore.\(^{1-7}\)

Rajat Kanta Ray remarks that it is surprising to note that throughout the depression, domestic market for cloth in India continued to expand from 1897-99 to 1937-39 and there was substantial increase of cloth available for consumption in India. From 3,202 million yards to 5,496 million yards (an increase of 2,500

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\(^{127}\) Adapted from Krishna Das Gandhi's article in, Maharashtra Khadi Parishad, Harijan, 8 Sept. 1940.
million yards) which was accompanied by a substantial increase of per capita consumption of 3.4 yards.\textsuperscript{128}

Unlike the commencement of the First World War which had a depressing effect, the Second World War saw industries operating under the influence of certain amount of optimism engendered by the memory of the handloom conditions of last year. Yarn and cloth prices rose considerably and quotation of shares on stock exchanges were heavily marked up. Since 1943, profits of cloth mills soared to record heights and the exorbitant prices fetched by yarns and cloth put a great strain on the purchasing power of the \textbf{public}.\textsuperscript{129}

\textbf{See Table 3.13 :} (Jan. to June)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1939</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1942</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>in sq. yds:</td>
<td>10,17,900</td>
<td>8,97,604</td>
<td>7,86,027</td>
<td>10,12,785</td>
<td>4,8541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value (in Rs.):</td>
<td>4,60,551</td>
<td>4,35,950</td>
<td>4,06,020</td>
<td>5,89,417</td>
<td>232,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sales value:</td>
<td>2,93,430</td>
<td>3,12,812</td>
<td>3,46,384</td>
<td>5,00,450</td>
<td>2,43,189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| T.N.     | in sq yds: | 33,04,073 | 23,85,110 | — | 17,49,898 | 23,95,034 |
|          | Value (in Rs.): | 16,57,472 | 11,84,987 | — | 10,46,091 | 14,21,249 |
|          | Sales value | 9,83,976 | 10,88,321 | — | 10,16,371 | 11,45,235 |

| All India | in sq yds: | 1,25,59,594 | 11,33,29,964 | — | 95,51,43 | 1,20,39,478 |
|           | Value (in Rs.): | 54,94,486 | 50,08,416 | — | 51,36,983 | 70,37,887 |
|           | Sales value | 54,98,620 | 64,84,724 | — | 77,72,750 | 96,12,281 |

The second period, i.e., from the middle of 1942 was a period of favourable but abnormal activity for the textile industry on the whole. Some confusion was perceptible particularly among the people of coastal Andhra where Kakinada and Vizagapatnam were bombed by Japan on October 1942. During this period, this


area also witnessed strikes in mills which affected production of yarn and cloth. Facilities for transporting made the problem of distribution rampant, making the daily necessities of life to rise sharply due to scarcity and **mal-distribution**. The following tables give figures to show the increase in economic contribution of India to Britain towards the Second World War:  

Table No. 3.14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Expenditure (in crores)</th>
<th>India's share (in crores)</th>
<th>British share (in crores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>215 (*52)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>358 (*38)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>397 (*60)</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2722</strong></td>
<td><strong>1198</strong></td>
<td><strong>1374</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circumstances were particularly favourable as a unique opportunity for small spinners and weavers for they could now be sure of high wages. Thus, receiving a boost every artisan began borrowing a little capital to invest it profitably in spinning and weaving. By 1942 mill yarn became as costly as handspun yarn. The former began selling higher so that there was a satisfactory demand for **khaddar**.  

Seen from this angle, one deduces that a

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132 *Testified by an oral interview with Vishwanath Tekumalla, Chief Surveyor, Department of Co-operative Societies, Madras, 1994-95.*
very large part of the *khaddar* consumption in the country was determined by economic considerations. The relative prices of mill yarn cloth and *khaddar* were the deciding factor in the purchase of *khaddar* by most consumers during this period.

Since 1943, profits of cotton mills soared to record heights and the exorbitant prices fetched by yarns and cloth put a great strain upon the purchasing power of the public. Three factors counted for the impetus given to the *Swadeshi* movement during the period 1944-45. The prospects of an early independence proclamation, presence of economists like J.C. Kumarappa, Sriman Narayan and K.T. Shah and finally the importance of a planning process for building economy on the lines of the Soviet five year plan. This in turn accelerated the cooperation of the efforts of economists towards planning on lines which Gandhi (and the Congress under his guidance) had advocated over the years. The situation engaged M.K. Gandhi, the AISA and all kindred organizations in planning and programming for a new India's economy. In this context Gandhi's theory of *samagraseva* and *samagrasevak* and his elaboration of the oceanic circle loomed large in importance.

At the end of 1945 Victor Sasoon an authority on Textile industry computed that if a yard of mill cloth of 20s counts costs 0-5-6, the same cloth woven on a handloom of same count would cost 1-3-0. Under the *khadi* scheme formulated by the textile department one yard of *khadi* would cost Rs. 1-7-0. Gandhi's insistence on *Swadeshi* had its ultimate result when the production of *khadi* rose

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134 Emphasized by Pragada Kottaiah, (Rajya Sabha member), Private interview at Hyderabad, October 1994.
to Rs.1.2 crores in 1941-42 and further to 1.4 crores in 1944-45. In the twenty months since the middle of June 1943, (during which period the scheme of cloth control had been in operation), the problem of the distribution of cloth had been problematic both to the Government and the textile control board. The first six months upto the end of 1943 was only an initial period of preparation for enforcing the control. Accordingly the machinery of control was decided, prices were reduced, dishoarding measures put into force and the movement of cloth standardized in the face of black marketing which had grown menacingly. A major recommendation of the textile control board was to stimulate yarn production through a grant of 10 crores to the AISA, to enable it to survive the scarcity of yarn.

See Table No. 3.16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Raw cotton</th>
<th>Cotton manufacture</th>
<th>Grain &amp; Pulses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895-96</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-01</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-06</td>
<td>1,576</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-11</td>
<td>2,176</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>2,493</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-21</td>
<td>2,249</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-26</td>
<td>4,405</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>3,235</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>2,729</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>3,231</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaking of the most important change in agriculture since the turn of the century; was the introduction of new strains of cotton plant in the Cambodia and karungani, increasing the quality and productivity of per acre of cotton grown in the Presidency by

138 Annual statement of the sea borne trade and navigation of the Madras presidency for the respective years that are give above (1895-1941). Published at Madras
the mid 1920s, the groundwork for an extensive cotton industry was being laid -with more gins; presses etc. appearing in the countryside and bankers in some of the main towns floating companies to build cotton mills, but these efforts did not bear fruit untill a decade later. In the thirties the volume of sea borne exports declined again to well below two million yards per annum due to depression but Indian exports once again were on the increase in 1937-38 and exported 241 million yards which was 60% more than in 1928 even though the world index compared with 1928 stood at 80%.

To conclude, in the earlier years of Gandhian ideology, one has evidence to prove that while Non Co-operation had undoubtedly been a success in south India, Gandhi’s specific programme of developing the 'khadi spirit' had gained only a mediocre response. Gandhi called for men to renounce their Government titles and offices and to boycott the Government schools, law courts and legislature urging these institutions to be replaced with National schools and local arbitration courts and to promote the production and consumption of handspun khaddar. Six out of the Madras Presidency 682 title holders relinquished their titles and in April 1921, 51 persons mostly honorary magistrates and municipal councillor had resigned their offices.

In the later years, the new arbitration courts and new schools flourished best in the towns particularly of western Tamil

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141 Gandhi himself was displeased with the poor response to khaddar wearing in the presidency towns in the earlier stages of Non Co-operation and voiced this in his CW, Vol. xix, pp. 496-565 and CW, Vol. XXI, pp. 159-232.

Nadu and Andhra deltas which were being stirred up for essentially local reasons as they were patronised by the rich local merchant patrons. The lower strata were wary in joining the Swadeshi movement as unemployment was rampant and they would be risking their jobs if they joined the movement. The partly educated dropouts from schools coming from the lower middle class took an active role in being linkages between the rural artisan (who did not know the disposal aspects of khadi and the yarn banks) and the towns.

The objection raised against the handloom movement was that the living wage earned by the spinner was so microscopic that as an occupation it could not attract sufficient number of people to make it an economic success. Gandhi had an answer to this. The charkha was not proposed as a full time occupation but as a part or spare time job for portions of the day and used in this way south Indian villages showed itself capable to supply 15% to 66% of family incomes.143

Treatment of the charkha movement from purely the economic point of view precludes one from describing the moral revolution that had also been brought in the weavers' thought process. For example, temperance and freedom from indebtedness and drink, that came in the wake of the charkha movement are as much economic as they are moral issues

Another potentiality of the charkha movement was the relief that it gave to the villagers during the famine years. A programme of paddy husking and other forms of relief in the flood and famine

143Young India, 13 August 1925 and 10 Sept. 1925.
areas (were taken up later to be discarded) but when the *charkha* was tried, it worked to perfection.\textsuperscript{144}

The concept of *khadi* and *Swadeshi* gradually transformed and reached a higher stage along with the mental growth of Gandhi over the years. Gandhi’s impact on the weaver was also seen in the technology, yarn banks and the disposal techniques of cloth which were perfected in later years. His impact on technology however, was limited as he wanted improvement of the individual and not mechanized industry. By the forties, making the weaver the central figure, in the development of all India's economy became a fetish for Gandhi.

His concept of the 'samagra seva' of involving every individual of the community in the production of cloth and his 'oceanic theory' which was planned for the upliftment of the weaver community as a whole was the primary and ultimate objective. However, one should not be unaware of the fact that Gandhi’s ideology was not only the panacea to the social problems of upper and middle strata of the society, but an immediate and economic one to the weaver and the down trodden.

The tremendous boost that the World Wars gave the handloom industry prove the point that if they would not have occurred then the progress of this industry would have been a slower one. The shortage and high prices of mill cloth brought about by the war time conditions acted as a catalyst, stimulating the concept of self-sufficiency and drew thousands of people to spinning and weaving besides the traditional community of weavers.

\textsuperscript{144} This was tried by Prafula Chandra Ray in west Bengal in 1923-24, cited in Richard Gregg, *Economics of Khaddar*, p. 180.
The importance Gandhi gave to the *charkha* is reflected in the continued interest that he demonstrated in its development for more than 25 years. The *charkha* according to Gandhi symbolized a non violent way of life while, the economics of *khadi* stood on certain fundamental assumptions. For a proper appreciation of Gandhi’s views it must be stated that the spinning wheel besides its immediate practical utilitarian aspect symbolized a new system'. It stood for an alternative system for the over centralized factory civilization.¹⁴⁵

Where the symbol of *khadi* differed was, that earlier in the hands of the *Swadeshi* leaders of 1905-10 home spun cloth was the political symbol but in the hands of Gandhi spinning was a *mantra* which was to gradually transform the moral fibre of the nation. The spinning wheel became more than just a means of regeneration of cottage industries or emphasizing the dignity of manual labour. But in the case of spinning wheel something else was added, something beyond economics, sociology or politics a kind of mystical concentration, upon services as a form and to him the pervading form of religion'.¹⁴⁶

As emphasized earlier, one of the major differences between the old *Swadeshi* of Bipan Chandra Pal and the new form given to it by Gandhi, lay in the fact that the former advocated discriminating protection of small industries on the basis of potential advantage and emphasized the indigenous nature of the products, irrespective of the method or the product. But for Gandhi though the indigenous nature of the product was stressed, organized industry was ruled out because he felt that there was no need for it. The

production for exports, as seen in the earlier paragraphs, received the last priority and planning mainly concentrated on (i.)
agricultural development, (ii.) development of village industries,
(iii.) promotion of housing, health and cleanliness, (iv.) spread of
education in villages and (v.) promotion of village organizations
and encouraging the cultural development in the villages.

It was obvious to Gandhi that rural India could not be
transformed without the help of urban intelligentsia. Therefore, to
make the country conscious about the villages he advised the
Congress committees to hold its annual sessions in the villages.
Thus, by this method it is seen that, planning would touch the life
of each and every citizen participating in the process of
development of state. There should be little scope for the members
of the state to exploit their position and they should be paid an
allowance based not on the fabulous profits of merchants but on
the average earnings of the citizens of the villages.¹⁴⁷

Gandhi's planning for an ideal society was formulated in
the social sphere of the ashram society where he tried to implement
his ideas of economic, society and political awareness. Another
noteworthy point is that the ashram society had many
characteristics in common with Marx's utopia of classless society.
The free society which Gandhi strove for and implemented in a
rudimentary manner in the ashram had the classlessness, the
abolition of the division of labour, the removal of the anti-thesis of
theory and practise, free time and occupation and the town and
country in common.¹⁴⁸

Refer to B.P. Pandey, "Towards a Gandhian approach to planning", Khadi
Gramudyog, Vol. 35, Jan. 1989, pp. 177-84. The Faizapur congress was the first to
be held in a village and Gandhi brought to notice that the session was free from
the scramble and hustle inevitable in big towns. See for further information on
this see B.R. Nanda, Mahatma Gandhi, a Biography, New Delhi, 1982, p. 376.
¹⁴⁷Rau Heimo, Mahatma Gandhi as the Germans see him, Bombay, 1976, p. 229.
Richard B. Gregg, goes a step further and elaborates that Gandhism is superior to socialism in providing for every person a common daily form of social work/service to help directly towards creating a new social and economic order and as everyone is urged to take part in it, this activities is psychologically wise. Gandhism through the wearing of *khaddar* and the use of the *charkha* attack the old gradations more subtly, directly and powerfully through symbolism, than does socialism.¹⁴⁹

What is significant to note is the meticulous details of the ways in which Gandhi was able to forge political linkages on local and regional levels. By bringing out connections between the cow and *khaddar*, between paddy and *khadi* etc, he brought out the indigenous nature of the whole movement. He agreed with Krishna Rao of Masulipatnam that handspinning should be reorganized as a *dharma* and performed as a *Yagna*.¹⁵⁰ *Sutra yagnas* soon followed and by 29 July 1939, the vernacular newspapers like the, *Krishna Patrika* and *Andhra Patrika*, propagated this idea vociferously. Their target was to enlist at least 1000 volunteers before Gandhi *jayanthi*. ¹⁵¹

Thus one observes, Gandhi using a consumer good as an ideological tool to mobilize the masses. His concept of *Swadeshi* is the main calculus of development, while his idea of decentralization is its derivative. The decentralization pattern of agro-based industrial production is very much akin to the doctrine of balanced regional economic development in modern terminology which argues for the adoption of the techniques of planning from below. Therefore, we see his decentralization

¹⁵⁰Sacrificial spinning in Andhra’ in Shankerlal Banker’s letter to M.K. Gandhi, in the *Harijan*, 7 Sept. 1939, p. 262
approach to development refers to the decentralization of economic activity from the village level onwards which however should not be understood as all economic activities as having to start from the village level.

There is flexibility in the Gandhian view to suggest that a group of villages can be considered as a decentralized unit for the purpose of organizing economic activity. His emphasis on village development was guided by two considerations (i.) to focus the attention of the political leaders on rural India where the major part of the population was concentrated and (ii.) to stop the exodus of the rural people to the unplanned towns and cities in search of a living.

Gandhi's idea was that, if the villages were made self-sufficient and self-reliant the people would not move to urban areas. Second, there was an aura of romanticism of 'city life', which promised the poor debt-laden villager a short cut to economic gains. The sociological implications of the Gandhian view of promoting village self-reliance was that it would perpetuate the existing social, economic inequalities by discouraging social and economic mobility and keep prosperity and education tied down in as narrow a sector as the village and thus not expose the villagers to the challenge of technological development. In the long run it would prove to be anti-rural and result in the creation of dual economies which would make the urban and rural sector separate entities by themselves.\textsuperscript{152}

To the critics of the \textit{khadi} ideology, it seemed to be a vain return to the ancient or middle ages but for Gandhi it was a dire

necessity of national existence. "The charkha reflected the will of the nation to be free from foreign exploitation." 153

When the question of Gandhi's appeal to the masses arise, one view posed in explaining the heavy response is that it must be sought in the peculiarities of India's economic circumstances that helped to produce a sympathetic audience. The task of re-awakening of the political consciousness of the Indian masses was undertaken by Gandhi on a scale far greater than had been performed by any other leader in modern times. His khadi programme was a stroke of genius. It had a political message, it was a social weapon, an economic solution and a national symbol.

To sum up, just as in the late nineteenth century cultural factors helped to preserve a minimum of demand for hand woven cloth, so also in the twentieth century the Swadeshi movement favoured one product and rejected the foreign one without much regard for the individual purse-and consequently managed to resuscitate the traditional textile economy. Along with this fact, Gandhi's social ideal of a rural economy based on manual labour in agricultural and handicrafts sector were reflected in an intensely religious life and it became the dominant feature of all those who desired to improve their economic conditions.

Gandhi's image conjured up before us until now has been that of a national leader or a saint's or an idealist who did not face the cruel realities of life. It is not the attempt here to make him appear as a charismatic leader or as a remote superhuman saint. "Though, such men are innovation and acknowledge their role as pioneers it should be recognized that their roots and strengths of

their greatness lie in the epoch or more concretely in the ethos of the period of material and cultural history".\textsuperscript{154}

Nevertheless, what this study has aimed at is that, Gandhian ideology and charisma stuck resonant chords in various elements of the Andhra handloom economy. The cult of \textit{Swadeshi} manifesting itself in the economic, social and cultural planes shaped the lives of the Andhra weavers in the twentieth century. This it has been demonstrated, had not been as a consequence of an individual power (here Gandhi's) to make history but was a result of a conjuncture of larger impersonal historical forces.