MODERN INDIAN HISTORY (1857 TO THE PRESENT):

INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

GANDHIAN PHASE (1917-1947)

HIS3 CO1

COMPLEMENTARY COURSE OF

BA ENGLISH/ BA ECONOMICS AND BA SOCIOLOGY

CUCBCSS

2014 Admn onwards

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Module I

Gandhian Tools and Early Struggles

Gandhian Ideology

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), herein after Gandhiji, was undoubtedly the most authentic and celebrated representative of the wisdom and culture of India in our times. His countrymen address him, with respect, as the Mahatma. For Many, among the greatest, Gandhiji was the great. He was a social reformer, an economist, a political philosopher and a seeker of truth. We consider him as a 'yugapurusha', one who inaugurated a new era. The contribution of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to the Indian national movement was un-paralleled. He made the Indian National Congress a peoples' Congress and the national movement a mass movement. He made people fearless and bold and taught them the non-violent method for fighting against injustice. He had a passion for individual liberty which was closely bound with his understanding of truth and self-realization. His search for truth led him to make deep forays within his own inner self as it led him to probe into the natural and social world around him, particularly the tradition which he considered his own. Gandhi’s philosophy was a profound engagement with modernity and its pitfalls. Against the evils of wanton industrialization, materialism and selfish pursuits, Gandhi suggested, in turn, swadeshi, primacy of the self and trusteeship; against the institution of state, as the force personified, and the prevalent notion of democracy where only heads are counted, he favored a swaraj type of democracy where everything springs from the free individual and where decisions are made bottom-up with the locus of power below. He proposed a minimal slate, vested only with coordinative powers, that supports decentralization with the autonomous individual as its base of support. A spiritual perspective infuses Gandhiji’s whole approach to life. This political understanding and practices, suggestions on the economy, social mobilization and practical life have their basis in immorality and ethics. Pursuit of Truth is his mantra and non-violence was integral to it. Among Gandhiji’s notable writings, mention may be made of An Autobiography: The Story, of My Experiments with Truth; The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi; Panchayati Raj; Sarvodaya and Hind Swaraj. He edited Young India which he later renamed as Harijan which remained his mouthpiece. Gandhi was also influenced by many: Tolstoy (Gospels in Brief; What to Do, The Kingdoms of God is Within You), Ruskin (Unto This Last), Thoreau (Civil Disobedience), Swami Vivekananda, Gokhale and Tilak, just to mention a few. He was familiar with the teachings of the major religions of the world. He was exceptionally well-read and even
translated such works as Plato's *Republic* into Gujarati. He maintained extensive correspondence with some of the most outstanding figures of his time.

The role of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian Freedom Struggle is considered the most significant as he single-handedly spearheaded the movement for Indian independence. The peaceful and non-violent techniques of Mahatma Gandhi formed the basis of freedom struggle against the British yoke. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2nd October 1869. After he came back to India from South Africa, where he worked as a barrister, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who led the Congress party, introduced Mahatma Gandhi to the concerns in India and the struggle of the people. The Indian independence movement came to a head between the years 1918 and 1922. A series of non-violence campaigns of Civil Disobedience Movement were launched by the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The focus was to weaken the British government through non-cooperation. The protests were mainly against abolition of salt tax, land revenue, reducing military expenses etc.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was ‘a man of millennium’ who imparts the lesson of truth, Non-violence and peace. The philosophy and ideology is relevant still today. The philosophy of Gandhi was based on truth, sacrifice, non-violence selfless service and cooperation. In modern times, nonviolent methods of action have been a powerful tool for social protest. According to Gandhi one should be brave and not a coward. He should present his views, suggestions and thoughts without being violent. One should fight a war with the weapons of truth and non-violence. Gandhi said that ‘There is no god higher than truth’. According to Gandhi’s thoughts nonviolence is ultimate solution of every kind of problem in the world. Gandhi was single person who fought against the British with the weapons of truth and Non-violence by persuading countrymen to walk on the path of non-violence. Gandhi leading a decades-long nonviolent struggle against British rule in India, which eventually helped India, wins its independence in 1947. By the efforts of Gandhi India became independent. Gandhi initiated non violence activities like Quit India movement and non-operation movement. Gandhi could never have done what he did alone, but with his ability to identify a seed here, a seed there and nurture it, he was able to create a forest of human change. He understood that it was not enough to be a leader, but to create leaders. In quite simple and clear words, Gandhism consists of the ideas, which Mahatma Gandhi put forth before human world. Along with that, to the maximum possible extent, Mahatma Gandhi treated his individual life in accordance with these ideas. Clearly; Gandhism is a mixture of Gandhi’s concepts and practices. The basic ground ship of Gandhism happens to be non-violence. The non-violence is the most ancient eternal value. This non-violence is the ground of ancient-most civilization and culture of India. Mahatma Gandhi said on this very account while making his concepts and practices based on non-violence: ‘I have nothing new to teach you’ Truth and non-violence are as old as hill. As we know, non-violence and truth are two sides of the same
coin. After knowing Gandhism, it is imperative for us to know clearly the concept of non-violence also as it accords the ground for Gandhism. Gandhi’s importance in the political world scenario is twofold. First, he retrieved non-violence as a powerful political tool and secondly manifestation of a higher spiritual goal, culmination in world peace. For Gandhi, means were as important as the end and there could be only one means - that of non-violence. As a situation opposite to violence is non-violence, we can firmly state, total nonviolence consists in not hurting some other one’s intellect, speech or action per own thought, utterance or deeds and not to deprive some one of his life. Mahatma Gandhi fully agrees with above-mentioned derivation of non-violence. He himself has said, Non-violence is not a concrete thing as it has generally been enunciated. Undoubtedly, it is a part of non-violence to abstain from hurting some living being, but it is only an iota pertaining to its identity. The principle of nonviolence is shattered by every evil thought, false utterance, hate or wishing something bad unto someone. It is also shattered per possession of necessary worldly things. In this chain Mahatma Gandhi clarified in an edition of Young India: ‘To hurt someone, to think of some evil unto someone or to snatch one’s life under anger or selfishness, is violence. In contrast, purest non-violence involves a tendency and presuming towards spiritual or physical benefit unto every one without selfishness and with pure thought after cool and clear deliberations’. The ultimate yardstick of violence or non-violence is the spirit behind the action. There are many examples of their use like resistance, non-violent resistance, and civil revolution. Mahatma Gandhi had to struggle in his whole life, but he never disappointed, he continued his innate faith in non-violence and his belief in the methods of Satyagraha. The significance of Satyagraha was soon accepted worldwide. Martin Luther King adopted the methods of Satyagraha in his fight against the racial discrimination of the American authorities in 1950. Gandhism is very much contextual today on this accord. It is significant. We should grasp importance of Gandhism while analyzing it. Presently a big portion of the world happens to be under Democratic system of Government. Theoretically, this system stands out to be the best up to now. This is a truth. It is the best because people are connected with it directly or indirectly at every level. Not only this, it is this very system, which provides maximum opportunities of public progress and development. People can themselves decide in this system the mode of their welfare. However, even though being theoretically the best system of government, if we peruse the democratic nations, we first of all find that there is non-equal development of the citizens. We subsequently find that these nations are more or less victimized by regionalism. They have problem relating to language. They are under clutches of terrorism and communalism. There is also the problem of negation of human rights in these nations. There are other vivid problems akin to mention above and peace is far away so long as these problems exist. All citizens must have equal development and they should have communal harmony towards making all citizens collective and unified partners in
progress. But, in reality, it is not so. It is essential that the nations of democratic system of government should be free from above-mentioned problems, must be capable of ensuring equal development of their all citizens and the citizens concerned must march forward on path of progress in unified way along with rendering contribution to world peace. Gandhi demonstrated to a world, weary with wars and continuing destruction that adherence to Truth and Non-violence is not meant for individuals alone but can be applied in global affairs too. Gandhi’s vision for the country and his dreams for the community as a whole still hold good for India. He got the community to absorb and reflect true values of humanity and to participate in tasks that would promote the greater good. These issues are still relevant to what free India is and represents. The main cause of worry today is intolerance and hatred leading to violence and it is here the values of Gandhi need to be adhered to with more passion.

**SATYAGRAHA AND AHIMSA**

Truth or Satya, for Gandhiji, is God himself. He therefore changed the statement, "God is Truth", later in his life into, "Truth is God" and suggested that it was one of the fundamental discoveries of his life's experiments. It is Truth, lze says, that exists; what does not exist is untruth. The life of man, for Gandhiji, is a marc11 of his pursuit in search of Truth or God. According to Gandhiji, truth is what the inner self experiences at any point of time; it 'is an answer to one's conscience; it is what responds to one's moral self. He was convinced that knowledge alone" leads a person to the truth while ignorance takes one away from the truth. Satyagraha means urge for Satya, or truth. Satyagraha is not merely the insistence on truth; it is, in fact, holding on to truth through ways which are moral and non-violent; it is not the imposition of one's will over others, but it is appealing to the reasoning of the opponent; it is not coercion but is persuasion. Gandhiji highlights several attributes of satyagraha. It is a moral weapon and does not entertain ill-feeling towards the adversary; it is a non-violent device and calls upon its user to love his enemy; it does not weaken the opponent but strengthens him morally; it is a weapon of the brave and is constructive in its approach. For Gandhiji, a Satyagrahi is always truthful, morally imbued, non-violent and a person without any malice; he is one who is devoted to the service of all. Truth, he firmly believed, can be attained only through non-violence which was not negative, meaning absence of violence, but was positively defined by him as love. Resort to nonviolence is recourse to love. In its positive sense, non-violence means love for others; in its negative sense, it seeks no injury to others, both in words as well as deeds. Gandhiji talked of non-violence of different people. There is the non-violence of the brave: one has the force but he does not use it as a principle; there is the non-violence of the weak: one does not have faith in non-violence, but he uses it for attaining his objectives; there is the nonviolence of the coward: it is not non-violence, but impotency, more harmful than violence. For Gandhiji, violence was a better option than cowardice.
Through non-violence one appeal to the truth that nestles in people and makes the latter realize it in themselves, come around, and join hands in the common march to truth along with those whom they earlier considered as their adversaries. Given the enmeshing of means and ends, Gandhiji, often saw Love, Truth, God and Non-violence as interchangeable terms. Truth or God or Self-realization being man's ultimate goal in life, this goal can be attained only through non-violence or ahimsa

**Champaran**

Champaran in the Tirhut division of North Bihar had been seething with agrarian discontent for some time. European planters had established indigo farms and factories in Champaran at the beginning of the 19th century. By 1916-17, a large part of Champaran was held by three proprietors, the Bettiah, Ram Nagar and Madhuban estates. Bettiah was the largest estate consisting of over one and half thousand villages. Most of these villages were not managed by landlords but were leased to thikadars or temporary tenure holders, of whom the most influential group was European indigo planters. The basic issue of the trouble was the system of indirect cultivation whereby peasants leased land from planters, binding themselves to grow indigo each year on specified land in return for an advance at the beginning of the cultivation season. Indigo was cultivated under the system called Tinkathia by which a tenant had to cultivate indigo at three-twentieths of his holdings, which generally constituted the best portion of the land although some slight modification were made in Tinkatiya system in 1908 it did not bring any material change in the degrading conditions of the tenants. Planters always forced them to sell their crop for a fixed and usually uneconomic price. At this time the demand of Indian indigo in the world market was declining due to the increasing production of synthetic indigo in Germany. Most planters at Champaran realised that indigo cultivation was no longer a paying proposition. The planters tried to save their own position by facing the tenants to bear the burden of their losses. They offered to release the tenants from growing indigo (which was a basic condition in their agreement with planters) if the latter paid compensation or damages. Apart from this, the planters heavily inflated the rents and imposed many illegal levies on the tenants. Gandhi took no interest in the case of indigo cultivators of Champaran when this question was discussed at the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1916 on the ground that he knew nothing about the matter. But Raj Kumar Shukul a peasant from Champaran, after strenuous efforts prevailed upon Gandhi to visit Champaran. Gandhi arrived in Bihar and started making investigations in person. When he reached Motihari, the headquarters of the district of Champaran, he was served with an order to quit Champaran as he was regarded a danger to the publicspace. Gandhi decided to disobey the order 'out of a sense of public responsibility. He was immediately arrested and tried in the district court. But the Bihar government ordered the Commissioner and District Magistrate to abandon proceedings and grant to Gandhi the facilities for investigation. Gandhi was warned not to stir up trouble, but he was free to continue his
investigations into the cultivator’s grievances. The Government appointed Champaran Agrarian Committee with Gandhi as one of its members. The committee unanimously recommended the abolition of Tinkathia system and many illegal exactions under which the tenants groaned. The enhanced rents were reduced, and as for the illegal recoveries, the committee recommended 25% refund. The major recommendations of the Committee were included in the Champaran Agrarian Act of 1917. In this agitation, the chief supporters of Gandhi came from the educated middle class. For instance, Rajendra Prasad, Gorakh Prasad, Kirpalani and some other educated persons from the cities worked as his close associates. Local Mahajans traders and village Mukhtars (attorneys) also helped him. But it was the peasantry which gave him the real massive support. And he approached them in a most simple and unassuming manner. In the countryside, he often walked on foot or travelled in a bullock cart. He came where ordinary people lived and talked in the language they understood.

**Ahmadabad Mill Strike**

Gandhi organised the third campaign in Ahmedabad where he intervened in a dispute between the mill owners and workers. Ahmedabad was becoming the leading industrial town in Gujarat. But the mill owners often faced scarcity of labour and they had to pay high wages to attract enough mill hands. In 1917 plague outbreak made labour shortage more acute because it drove many workers away from Ahmedabad to the countryside. To dissuade the workers from leaving the town, the mill owners decided to pay 'Plague Bonus' which was sometimes as high as 75% of the normal wages of the workers. After the epidemic was over, the mill owners decided to discontinue the Plague Bonus. But the workers opposed the employers' move and argued that it was helping them to offset the war-time rise in the cost of living. The mill owners were prepared to give 20% increase but the workers were demanding a 50% raise in the wages in view of the price hike. Gandhi was kept informed about the working conditions in Ahmedabad mills by one of the Mahatma Gandhi’s secretaries of the Gujarat Sabha. Gandhi knew Ambalal Sarabhai, a mill owner, as the latter had financially helped Gandhi’s Ashram. Moreover, Ambalal’s sister, Anasuya Sarabhai had reverence for Gandhi. Gandhi discussed the workers problems with Ambalal Sarabhai and decided to intervene in the dispute. Both workers and mill owners agreed to refer the issue to a board of arbitration consisting of three representatives of the employers and three of the workers with the British Collector as Chairman. Gandhi was included in the board as representing the workers. But, suddenly the mill owners decided to withdraw from the board on the ground that Gandhi had no real authority or mandate from the workers, and that there was no guarantee that workers would accept the arbitration award. They declared the lockout of the Mills from 22 February 1918.

In such a situation, Gandhi decided to study the whole situation in detail. He went through a mass of data concerning the financial state of the mills and compared their wage
rates with those of Bombay—Finally he came to the conclusion that the workers should demand 35% ‘instead of 50% increase in their wages. Gandhi began the Satyagraha movement against the mill owners. The workers were asked to take a pledge stating that they would not resume work without 35% increase and that they would remain law abiding during the lockout. Gandhi, assisted by Anasuya Sarabhai organised daily mass meetings of workers, in which he delivered lectures and issued a series of leaflets on the situation. The mill owners ended the lockout on 12 March and announced that they would take back the workers who were willing to accept 208 increases. On the other hand, Gandhi announced on 15 March that he would undertake a fast until a settlement was reached. Gandhi’s object was to rally he workers who were thinking of joining the mills despite their pledge. The fast created tremendous excitement in Ahmedabad and the mill owners were compelled to negotiate. A settlement was reached on 18 March. According to this agreement, the workers on their first day would receive 35% raise, in keeping with their pledge. On the second day, they would get 20% increase, offered by the mill owners. From the third day until the date of an award by an arbitrator, they would split the difference and receive 27 12% increases. Finally the arbitrator's award went in favor of the' workers and 35% raise was given to them.

Kheda

Gandhi’s second intervention was for the peasants of Kheda in Gujarat where his method of Satyagraha came under a severe test. 6ost of Kheda was a fertile tract and the crop of food grains, tobacco and cotton produced here had a convenient and sizeable market in Ahmedabad. There were many rich peasant proprietors called Patidars or from the Kunbi caste. Besides, a large number of small peasants and landless labourers also lived in this region.

In 1917 excessive rain considerably damaged the Kharif crop in Kheda. This coincided with an increase in the price of kerosine, iron, cloth and salt because of which the cost of living for the peasantry went up. In view of the poor harvest, the peasants demanded the remission of land revenue. The ‘revenue code’ provided for a total remission if the crops were less than twenty five per cent of the normal production. Two Bombay barristers, V.J. Patel and G.K. Parakh made the enquiries and reached the conclusion that a major portion of the crop was damaged. But the government did not agree with their findings. After enquiry into the state of the crop in Kheda the Collector decided that there was no justification for the remission of land revenue. The official contention was that the agitation was not a spontaneous expression of the peasant discontent but was started by 'outsiders' or members of the Home Rule League and Gujarat Sabha of which Gandhi was the president at that time. The truth was that initiative for the agitation against payment of revenue came neither from Gandhi nor from the other Ahmedabad politicians; it was raised by local village leaders like Mohanlal Pandya of Kapadvanj taluka in Kheda.
Gandhi maintained that the officials had over-valued the crops and the cultivators were entitled to a suspension of revenue as a legal right and not as a concession by grace. After a lot of hesitation he decided to launch a Satyagraha movement on 22 March 1918. He inaugurated the Satyagraha at a meeting in Nadiad, and urged the peasants not to pay their land revenue. He toured villages and gave moral support to the peasants in refusing to pay revenue, and to expel their fear of the government authority Gandhi was also assisted in this struggle by Indulal Yajnik, Vallabhbhai Pate and Anasuya Sarabhai. The Satyagraha reached at its peak by 21 April when 2,337 peasants pledged not to pay revenue. Most of the Patidars took part in this Satyagraha. Some poorer peasants were coerced by the government into paying the revenue. Moreover, a good Rabi crop had weakened the case for remission. Gandhi began to realise that peasantry was on the verge of exhaustion. He decided to call off the agitation when the government issued instructions that land revenue should be recovered from only those who had the capacity to pay and no pressure should be exerted on the genuinely poor peasants. This agitation did not have a uniform effect on the area. Only 70 villages out of 559 in Kheda were actually involved in it and it was called off after a token concession. But this agitation certainly helped Gandhi in broadening his social base in the rural Gujarat.

Rowlatt Act

During the years 1917 and 1918 Gandhi took little interest in all India issues. He protested against internment of Annie Besant, and also demanded the release of Ali brothers (Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali) who were actively associated with the Khilafat issue. They were political leaders of the time; Gandhi did not take active interest in the Reform proposals. But it was the British decision to pass 'Rowlatt Act' which forced him to plunge into national politics in a forceful manner.

In 1917 the Government of India had appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Justice Sydney Rowlatt to investigate “revolutionary crime” in the country and to recommend legislation for its suppression. After a review of the situation, the Rowlatt committee proposed a series of change in the machinery of law to enable the British government to deal effectively with the revolutionary activities. In the light of these recommendations the Government of India drafted two bills and presented them to the Imperial Legislative Council on 6 February 1919. The government maintained that the bills were 'temporary measures' which aimed at preventing 'seditious crimes'. The new bills attempted to make war-time restrictions permanent. They provided trial of offences by a special court consisting of three high court judges. There was no provision of appeal against the decision of this court which could meet in camera and take into consideration evidence not admissible under the Indian Evidence Act. The bill also proposed to give authority to the government to search a place and arrest a person without a warrant. Detention without a trial for maximum period of two years was also provided in the bills.
The bills were regarded by nationalist leaders as an effort to conciliate a section of official and non-official white opinion which had resented Montagu's Reform proposals.

Hartal

There was widespread condemnation of the bills in the whole country. Gandhi also launched his campaign against the bills. He said that the proposed powers were out of all proportion to the danger, particularly when the Viceroy possessed emergency powers of legislation by ordinance. He also stated that they were instruments of distrust and repression, nullifying the proposed reforms. Moreover, he opposed not just the content of the bills, but also the manner in which they were foisted in the country without regard to public opinion. He formed a Satyagraha Sabha on 24th February 1919 in Bombay to protest against the Rowlatt Bills. Its members signed a pledge to proclaim their determination "to refuse civilly to obey these laws (i.e., the Rowlatt Bills) and such other laws as a committee hitherto appointed may think fit and we (members) further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property." While launching the Satyagraha agitation against the Rowlatt bills Gandhi said: "It is my firm belief that we shall obtain salvation only through suffering and not by reforms dropping on us from the English –they use brute force, we soul force."

Despite strong opposition in the whole country the government remained firm. The Council passed one of the bills, though all the non-official members voted against it. The Viceroy gave assent to the bill on March 21, 1919. A group of liberals like Sir D.E. Wacha, Surendranath Banerjee, T.B. Sapru and Srinivas Sastri opposed Gandhi's move of starting Satyagraha. Their reason for opposing the Satyagraha was that it would hamper the Reforms. Some of them also felt that the ordinary citizen would find it difficult to civilly disobey the Act. Annie Besant also condemned the Satyagraha on the grounds that there was nothing in the Act to resist civilly, and that to break laws at the dictate of others was exceedingly dangerous. But the younger and radical elements of Annie Besant's Home Rule League supported Gandhi: They formed the main cadre of Satyagraha movement in different parts of the country. In organizing this Satyagraha, Gandhi was also assisted by certain Pan-Islamic Leaders, particularly Abdul Bari of Firangi Ulema group at Lucknow, and some radical members of the Muslim League. M.A. Jinnzh also opposed the Rowlatt Bill vehemently and warned the Government of the dangerous consequences if the government persisted in clamping on the people of India the "lawless law". Gandhi inaugurated his Satyagraha by calling upon the countrymen to observe a day of 'hartal' when business should be suspended and people should fast and pray as a protest against the Rowlatt Act. The date for the 'hartal' was fixed for 30th March but it was changed to April 6th. The success of hartal varied considerably between regions and between towns and the countryside. In Delhi a hartal was observed on 30th March and ten people were killed in police firing. Almost in all major towns of the country, the hartal was observed on the 6th April and the people responded enthusiastically. Gandhi
described the hartal as a 'magnificent success. Gandhi intensified the agitation on 7th April by advising the satyagrahis to disobey the laws dealing with prohibited literature and the registration of newspapers. These particular laws were selected because disobedience was possible for an individual without leading to violence. Four books including Hind Swaraj of Gandhi, which were prohibited by Bombay Government in 1910 were chosen for sale as an action of defiance against the government.

Gandhi left Bombay on the 8th to promote the Satyagraha agitation in Delhi and Punjab. But, as his entry in Punjab was considered dangerous by the government, so Gandhi was removed from the train in which he was travelling at Palwal near Delhi and was taken back to Bombay. The news of Gandhi's arrest precipitated the crisis. The situation became tense in Bombay and violence broke out in Ahmedabad and Virangam. In Ahmedabad the government enforced martial law.

The Punjab region as a whole and Amritsar, in particular, witnessed the worst scenes of violence. In Amritsar, the news of Gandhi's arrest coincided with the arrest of two local leaders Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal on 9th April. This led to mob violence and government buildings were set on fire, five Englishmen were murdered, and a woman, assaulted. The civil authority lost its control of the city. On 13th April, General Dyer ordered his troops to fire on a peaceful unarmed crowd assembled at Jallianwala Bagh. Most of the people were not aware of the ban on meetings, and they were shot without the slightest warning by General Dyer who later on said that it was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of 'producing a moral effect.'

The Jallianwala Bagh

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, was a seminal event in the British rule of India. On 13 April 1919, a crowd of nonviolent protesters, along with Baishakhi pilgrims, had gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh garden in Amritsar, Punjab to protest against the arrest of three Freedom Fighters, Dr. Satyapal, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Mahatma Gandhi, despite a curfew which had been recently declared. On the orders of Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, the army fired on the crowd for ten minutes, directing their bullets largely towards the few open gates through which people were trying to run out. The figures released by the British government were 370 dead and 1200 wounded. Other sources place the number dead at well over 1000. This "brutality stunned the entire nation", resulting in a "wrenching loss of faith" of the general public in the intentions of Britain. The ineffective inquiry and the initial accolades for Dyer by the House of Lords fuelled widespread anger, leading to the Non-cooperation Movement of 1920–22.

On Sunday, 13 April 1919, Dyer was convinced of a major insurrection and he banned all meetings, however this notice was not widely disseminated. That was the day of Baisakhi, the main Sikh festival, and many villagers had gathered in the Bagh. On hearing that a
meeting had assembled at Jallianwala Bagh, Dyer went with fifty Gurkha riflemen to a raised bank and ordered them to shoot at the crowd. Dyer continued the firing for about ten minutes, until the ammunition supply was almost exhausted; Dyer stated that 1,650 rounds had been fired, a number which seems to have been derived by counting empty cartridge cases picked up by the troops.\[^5\] Official British Indian sources gave a figure of 379 identified dead, with approximately 1,100 wounded. The casualty number estimated by the Indian National Congress was more than 1,500, with approximately 1,000 dead.

Dyer was initially lauded by conservative forces in the empire, but in July 1920 he was censured and forced to retire by the House of Commons. He became a celebrated hero in Britain among most of the people connected to the British Raj, for example, the House of Lords, but unpopular in the House of Commons, which voted against Dyer twice. The massacre caused a re-evaluation of the army's role, in which the new policy became "minimum force", and the army was retrained and developed suitable tactics for crowd control. Some historians consider the episode as a decisive step towards the end of British rule in India, although others believe that greater self-government was inevitable as a result of India's involvement in World War I.

**Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, 1919**

The Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms or more briefly known as Mont-Ford Reforms were reforms introduced by the British Government in India to introduce self-governing institutions gradually to India. The reforms take their name from Edwin Samuel Montagu, the Secretary of State for India during the latter parts of World War I and Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy of India between 1916 and 1921. The reforms were outlined in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report prepared in 1918 and formed the basis of the Government of India Act 1919. Indian nationalists considered that the reforms did not go far enough while British conservatives were critical of them.

In late 1917, Montagu went to India to meet up with Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India, to meet with leaders of Indian community to discuss the introduction of limited self-government to India and protecting the rights of minority communities. The Report went before Cabinet on 24 May and 7 June 1918 and was embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919. These reforms represented the maximum concessions the British were prepared to make at that time. The franchise was extended, and increased authority was given to central and provincial legislative councils, but the viceroy remained responsible only to London.

The changes at the provincial level were significant, as the provincial legislative councils contained a considerable majority of elected members. In a system called "dyarchy," the nation-building departments of government – agriculture, education, public works, and the like – were placed under ministers who were individually responsible to the legislature. The departments that made up the "steel frame" of British rule – finance, revenue, and
home affairs – were retained by executive councillors who were nominated by the Governor. They were often, but not always, British and who were responsible to the governor.

In 1921 another change recommended by the report was carried out when elected local councils were set up in rural areas, and during the 1920s urban municipal corporations were made more democratic and "Indianized.

The main provisions were the following:

1. The secretary of state would control affairs relating to Government of India
2. The Central Legislature would comprise two chambers- The Council of State and the Indian Legislative Assembly
3. The Central Legislature was empowered to enact laws on any matter for whole of India.
4. The Governor General was given powers to summon, prorogue, dissolve the Chambers, and to promulgate Ordinances.
5. The number of Indians in Viceroy's Executive Council would be three out of eight members.
7. Dyarchy in the Provinces-
   1. Reserved subjects like Finance, Law and Order, army, police etc.
   2. Transferred subjects like Public Health, Education, agriculture, local self government etc.

There would henceforth be direct election and an extension of Communal franchise.
Module II

Gandhian Political Programmes

Non-Co-operation Movement.

The Gandhi Era in the Indian Freedom Struggle took place with the Non Cooperation Movement. This movement was led by Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress. This was the first-ever series of nationwide movement of nonviolent resistance. The movement took place from September 1920 until February 1922. In the fight against injustice, Gandhi’s weapons were non-cooperation and peaceful resistance. But after the massacre and related violence, Gandhi focused his mind upon obtaining complete self-government. This soon transformed into Swaraj or complete political independence. Thus, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the Congress Party was re-organized with a new constitution, with the aim of Swaraj. Mahatma Gandhi further extended his non-violence policy to include the Swadeshi Policy, which meant the rejection of foreign-made goods. Mahatma Gandhi addressed all the Indians to wear Khadi (homespun cloth) instead of British-made textiles. He strongly appealed to all Indians to spend some time spinning khadi for supporting the independence movement of India. This was a policy to include women in the movement, as this was not considered a respectable activity. Moreover; Gandhi also urged to boycott the British educational institutions, to resign from government jobs, and to leave British titles. Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore resigned the title knight from the British soon after the Jalianwalabagh Massacre as a protest. When the movement reached great success, it ended unexpectedly after the violent clash in Chauri Chaura, Uttar Pradesh. Following this, Mahatma Gandhi was also arrested and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. Indian National Congress was divided into two segments. Furthermore, support among the Hindu and Muslim people was also breaking down. However; Mahatma Gandhi only served around 2 years and was released.

Non-Cooperation was a movement of passive resistance against British rule, which was initiated by Mahatma Gandhi. To resist the dominance of the British Government and advance the Indian nationalist cause, the non-cooperation movement was a non-violent movement that prevailed nationwide by Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. This movement took place from September 1920 to February 1922 and initiated Gandhi era in the Independence Movement of India. The Rowlatt Act, Jaliwanwala Bagh massacre and Martial Law in Punjab caused the native people not to trust the British Government anymore. The Montagu- Chelmesford Report with its diarchy could satisfy a few only. Until then Gandhi believed the justice and fair-play of the British Government, but after this incidences he felt that Non-cooperation with the Government
in a non-violent way must be started. In the meantime the Muslims in India also revolted against the harsh terms of the Treaty of Severs between Allies and Turkey and they started Khilafat movement. Gandhi also decided to stand beside them. Gandhiji’s idea of winning over Muslim support also helped in Non-Cooperation Movement of India. Gandhi had given a notice to the Viceroy in his letter of 22nd June in which he had affirmed the right recognized `from time immemorial of the subject to refuse to assist a ruler who misrules`. After the notice had expired the Non-Cooperation movement was launched formally on 1st August of 1920. At the Calcutta Session on September, 1920 the program of the movement was stated. The programs of Non-cooperation involved the surrender of titles and offices and resignation from the nominated posts in the government body. It included not attending Government duties, Durbars and other functions, withdrawing children from government schools and colleges and establishment of national schools and colleges. The people of India were instructed to boycott the British courts and establish the private judicial courts. The Indians should use Swadeshi cloth and boycott the foreign clothes and other things. Gandhiji strictly advised the Non-Cooperators to observe truth and non-violence. The decision taken in Calcutta Session was supported in the Nagpur Session of the Congress on December; 1920. The decision was also taken for the betterment of the party organization. Any adult man or woman could take Congress membership for 4 annas as subscription. This adoption of new rules gave a new energy to the Non-Cooperation movement and from January of 1921 the movement gained a new momentum. Gandhi along with Ali Brothers went to a nationwide tour during which he addressed the Indians in hundreds of meetings. In the first month of the movement, about nine thousand students left schools and colleges and joined the national institutions. During this period about eight hundred national institutions were established all over the country. The educational boycott was most successful in Bengal under the leadership of Chitta Ranjan Das and Subhas Chandra Bose. In Punjab also the educational boycott was extensive under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai. The other active areas were Bombay, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Uttar Pradesh. The movement also affected Madras. The boycott of law courts by the lawyers was not as successful as the educational boycott was. The leading lawyers like, Motilal Nehru, CR Das, Mr Jayakar, V Patel, Asaf Ali Khan, S Kitchlew and many others gave up their lucrative practices and many followed their path inspired by their sacrifice. Bengal again led in this matter and Andhra, UP, Karnataka and Punjab followed the state. However the most successful item of the Non-Cooperation was the boycott of foreign clothes. It took such an extensive form that value of import of the foreign clothes reduced from hundred and two crores in 1920-21 to fifty-seven crores in 1921-22. Although some of the veteran political leaders like the Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant opposed Gandhiji’s plan but the younger generation supported him fully. Muslim leaders like Maulana Azad, Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Abbas Tyabji, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali also
supported him. In the month of July 1921, the Government had to face a new challenge. Mohammad Ali and other leaders believed that it was `religiously unlawful for the Muslims to continue in the British army` and they were arrested for their view. Gandhi and other Congress leaders supported Muhammad Ali and issued a manifesto. The next dramatic event was visit of Prince of Wales on 17th November, 1921. The day on which Prince boarded on Bombay Port the day was observed as a `Hartal Divas` all over India. The Prince was greeted with empty streets and closed shops wherever he went. The Non-Cooperators gained more and more energy at their success and became more aggressive. The congress volunteer corps turned into a powerful parallel police. They used to march in formation and dressed in uniform. Congress had already granted permission to the Provincial Congress Committees to sanction total disobedience including non-payment of taxes. The Non-Co operational movement had other effects also which are not very direct. In UP it became difficult to distinguish between a Non-Co operational meeting and a peasant meeting. In Malabar and Kerala the Muslim tenants roused against their landlords. In Assam the labors of tea-plantation went with strike. In Punjab the Akali Movement was considered as a part of Non-Cooperation movement. The Non-Cooperation movement particularly strengthened in Bengal. The movement was not only seen in Kolkata but it also agitated the rural Bengal and an elemental awakening was observed. The movement reached a climax after the Gurkha assault on coolies on the river port of Chandpur (20-21st May). The whole Eastern Bengal was under the lash of the movement under the leadership of JM Sengupta. The other example was the Anti-Union Board agitation in Midnapur led by Birendranath Sashmal. As the Non-Cooperation movement proceeded the woman of India, especially from Bengal wanted to take active part in the protest movement. The women nationalists were assembled under the Mahila Karma Samaj or the Ladies organization Board of the Pradesh Congress Committee of Bengal. The ladies members of that organization arranged meeting and circularized the spirit of Non-Cooperation. Women volunteers were enlisted to take part in the movement. The ladies from many respected families led them. CR Das`s wife Basanti Devi and sister Urmila Devi, JM Sengupta`s wife Nellie Sengupta, Mohini Devi, Labanya Prabha Chanda played significant role in this movement. Picketing of foreign wine and cloth shops and selling of Khaddar in the streets were the point of attention of this movement. The Government proclaimed Sections 108 and 144 of the code of criminal procedure at various centers of agitation. The Congress Volunteer Corpse was declared illegal. By December 1921 More than thirty thousand people were arrested from all over the India. Except Gandhiji, most of the prominent leaders were inside jail. In mid-December Malaviya initiated a negotiation, which was futile. The conditions were like that it offered sacrifice of Khilafat leaders, which Gandhiji could never accept. At that time Gandhiji was also under a pressure from the higher leaders of Congress to start the mass civil disobedience. Gandhiji gave an ultimatum to the Government but the British Government paid no attention to it. In
response, Gandhiji initiated a civil disobedience movement in Bardoli Taluqa of Surat district of Gujrat. Unfortunately at this time the tragedy of Chauri Chaura occurred that change the course of the movement, where a mob of three thousand people killed twenty-five policemen and one inspector. Gandhi was in support of complete nonviolence and this incident was too much for him to bear. He ordered to suspend the movement at once. Thus, on February 12th, 1922 the Non-Cooperation movement totally stopped. There were limitations in achievements of Non-Cooperation Movement as it apparently failed to achieve its object of securing the Khilafat and changing the misdeeds of Punjab. The Swaraj could not be achieved in a year as it was promised. The retreat of the February 1922 was only temporary. The movement slowed down gradually. The part of Battle was over but the war continued.

**Dandi March.**
Mahatma Gandhi returned to the forefront again in 1928. On March 12, 1930 Gandhi launched a new Satyagraha against the tax on salt. He started the historic Dandi March, by walking from Ahmedabad to Dandi, to break the law that had deprived the poor of his right to make his own salt. Gandhi broke the Salt law at the sea beach at Dandi. This movement stimulated the entire nation and it came to be known as Civil Disobedience Movement. On 8th May, 1933, he started a 21-day fast of self-purification in order to help the Harijan movement.

**Salt satyagraha**
The Salt Satyagraha, also known as *The Dandi March*, began on 12 March 1930 and was an important part of the Indian independence movement. It was a direct action campaign of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly in colonial India, and triggered the wider Civil Disobedience Movement. This was the most significant organised challenge to British authority since the Non-cooperation movement of 1920–22, and directly followed the Purna Swaraj declaration of independence by the Indian National Congress on 26 January 1930. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi led the Dandi march from his base, Sabarmati Ashram near Ahmedabad, to the coastal village of Dandi, located at a small town called Navsari, in the state of Gujarat. As he continued on this 24-day, 240-mile (390 km) march to Dandi to produce salt without paying the tax, growing numbers of Indians joined him along the way. When Gandhi broke the salt laws at 6:30 am on 6 April 1930, it sparked large scale acts of civil disobedience against the British Raj salt laws by millions of Indians. The campaign had a significant effect on changing world and British attitude towards Indian independence and caused large numbers of Indians to join the fight for the first time.

After collecting salt at Dandi, Gandhi continued southward along the coast, producing salt and addressing meetings on the way. The Congress Party planned to stage a satyagraha at the Dharasana Salt Works, 25 miles south of Dandi. However, Gandhi was arrested on the midnight of 4–5 May 1930, just days before the planned action at Dharasana. The Dandi
March and the ensuing Dharasana Satyagraha drew worldwide attention to the Indian independence movement through extensive newspaper and newsreel coverage. The satyagraha against the salt tax continued for almost a year, ending with Gandhi's release from jail and negotiations with Viceroy Lord Irwin at the Second Round Table Conference. Over 80,000 Indians were jailed as a result of the Salt Satyagraha. However, it failed to result in major concessions from the British.

The Salt Satyagraha campaign was based upon Gandhi's principles of nonviolent protest called satyagraha, which he loosely translated as "truth-force." Literally, it is formed from the Sanskrit words satya, "truth", and agraha, "force". In early 1930 the Indian National Congress chose satyagraha as their main tactic for winning Indian independence from British rule and appointed Gandhi to organise the campaign. Gandhi chose the 1882 British Salt Act as the first target of satyagraha. The Salt March to Dandi, and the beating by British police of hundreds of nonviolent protesters in Dharasana, which received worldwide news coverage, demonstrated the effective use of civil disobedience as a technique for fighting social and political injustice. The satyagraha teachings of Gandhi and the March to Dandi had a significant influence on American activists Martin Luther King, Jr., James Bevel, and others during the movement for civil rights for blacks and other minority groups in the 1960s.

**Khilafat Movement**

During the First World War, Turkey joined the central powers against Britain. The sympathy of Indian Muslims, who regarded the Sultan of Turkey as their spiritual leader or Khalifa, was naturally with Turkey. After the war with defeat of Turkey, the Allied powers removed the Khalifa from power in Turkey which aggrieved the Indian Muslims against the British Government. Hence the Muslims started the Khilafat movement in India for the resumption of Khalifa's position. A Khilafat Committee was formed under the leadership of Mahammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Maulana Azad and Hasrat Mohini to organise a country-wide agitation. The main object of Khilafat Movement was to force the British Government to change its attitude towards Turkey and to restore the Sultan. October 17, 1919 was observed as Khilafat Day, when the Hindus along with Muslims in fasting observed hartal on that day. An All India Khilafat Conference was held at Delhi on November 23, 1919 with Gandhi as its president. The Conference resolved to withdraw all cooperation from the Government, if the Khalifat demands were not met. Congress leaders, like Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, viewed the Khalifat Movement as an opportunity to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity against British. A joint Hindu- Muslim deputation met the Viceroy on the Khalifat issue, but it failed to yield any result. The central Khalifat Committee met at Allahabad from 1st to 3rd June, 1920 which was attended by a number of congress leaders. In this meeting a programme of Non-Cooperation towards the Government was declared. It was to include boycott of titles, can offered by the Government, boycott of civil services, army and police and non-payment of
taxes to the Government. Gandhi insisted that unless the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were undone, there was to be non-cooperation with the Government.

**Civil Disobedience Movement**

Civil Disobedience Movement, launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, in 1930, was one of the most significant phases of Indian freedom struggle. The Simon Commission, which was formed in November 1927 by the British Government to chart and conclude a Constitution for India, included members of the British Parliament only. As a result, the Commission was boycotted by every section of the Indian social and political platforms as an ‘All-White Commission’. The opposition to the Simon Commission in Bengal was noteworthy. In disapproval against the Commission, a ‘Hartal’ or Strike was observed on 3rd of February, 1928 in various parts of the region. Widespread demonstrations were held in Kolkata on 19th of February, 1928, the day of Simon’s arrival to the city. Further, on 1st of March, 1928, meetings were held simultaneously in all 32 wards of the city, spurring people to restore the movement for boycott of British goods. Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on 5th of May, 1930, just days before his projected raid on the Dharasana Salt Works. The Dandi March and the resultant Dharasana Satyagraha drew worldwide attention to the Civil Disobedience Movement through widespread newspaper coverage. It continued for almost a year, ending with the release of Mahatma Gandhi from jail and after the discussions at the Second Round Table Conference with Viceroy Lord Irwin. The crusade had a significant effect on changing British attitudes toward Indian independence and caused huge numbers of Indians to aggressively join the fight for the first time. The Salt March to Dandi and the flogging of hundreds of non-violent protesters in Dharasana, marked the efficient use of civil disobedience as a method for fighting social and political injustice. On 8th of April 1929, members of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association attacked the assembly chamber of the Imperial Legislative Council in Delhi. In response, Lord Irwin published a Public Safety Bill. Moreover, on 31st of October, Lord Irwin announced that the natural constitutional progress of India was the attainment of Dominion Status. The Congress Party indicated its willingness to cooperate in formulating a Dominion constitution. In November, measures were accepted in such a way that Congress rejected the declaration. On 23rd of December, Lord Irwin met with Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Tej Bahadur Sapru in New Delhi. Erwin however, could not arrive at an agreement for framing a constitution under Dominion Status. At the ensuing 1930 annual meeting of the Congress Party held at Lahore, the Congress declared itself for independence rather than Dominion Status and authorized a campaign of Civil Disobedience. Gandhi’s Civil Disobedience Movement came out as a march to Dandi, in objection to the tax on salt. Gandhi reached Dandi on April 6th, and explicitly violated the salt law. On 18th of April, around one hundred revolutionaries
attacked police and railway armories at Chittagong. Mahatma Gandhi condemned the raid, which had made a deep impression throughout India. On 5th of May, the Government of India had Gandhi arrested and lodged at Yervada Jail near Pune. Following the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi, the British faced the full programme of Civil Disobedience as composed of Indian raids on salt depots, refusal to pay taxes in chosen areas, spirits and avoidance of business with all British firms, disobedience of forest laws and boycott of foreign cloth. On 30th of June, the Government of India outlawed the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress Working Committee. Further, on 23rd of July, Lord Irwin facilitated visits to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru by two Indian Liberals, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mukund Ramrao Jayakar, for the purpose of finding ways to end civil disobedience movement. On 25th of January 1931, Lord Irwin authorized Gandhi’s release from prison and withdrew prohibition of illegality against the Congress Working Committee. Between February to March, 1931, Lord Irwin and Gandhi met in a series of talks seeking settlement of the issues originating from the civil disobedience movement. In the agreement reached on 5th of March, Gandhi agreed to discontinue Civil Disobedience as it embraced defiance of the law, non-payment of land revenue, publication of news-sheets, termination of its boycott of British goods and the restraint of aggressive picketing. The Government of India agreed to cancel ordinances opposing the movement, to release Indian prisoners, return fines and property.

**Poona Pact**

The Poona Pact refers to an agreement between Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi signed on 24 September 1932 at Yerwada Central Jail in Pune. It was signed by Pt Madan Mohan Malviya and some Hindu leaders and Dr BR Ambedkar and some Dalit leaders to break the fast unto death undertaken by Gandhi in Yarwada jail to annul Macdonald Award giving separate electorate to Dalits for electing members of state legislative assemblies in British India.

There shall be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of general electorate. Seats in the Provincial Legislatures.

Election to these seats shall be by joint electorates subject, however, to the following procedure –

All members of the Depressed Classes registered in the general electoral roll of a constituency will form an electoral college which will elect a panel of four candidates belonging to the Depressed Classes for each of such reserved seats by the method of the single vote and four persons getting the highest number of votes in such primary elections shall be the candidates for election by the general electorate. The representation of the Depressed Classes in the Central Legislature shall likewise be on the principle of joint
electorates and reserved seats by the method of primary election in the manner provided for in clause above for their representation in the provincial legislatures.

Central Legislature

In the Central Legislature 18 per cent of the seats allotted to the general electorate for British India in the said legislature shall be reserved for the Depressed Classes.

5. The system of primary election to a panel of candidates for election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures as herein-before mentioned shall come to an end after the first ten years, unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement under the provision of clause 6 below.

The system of representation of Depressed Classes by reserved seats in the Provincial and Central Legislatures as provided for in clauses (1) and (4) shall continue until determined otherwise by mutual agreement between the communities concerned in this settlement.

The Franchise for the Central and Provincial Legislatures of the Depressed Classes shall be as indicated, in the Lothian Committee Report.

There shall be no disabilities attached to any one on the ground of his being a member of the Depressed Classes in regard to any election to local bodies or appointment to the public services. Every endeavor shall be made to secure a fair representation of the Depressed Classes in these respects, subject to such educational qualifications as may be laid down for appointment to the Public Services.

In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be ear-marked for providing educational facilities to the members of Depressed Classes.

**Quit India – Do or Die**

Mahatma Gandhi again became active in the political arena after the outburst of World War II in 1939. On August 8, 1942 Gandhi gave the call for Quit India Movement or Bharat Chhodo Andolan. Soon after the arrest of Gandhi, disorders broke out immediately throughout the country and many violent demonstrations took place. Quit India became the most powerful movement in the freedom struggle. Thousands of freedom fighters were killed or injured by police gunfire, and hundreds of thousands were arrested. He called on all Congressmen and Indians to maintain discipline via non violence and Karo Ya Maro (Do or Die) in order to achieve ultimate freedom. On 9th of August, 1942, Mahatma Gandhi and the entire Congress Working Committee were arrested in Mumbai. In view of his deteriorating health, he was released from the jail in May 1944 because the British did not want him to die in prison and enrage the nation. The cruel restraint of the Quit India movement brought order to India by the end of 1943 although the movement had modest success in its aim. After the British gave clear signs of transferring power to the Indians, Gandhi called off the fight and all the prisoners were released.
The Quit India Movement or the August Movement, was a civil disobedience movement launched in India on 8 August 1942 by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The All-India Congress Committee proclaimed a mass protest demanding what Gandhi called "an orderly British withdrawal" from India. It was for the determined, which appears in his call to *Do or Die*, issued on 8 August at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai in 1942. The British were prepared to act. Almost the entire INC leadership, and not just at the national level, was imprisoned without trial within hours after Gandhi's speech. Most spent the rest of the war in prison and out of contact with the masses. The British had the support of the Viceroy's Council (which had a majority of Indians), of the Muslims, the Communist Party, the princely states, the Indian imperial Police the British Indian army and the Indian Civil Service. Many Indian businessmen were profiting from heavy wartime spending and did not support Quit India. Many students paid more attention to Subhas Chandra Bose, who was in exile and supporting the Axis. The only outside support came from the Americans, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt pressured Prime Minister Winston Churchill to give in to Indian demands. The Quit India campaign was effectively crushed.

The British refused to grant immediate independence, saying it could happen only after the war ends. Sporadic small-scale violence took place around the country but the British arrested tens of thousands of leaders, keeping them imprisoned until 1945. In terms of immediate objectives Quit India failed because of heavy-handed suppression, weak coordination and the lack of a clear-cut programme of action. However, the British government realized that India was ungovernable in the long run, and the question for postwar became how to exit gracefully and peacefully.

*Factors contributing to the movement*

The Congress had to decide its course of action in the wake of:

- The failure of the Cripps Mission;
- The arrival of Japanese armies on Indian borders;
- The rising prices and shortages in food supplies, and the different opinions within the Congress

In 1939, with the outbreak of war between Germany and Britain, India was announced to be a party to the war for being a constituent component of the British Empire. Following this declaration, the Congress Working Committee at its meeting on 10 October 1939, passed a resolution condemning the aggressive activities of the Germans. At the same time the resolution also stated that India could not associate herself with war unless it was consulted first. Responding to this declaration, the Viceroy issued a statement on 17 October wherein he claimed that Britain is waging a war driven by the motif to strengthen peace in the world. He also stated that after the war, the government would initiate modifications in the Act of 1935, in accordance to the desires of the Indians.
Gandhi’s reaction to this statement was; "the old policy of divide and rule is to continue. The Congress has asked for bread and it has got stone." According to the instructions issued by High Command, the Congress ministers were directed to resign immediately. Congress ministers from eight provinces resigned following the instructions. The resignation of the ministers was an occasion of great joy and rejoicing for leader of the Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah. He called the day of 22 December 1939 'The Day of Deliverance'. Gandhi urged Jinnah against the celebration of this day, however, it was futile. At the Muslim League Lahore Session held in March 1940, Jinnah declared in his presidential address that the Muslims of the country wanted a separate homeland, Pakistan.

In the meanwhile, crucial political events took place in England. Chamberlain was succeeded by Churchill as the Prime Minister and the Conservatives, who assumed power in England, did not have a sympathetic stance towards the claims made by the Congress. In order to pacify the Indians in the circumstance of worsening war situation, the Conservatives were forced to concede some of the demands made by the Indians. On 8 August, the Viceroy issued a statement that has come to be referred as the "August Offer". However, the Congress rejected the offer followed by the Muslim League. In the context of widespread dissatisfaction that prevailed over the rejection of the demands made by the Congress, Gandhi at the meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Wardha revealed his plan to launch Individual Civil Disobedience. Once again, the weapon of satyagraha found popular acceptance as the best means to wage a crusade against the British. It was widely used as a mark of protest against the unwavering stance assumed by the British. Vinoba Bhave, a follower of Gandhi, was selected by him to initiate the movement. Anti war speeches ricocheted in all corners of the country, with the satyagrahis earnestly appealing to the people of the nation not to support the Government in its war endeavors. The consequence of this satyagrahi campaign was the arrest of almost fourteen thousand satyagrahis. On 3 December 1941, the Viceroy ordered the acquittal of all the satyagrahis. In Europe the war situation became more critical with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the Congress realized the necessity for appraising their program. Subsequently, the movement was withdrawn.

The Cripps' Mission and its failure also played an important role in Gandhi's call for The Quit India Movement. In order to end the deadlock, the British government on 22 March 1942, sent Sir Stafford Cripps to talk terms with the Indian political parties and secure their support in Britain's war efforts. A Draft Declaration of the British Government was presented, which included terms like establishment of Dominion, establishment of a Constituent Assembly and right of the Provinces to make separate constitutions. These would be, however, granted after the cessation of the Second World War. According to the Congress this Declaration only offered India a promise that was to be fulfilled in the
future. Commenting on this Gandhi said; "It is a post dated cheque on a crashing bank." Other factors that contributed were the threat of Japanese invasion of India and realization of the national leaders of the incapacity of the British to defend India.

The Congress gave the call for ousting British but it did not give any concrete line of action to be adopted by the people. The Government had been making preparations to crush the Movement. On the morning of 9 August all prominent Congress leaders including Gandhi were arrested. The news of leaders' arrest shook the people and they came to streets protesting against it. K.G. Mashruwala, who had taken over as editor of Harijan published his personal opinion as to the shape the protest should take: In my opinion looting or burning of offices, bank, granaries etc., is not permissible. Dislocation of traffic communications is permissible in a non-violent manner - without endangering life. The organisation of strikes is best.... Cutting wires, removing rails, destroying small bridges, cannot be objected to in a struggle like this provided ample precaution are taken to safeguard life. Mashruwala maintained that "Gandhiji and the Congress have not lost all hope of goodwill being re-established between the British and the Indian nations, and so provided the effort is strong enough to demonstrate the nations will, self-restraint will never go against us". Before his arrest on 9 August 1942 Gandhi had given the following message to the country: Everyone is free to go the fullest length under Ahimsa to complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go out to die not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive, Karenge Ya/Marenge (do or die). But while giving this call Gandhi had once again stressed on non-violence: Let every non-violent soldier of freedom write out the slogan 'do or die' on a piece of paper or cloth and stick it on his clothes, so that in case he died in the course of offering, Satyagraha, he might be distinguished by that sign from other elements who do not subscribe to non-violence. The news of his arrest along with other Congress leaders led to unprecedented popular outbursts in different parts of the country. There were hartals, demonstrations and processions in cities and towns. The Congress leadership gave the call, but it was the people who launched the Movement. Since all the recognized leaders-central, provincial or local-had been arrested, the young and more militant caders-particularly students with socialist leanings took over as leaders at local levels in their areas. In the initial stages, the Movement was based on non-violent lines. It was the repressive policy of the government which provoked the people to violence. The Gandhian message of non-violent struggle was pushed into the background and people devised their own methods of struggle. These included: attacks on government buildings, police stations and post offices, attacks on railway stations, and sabotaging rail lines, cutting off the telegraph wires, telephones and electric power lines, disrupting road traffic by destroying bridges, and workers going on strike, etc. Most of these attacks were to check the movement of the military and the police, which were being used by the government to crush the Movement. In many areas, the government lost all control and the
people established Swaraj. We cite a few such cases: In Maharashtra, a parallel government was established in Satara which continued to function for a long time. In Bengal, Tamuluk Jatiya Sarkar functioned for a long time in Midnapore district. This national government had various departments like Law and Order, Health, Education, Agriculture, etc., along with a postal system of its own and arbitration courts. People established Swaraj in Talacher in Orissa.

The suppression of the movement

One of the achievements of the movement was to keep the Congress party united through all the trials and tribulations that followed. The British, already alarmed by the advance of the Japanese army to the India-Burma border, responded by imprisoning Gandhi. All the members of the Party's Working Committee (national leadership) were imprisoned as well. Due to the arrest of major leaders, a young and till then relatively unknown Aruna Asaf Ali presided over the AICC session on 9 August and hoisted the flag; later the Congress party was banned. These actions only created sympathy for the cause among the population. Despite lack of direct leadership, large protests and demonstrations were held all over the country. Workers remained absent en masse and strikes were called. Not all demonstrations were peaceful, at some places bombs exploded, government buildings were set on fire, electricity was cut and transport and communication lines were severed.

The British swiftly responded with mass detentions. Over 100,000 arrests were made, mass fines were levied and demonstrators were subjected to public flogging. Hundreds of civilians were killed in violence many shot by the police army. Many national leaders went underground and continued their struggle by broadcasting messages over clandestine radio stations, distributing pamphlets and establishing parallel governments. The British sense of crisis was strong enough that a battleship was specifically set aside to take Gandhi and the Congress leaders out of India, possibly to South Africa or Yemen but ultimately did not take that step out of fear of intensifying the revolt.

The Congress leadership was cut off from the rest of the world for over three years. Gandhi's wife Kasturbai Gandhi and his personal secretary Mahadev Desai died in months and Gandhi's health was failing, despite this Gandhi went on a 21-day fast and maintained his resolve to continuous resistance. Although the British released Gandhi on account of his health in 1944, Gandhi kept up the resistance, demanding the release of the Congress leadership.

By early 1944, India was mostly peaceful again, while the Congress leadership was still incarcerated. A sense that the movement had failed depressed many nationalists, while Jinnah and the Muslim League, as well as Congress opponents like the Communists sought to gain political mileage, criticizing Gandhi and the Congress Party.
Module III

Gandhian Constructive Programmes

Mahatma Gandhi was the modern emancipator of caste system of Hindu society. In his writings in ‘Young India’ and ‘Harijan’ stressed on the problems of untouchability and its removal from its roots. To him, Bhagavad-Gita has never taught that a Chandal was in any inferior than a Brahmin. According to Mahatma Gandhi, the Hindu scripture like Upanishad, Bhagavat Gita, Smrities and other writings were not consistent with truth and Non-violence or other fundamental and universal principle of ethics. We are all the songs of same God. To him, there was only one Varna in India i.e. the Shudras. He desired that all the Hindus voluntarily call themselves Shudras. Gandhi called them (untouchables) as ‘Harijans’ which literally meaning is son of the God. For the upliftment of Harijans he founded the “Harijan Sevak Sangh”. To abolish the disparities between caste Hindus and untouchables was its main function. The Sangh is truly based on welfare of the society Gandhi experienced social discrimination for the first time when he was in South Africa where he engaged himself against the discriminatory attitude of the South African Government against Indians. The problems were akin to that of untouchability as migrants were treated as inferior to the local population which enjoyed numerous basic rights legally not available to Indians. It was then that Gandhi realized the extent of the impact of social discrimination on the underprivileged sections of the society including untouchables.

He thought it was necessary to reconstruct the life of the nation. This was only possible through alleviating the social status of untouchables. He always considered untouchability as a cruel and inhuman institution. It violated human dignity.

He did not believe that the imperial ambitions of Britain were alone responsible for our slavery but it was the negligence of our national duty which was primarily responsible for it. As he always thought untouchability an evil in Hinduism, he had no hesitation in Hinduism itself Removal of untouchability was the responsibility of the caste-Hindus towards Hinduism.

Gandhi called upon the Harijans to magnify their own faults so that they looked as big as mountains and they make regular attempts to overcome them. He said to untouchables, “Never believe that since others have the same faults we need not mind our own. No matter what others do, it is your dharma to overcome the feelings which you find in yourselves.” In the process of regeneration of the nation, Gandhi waged an incessant war. He said, “If we are children of the same God how can there be any rank among us.”
According to him, there was only one Varna, in India, the Sudras. He desired that all the Hindus voluntarily call themselves Sudras.

He criticized those who would claim superiority over fellowmen. He thought there was no such thing as inherited superiority. He was happy and felt satisfied to call himself a scavenger, a spinner, a weaver, and a laborer. He was troubled to see the appalling plight of untouchables in different regions of the country. Its eradication greatly agitated his mind and he devised ways and means from time to time, through his speeches and writings.

Gandhi called Harijans as men of God and felt that all the religions of the world consider God pre-eminently as the Friend of the Friendless, Help of the Helpless, and Protector of the Weak. He questioned that in India who could be more friendless, helpless, or weaker than the 40 million or more Hindus of India who were classified as “untouchables.” Therefore, if there were people who could be fitly described as men of God, they were surely these helpless, friendless, and despised people.

He said that if India became free with untouchability intact, the untouchables would become worse under that Swaraj than they were before the freedom for the simple reason that the weakness and failings would then be buttressed up by the accession of power.

Mahatma Gandhi used newspapers including Harijan and Young India to propagate his anti-untouchability views. In his writings he stressed the problem of untouchability and its removal from its roots. He felt that Hinduism, in reality, did not permit untouchability.

The Bhagavad Gita never taught that an untouchable was in any way inferior to a Brahman. A Brahman was no more a Brahman, once he became insolvent and considered himself, a superior being. Gandhi felt that untouchability would not be removed by the force of even law. It could only be removed, when the majority of Hindus felt that it was a crime against God and man and were ashamed of it.

The aid of law had to be invoked when it came in the way of reform, i.e., opening of a temple. He described the social position of untouchables as follows: “Socially they are lepers. Economically they are worse than slaves. Religiously they are denied entrance to places we miscall ‘houses of God’.”

Gandhiji never stopped fighting against untouchability. He considered it a blot on Hinduism. He said that a religion that established the worship of the cow could not in all probability countenance or warrants a cruel and inhuman boycott of human beings. Hindus would never deserve freedom, nor get it if they allowed their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability.

He found Harijan Sevak Sangh in 1932. G.D. Birla was its president and Thakkar Bapa its Secretary. He always preached among the Harijans, the importance of cleanliness,
abstention from carrion-eating and intoxicating drinks and drugs, requirement of taking education themselves and giving it to their children, also abstention from eating the leavings from caste Hindus’ plates.

Gandhi, therefore, was concerned with the issues of Dalits no less than any other leader. His heart went out to them and he worked very hard and sincerely for their upliftment. The fact that he had many other tasks on hand did not stop him from taking up their cause and he devoted considerable time and energy to bring an end to untouchability.

Anti Caste Movements

Untouchability

Brown explains that: His [Gandhi’s] primary social concern at the time was the problem of untouchability, the rejection of a whole group of the poorest and most menial in society as a result of Hindu ideas of hierarchy, and purity and pollution. Now, as he travelled widely, he saw in harsh practice the power of this social division, and the poverty and degradation it caused.

Gandhi wanted to remove untouchability as he saw it as an evil imposed by man, not by any divine authority. The word —untouchable of course, refers to the aspect of Hinduism known as —pollution. Coming into physical contact with untouchables, who numbered between 40 and 60 million individuals in 1940, polluted a Hindu of a higher rank.

There were others working for the abolition of untouchability, among them the untouchable leader Bhim Rao Ambedkar, who wanted reform. Where Gandhi differed from the other abolitionists was the method used to reach this goal. For Gandhi, religion was at the core of the untouchability problem. It was Hinduism that had created untouchability, it was the Hindus that had acted upon these divisions within society, and it was therefore the Hindus that had to remove the taint on Hinduism. To provide the untouchables with a more positive connotation, Gandhi gave the group a new name, namely Harijan meaning —Children of God, in an attempt to make caste Hindus see that they were all equal under God.

Apart from giving the untouchables a new name, Gandhi also published several texts in which he gave his interpretation of Hinduism and untouchability. According to Gandhi‘s interpretation of the religious books, he or she had to fill at least one of three criteria used to classify untouchables; 1) the person had to be born as an untouchable due to a mixed caste heritage, 2) the person had to be guilty of either working with impure elements such as refuse, blood, excrements or death or not being a vegetarian, 3) a person who was in a polluted state.63 Gandhi‘s belief was that the first criterion did not apply to Indians in the 1930s, since there was no evidence of untouchables ever having been direct results of mixed marriages between higher and lower castes. As to the second and third
criteria, Gandhi believed that untouchables – who by this definition could be anyone in contact with impure elements regardless of caste – could perform purifying rituals to rid themselves of internal impurity and become vegetarians. A bath and a change of clothes would suffice for external impurities. —Untouchability by birth cannot exist today in connection with a class. In connection with individuals, it is practically impossible of detection. According to Gandhi’s interpretation, no person who followed the rules of cleanliness in Hinduism was an —untouchable.

Accordingly, temples should not be closed to a section of society, but open to every one who followed the Hindu religious guidelines. Gandhi wanted to abolish untouchability, but instead of insisting on abolishing the caste system in which untouchability was created and practiced, Gandhi wanted to incorporate untouchables in the servant or Shudra caste. Untouchables themselves would have to be uplifted by clean caste-Hindus, who would have a change of heart when Gandhi enlightened them about the wrongs they had committed.68 This was not all, however; Gandhi wanted the caste system to only consist of the Shudra caste. His reason for suggesting this was that —Whilst we can all serve and hence be called Shudras, we do not all posses learning nor do we possess divine knowledge. Therefore it would be untruthful to regard ourselves as Brahmans. This view was contrary to centuries of practice and shows that Gandhi used rhetoric that contained familiar terms but, especially in the case of varna, had an inherent different meaning. Although Gandhi gained support for the eradication of untouchability through his campaign, he faced opposition to his interpretations and focus on religion – even among his own active participants

**Untouchability Prohibition**

The work of removal of untouchability is not merely a social or economic reform whose extent can be measured by so much social amenities or economic relief provided in so much time. Its goal is to touch the hearts of the millions of Hindus who honestly believe in the present-day untouchability as a God-made institution, as old as the human race itself. – Mohandas K. Gandhi.

When Mahatma Gandhi started his travelling campaign against untouchability in November 1933 he had, together with his organisation the Harijan Sevak Sangh, already made people in large parts of the subcontinent aware through the temple-entry campaign of the activity mobilised on behalf of untouchables. During the temple-entry campaign Gandhi had spent most of the time in gaol, from where he mobilised and instructed his followers and the literate public through his newspaper Harijan. The travelling campaign against untouchability, however, was remarkably different. In addition to spreading his ideas through the newspaper Gandhi and a small entourage visited cities and villages in different parts of India. Over a period of nine months, from November 1933 to August
1934, his group gained supporters and initiated reform through direct contact with the populous.

The most important issue in the travelling campaign was, as in the campaign for temple-entry, —the uplifting of untouchables. As explained in the previous chapter, Gandhi did not only want to remove untouchability but include these castes in the *Shudra* or servant *varna*. At the same time, he wanted the *varna* system to be a system of equals under God with no high or no low. The ultimate goal of the campaign, therefore, was to rid untouchables of obstacles standing in their way of becoming equals.

Gandhi’s intention with the travelling campaign was also to incorporate India both territorially and socially. This was accomplished in two ways: first, personally travelling around India would create closer ties to his followers in the places he visited – and in addition create opportunities to gather more followers. Second, collecting funds for untouchables both locally and nationally could create a feeling of community by having a common cause.

The efforts in the travelling campaign against untouchability were divided into two main branches: first, there was Gandhi and his entourage who travelled around India in the attempt to remove untouchability. Second, there were supporters in the *Harijan Sevak Sangh* and other groups of volunteers who travelled to villages around India independent from Gandhi and his travelling route – but dependent on instructions given through the organisation and the *Harijan*. Gandhi’s travelling campaign against untouchability, a campaign that was mainly carried out in villages around India, it is important to discern Gandhi’s views on rural India, specifically village life. As to the actual campaign, Gandhi spoke of common concerns and acted upon them. In contrast to the structure of the chapter on the temple-entry campaign, I find it necessary to divide the campaign into themes according to the main concerns. This will be done in an effort to make the campaign explicable and also to avoid repetitiveness as Gandhi had a tendency to talk of the same concerns wherever he went in India.

When the travelling campaign against untouchability began, temple-entry was one of the most discussed topics of Gandhi’s vision for Indian society. As the campaign progressed, however, temple-entry lost ground to other areas of concern such as *khadi*, educational reform and, not the least, to the earthquake in Bihar in January of 1934. In the beginning of the campaign emphasis was put on opening temples in the places Gandhi visited. This is known from statements such as —A fine temple near Wardha was thrown open to Harijans, performed the opening [in Raipur near Delhi] with God as witness. The Harijans had cheerfully come in large numbers, and —Gandhiji then declared open to Harijans two temples [in Mudunuru in Central India].
It is difficult to discern whether these temple-openings were results only of pressure from Gandhi’s appearance or if they were inspired by Gandhi’s appeal on behalf of untouchables – thereby being part of the group of participants who believed in and followed Gandhi’s instructions. During the campaign, however, Gandhi received complaints from both his supporters and others. They stated that in some cases there was massive pressure from the local Harijan Sevak Sangh to open temples. Defending himself from the accusations, Gandhi insisted that —I will not be guilty of being party to the opening of a single temple under coercion. But I do want temples to be opened where public opinion is absolutely and clearly ripe for the opening of those temples.

Stating that he only wanted temples to be opened where the opinion was ripe may have inspired participants to force the time to be right. Gandhi claimed that there was little opposition to untouchables’ entry to temples in the travelling campaign. As the campaign continued, Gandhi also stated that protests against temple-entry were receding in number compared to the protests in the previous temple-entry campaign.

Gandhi expressed in the beginning of the campaign that his experience while travelling was that —wherever I have gone and opened temples to Harijans, I have done so in the presence of thousands of caste Hindus and with their consent: the thousands of caste Hindus who were most concerned about the temple said, ‘We want the temples to be opened.’ Gandhi therefore insisted that ordinary caste-Hindus were ready to recognize untouchables as equals, helped by the campaign and his efforts. His statements together with the information provided shows that there were a large number of people who – if they did not actively participate – were interested in Gandhi and his initiatives in the campaign. The example also shows that Gandhi had an interest in reproducing successful interactions with Indians. Propagating the success of initiatives in the campaign would have a positive effect as it could inspire more Indians to participate.

Having limited respect – it would seem – for diversity in Hindu worship, Gandhi treated temples as though they were uniform. Upon entering the state of Mysore, Gandhi and his followers visited Sirsi, where local temples had been opened to the untouchables. In contrast to other places in India, Gandhi did just not want temple-entry in Sirsi and instead demanded change. In the form of worship, Gandhi’s criterion for temple-entry was that everyone should adhere to the rules of spiritual cleanliness, including becoming vegetarian and avoiding impure elements. In Sirsi, however, temple-worship included animal sacrifice. This meant that untouchables would be involved in the slaughter of animals, which was unacceptable to Gandhi. Instead of sacrificing animals, Gandhi’s speech concluded that —One can please God only by self-sacrifice and self-denial. He therefore, hoped that the trustees of the temple would take a strong line and put an end to the evil
practice in question. Gandhi wanted the temples to follow the same principles and not deviate from what he believed to be true religion. This could be an attempt to unify Hindus through participation in worship in the ideal temple.

Gandhi met with opposition during the campaign. In connection with temple-entry, this opposition was often posed by sanatanist or orthodox Hindus. The ways in which they opposed him varied, but often it was by demonstrating or physically trying to hinder Gandhi from reaching his destination. In Deoli in the Central Provinces, Gandhi and his entourage were in procession to open a temple for the untouchables, but as they drew close, sanatanists blocked the entry so that no one could enter. In addition they warned Gandhi that he should stop the campaign, even though it had only just begun, because the campaign would create dissension in Hindu society.

The clash between Gandhi and his reformers and sanatanists was much discussed both in meetings held by Gandhi and in letters between Gandhi, sanatanists and troubled reformers. A letter from Bengal in February of 1934 described the situation as a strain in the campaign against untouchability – and also a hindrance in actually helping untouchables. The letter described the situation as being threefold, which is also the impression of the reader of Mahatma Gandhi Complete Works: On the one hand there was Gandhi and his reformers wanting temple-entry and making it a priority equal or even superior to improving the economic and educational situation of untouchables, all done in an attempt to reform Hinduism. On the other hand, there were the sanatanists and other orthodox Hindus who did everything in their power to prevent the destruction of Hinduism by prohibiting untouchables from entering temples. In the middle were untouchables, not being allowed into temples.

Even though sanatanists tried to hinder the temple-entry, they were not necessarily against the betterment of untouchables. While in Karur on his way to Orissa, Gandhi was told that sanatanists there did want to help untouchables and had made several initiatives with local untouchables. As local sanatanists presented it, their problem was not with untouchables themselves but with their entering the temples. In fact, there were those who called themselves liberal sanatanists who wanted the temple-entry issue to be dropped so that resources could be gathered for promoting the —material, moral, educational and spiritual welfare of Harijans in consonance with the tradition of Hindu religion, so that the Harijans may become the equals of savarnas in every respect and there will not be any curse of untouchability, if they are treated as our kith and kin.

The solution of separate temples was proposed from both reformers and sanatanists in the end of February in 1934. Accepting separate temples can be seen as a shift in tactics for Gandhi: as I showed in the chapter on the temple-entry movement, Gandhi had refused building separate facilities for untouchables due to his conviction that separation would
not lead to acceptance or equality. The compromise shows that Gandhi stubborn, but willing to compromise when mobilising for the travelling campaign.

Gandhi’s logic was that untouchables would then be able to enter temples without offending sanatanists, and sanatanists would have their own temples and be secure in the thought that untouchables could not defile their place of worship. If Gandhi was right and the majority of caste-Hindus were for untouchables’temple-entry, the result would be that only a minority of temples would be reserved for sanatanists and therefore a majority of temples would be open to untouchables. In addition, the solution would result in a strengthened focus on the other issues on the campaign where opposition was not as strong as with temple-entry. Having separate temples was in accordance with Gandhi’s overall goal of mobilizing Indian society. Even though untouchables would gain access to temples, separate temples would decrease opposition and thereby increase the number of supporters in the campaign.

Another issue that appeared during the emphasis on temple-entry was the desire of many untouchables not to enter temples, but to better their own situation economically. Gandhi wrote an article in The Hindu where he juxtaposed temple-entry with economic uplift. There he wrote of the protests he had received from both sanatanists and untouchables concerning the focus on temple-entry. —Some of the Harijans say, we do not want temple-entry; do not build temples, but use all you receive for economic uplift. ‘Some sanatanists say, Give up the temple-entry question altogether. You are hurting our feelings by forcing Harijans into temples. Gandhi’s reply was that even though there was disagreement on the temple-entry issue, the protesters were now a minority and would have to comply with the majority.

As mentioned in the introduction, India in the early 1930s was facing severe economical problems due to the Depression and a lack of rainfall. Economic uplift, therefore, may have seemed like a more immediate need than religious initiatives such as temple-entry. As it turned out, the information available shows a tendency towards focusing more on economical and educational reform as the campaign continued. This was particularly the case after the earthquake in Bihar in January of 1934, which affected thousand of Indians and made the need for economic uplift paramount.

Untouchables

Economic reform in the villages in the form of khadi was one of the aspects of the campaign where untouchables could help themselves advance economically, according to Gandhi. In February of 1934 Gandhi gave instructions on how to implement the spinning and use of khadi. First, the knowledge of spinning had to be spread to the villages by the Sangh and other reform workers. Second, the khadi surplus should be sold in their own and neighboring villages so that the profit of the sale could go wholly to the spinners.
Sending cloth to other regions required both extra cost and time, which would only hurt the profit of the spinners and therefore the poor who needed the profits the most.

According to Gandhi, one example of the introduction of the spinning wheel and khadi can be found in the Central Provenance, namely Anantpur. A village of approximately nine hundred, the inhabitants was only occupied four months of the year and had hardly any supplementary occupation. In a time-span of four years, four reform workers taught the villagers how to spin and weave, selling the surplus of their labour to neighboring villages and at the same time making their village self-sufficient. The spinning of khadi also bettered the lives of the villagers in other aspects: the reform workers refused to teach villagers who drank alcohol. As a consequence the alcohol consumption in the village went down considerably as spinning became more popular. The cottage industry also spread to seventeen neighboring villages making the spinning of khadi a local success.

Spreading the concept of khadi and printing successful results does not mean that reforming the village economy was an easy task. Gandhi was aware of the fact that success could in many cases be only temporary. In the early 1920s Gandhi had started schools for the spinning of khadi in Bihar. While Gandhi and his supporters were in Bihar the school was a success, but when they departed and the campaign faded the school closed down. In the travelling campaign against untouchability, therefore, attempts were made to establish khadi as a cottage industry in the village and make it a permanent feature. The reformers had to create a bond between the different people who worked in the process of creating cloth made of hand-spun cotton. At the same time the reformers had to persuade the khadi-workers to cooperate when selling the cloth in the area and not attempt for a larger profit in the cities – all in an attempt to make the village or cluster of villages self-sufficient.

Even though khadi was first and foremost meant for untouchables and other poor in Indian villages, it was the Sangh and reform workers connected to Gandhi – who was themselves not untouchables – who spread the knowledge of spinning and taught the untouchables. Although khadi helped many untouchables and made them part of the campaign, it was not initiated by untouchables but by caste-Hindus.

One of the major grievances that Gandhi faced was the fact that untouchables did not themselves have leading positions in the Harijan Sevak Sangh. As discussed in the chapter on the temple-entry campaign, Gandhi believed that caste-Hindus had to have leading positions in the Sangh as repentance for their sin of observing untouchability. His interpretation, however, was not understood by untouchables, something which can be seen in the travelling campaign. In Rajahmundry, close to Madras, Gandhi met a deputation of untouchables who believed that the Sangh both should consist of and be managed by them. After hearing the organization’s goal of caste-Hindu repentance, the deputation asked that an advisory committee be appointed to assist the Sangh. Then, at
least, untouchables could help the campaign directly. Gandhi supported sending suggestions and supporting the organization, but he argued that an advisory board could create favoritism and even sectionalism among the untouchables and create suggestions based on sectional needs.

Although Gandhi did not want the goals of the Sangh to be compromised by untouchable groups, he did have a solution: —What you have to do is to enable and help them to discharge their obligations; that is to say, you can tell them how they can discharge their obligation, you can tell them what in your opinion will satisfy the great body of Harijans. He did not want the untouchables to participate in the organization, but rather to inspire it. To Gandhi it did not make any sense that untouchables should have leading positions in the Sangh. After all, it was not the untouchables that had to repent. Comparing the caste-Hindus to debtors and untouchables to creditors, Gandhi insisted that it was not the creditors that owed anything. It was the debtors that had to initiate a down payment and the creditors’ responsibility to overlook the transactions. Based on his discussion in Rajahmundry, Gandhi later in the campaign proposed that instead of having one advisory committee to the Sangh, an alternative would be that every local and regional branch of the organization should have an advisory committee consisting of untouchables only. Gandhi’s plan was that the committee would have to be independent from the organization but at the same time cooperate with them. Its function was to suggest direction to the local Sangh – although Gandhi did not instruct the Sangh to follow the suggestions – and also to awaken the local untouchables to the fact that they were equal to caste-Hindus and had the right to the same privileges as them.

Connecting the example of Rajahmundry to the argument of Gandhi’s ability to mobilize, it is possible to view Gandhi’s compromise as a way of creating more supporters and at the same time subdue opposition. Untouchables did not have any real power in the Sangh but they could, according to this example, participate in the campaign under the direction of Gandhi. Tactically, connecting untouchables to his organization could hinder increased opposition against Gandhi or the campaign.

Another complaint among untouchables was based on the fact that Gandhi and reform workers were building separate wells and schools for them and at the same time speaking of untouchables being equal to caste-Hindus. The argument was that having separate wells and schools would separate untouchables from caste-Hindus even more than earlier or even enhance the differences between them. Gandhi, on the other hand, had witnessed untouchables in different parts of India with no schools and drinking water from the same container as dogs and cattle. Gandhi viewed separate wells and schools as an intermediate on the way to equality: —It is not to keep you segregated that the schools are being
opened and wells are being dug for you. All this is being done because I cannot bear to see you get no water at all. Separate wells and schools were therefore necessary, in Gandhi’s view, because it could take time before caste-Hindus would reform and accept untouchables as equals.

As with the suggestion of separate temples, separate wells and schools would logically not be as provocative as uniting untouchables with caste Hindus in these facilities. The initiative could also result in greater support for Gandhi and the campaign due to the fact that the solution did not provoke as many people as the alternative and new facilities were being built. During the campaign Gandhi faced critiques from untouchables that they did not want his help or follow what they called the —Gandhian creed, meaning the campaign with Gandhi’s initiatives in the villages combined with his religious views. An investigation had been done by a Mr. Acharya in Bombay where he had found out that ninety-five per cent of the untouchables asked were not in agreement with the campaign. Even though the scope of the investigation is not known, it did show that untouchables could be skeptical to the campaign. As to the —Gandhian creed, Gandhi himself did not believe that untouchables were against the goals of the campaign because his goals were universally beneficial to all untouchables:

I am engaged in giving Harijans clean water. I am engaged in giving them facilities for education. I am engaged in finding accommodation for them in public caravanserais where they cannot get it. I am engaged in weaning them from drink and carrion. Do they not like all these? I am engaged in teaching them the elementary rules of hygiene. Do they not want it? I am engaged in telling them what the fundamentals of Hinduism are and in having public temples thrown open to them.

Even though Gandhi did not believe that untouchables were against the campaign – which he based on the fact he perceived untouchables as overjoyed by the improvements while on tour – the emphasis was on caste-Hindus to reform, not on the untouchables to approve. Approval would come naturally when the caste-Hindus had changed at heart.

The information provided shows that although Gandhi emphasized the participation of caste Hindus in the leadership of his organization in the campaign, he did adapt somewhat to demands of untouchables when offering them advisory positions to the Sangh. The information also shows that there were skeptics among untouchables who did not want Gandhi’s help. Whether this was because Gandhi wanted to help them together with caste-Hindus or that Gandhi used traditional Hindu rhetoric as basis for his initiative is not completely clear. What is clear, however, is that there was opposition to Gandhi and his campaign, namely opposition based on objections as to why only caste-Hindus were to initiate reform in villages and why religion had to be at the core of the campaign.
The Temple-Entry Campaign

Temple-entry is a spiritual act, transforming the whole society by one single act of admission. It will electrify into a new life the whole of the Harijan population, and it will purify Hinduism as no single act that I can think of can do – Mohandas K. Gandhi in January 1933.

When the period for this thesis began in the autumn of 1932, Mohandas Gandhi was in gaol for civil disobedience against the colonial power. There he planned and propagated a fast until death with the intent of opening a temple in Guruvayur in Kerala for untouchables. This fast was abandoned for a new fast in 1933 which, in contrast to his planned fast in 1932, was extended to regard all temples in India and thereby made a national campaign for untouchables. Both Indian and international press covered Gandhi’s fasting period and, as we shall see, he wrote a large number of articles and letters both about his reasons for fasting and the goals by undertaking it.

Gandhi made it clear early in 1933 that untouchables’ access to temples was the key for untouchability in India as a whole to be eradicated: if untouchability became obsolete, Gandhi was convinced that other problems within the Indian society, including economical, political and social problems, would solve themselves. For Gandhi, the fast was a small sacrifice that provided a shift in focus in India from civil disobedience to promoting the situation of the untouchables, though first and foremost in a religious context. The civil disobedience campaigns of the 1920s and early 1930s had gathered the country’s population around a common political centre, namely Gandhi and the Indian National Congress, in an attempt to extradite itself from the colonial power. The campaigns of 1932 to 1934, however, focused on society itself and created both unity and opposition within Gandhi’s interpretation of religion

Religion played a significant role in Gandhi’s campaigns. His first Indian campaign was in defense of Indian Muslims in the Khilafat-movement and his subsequent campaigns in the early 1920s and 1930s all had elements connected to the Hindu religion: Gandhi used fasting as a means to get attention for a cause. He believed fasting to be a way of showing courage or to suffer pain without retaliation. Gandhi became an ascetic, which he thought would enhance both bodily and spiritual power. As part of being an ascetic, Gandhi promoted and encouraged the idea of renunciation, a life in celibacy and self-restraint connected to Hindu revival movements and social reform movements.

Gandhi believed that it was paramount to address the issues within his own religion Hinduism and repair them as he viewed his religion as one of several branches of religion that interconnected in India. His definition of being a Hindus was —one who believes in God, immortality and transmigration of the soul, karma and moksha, who tries to practice
truth and non-violence and acts according to varnasharma, the division of society into distinct groups with their own roles. He thereby had a specific notion of what a Hindu was and what his duties were.

Rudolph and Rudolph add that Gandhi used traditional ideals and transformed them for modern purposes. Gandhi became connected to the bhakti-tradition, a tradition familiar to Indians based on a devotional teacher communicating through familiar symbols and local languages. Bhakti was known as a path to religious experience and salvation and the devotee associated with the lower castes. The anthropologist C. J. Fuller adds that the ascetic renouncer enjoys a special position in Hindu society as the exemplar of a supreme religious ideal. Ordinary householders typically —treat him as a spiritual preeminent and may seek his assistance in their own religious life or even in other, more worldly manners. 46 The well-regarded and powerful denouncer is treated as a man in a high position, ranking higher than Brahmins who can be both in a powerful position and be wealthy.

According to the historian Shahid Amin in his article —Gandhi as Mahatma the parts of rural India Gandhi visited in the early 1920s (the Gorakhpur region in what is now Uttar Pradesh in particular) were more affected by his religiosity than his politics: the people were more interested in receiving Gandhi’s darshan or blessings and thought of him as a saint first, not a politician or a social worker. Supported by this and the well-known fact that Gandhi had an ever-increasing number of followers, we can deduct that Gandhi was important as a religious figure (as well as a politician and social worker) in Indian society, which must have been a decisive factor in his mobilization.

Politicians in the Indian National Congress, including leading personalities as Jawaharlal Nehru, commented on Gandhi’s use of religion in a political context. The historian Harold Coward explains that Nehru characterized Gandhi as essentially a man of religion. Furthermore, Gandhi referred to himself as a Hindu at the very depths of his being. But Gandhi’s conception of religion as well as his Hinduism —had nothing to do with any dogma or custom or ritual.

The temple

When Gandhi spoke of Hindu worship he usually spoke of temples. Gandhi believed that the temple was in the core of everyday life for millions of Hindus, whether they be caste Hindus or untouchables. His vision therefore was of equal access to temples in a system with no high and no low. The caste Hindus would see that they had treated the untouchables badly by excluding them and welcome them into a common religious arena; the temple. Gandhi first mentioned the idea of temple-entry in 1921. It was to be the concrete representation of the abstract idea of abolishing untouchability. Gandhi’s goal was equality among Hindus, which would, in turn, take India one step closer to swaraj.
One way of achieving equality was taking steps that would enable untouchables to become equals. Gandhi did not believe that India was ready for a temple-entry effort in 1921, however, and appealed to people that they should instead focus on opening wells until the time was right.

In the travelling campaign it was not an option (although it was suggested by several supporters) to build separate temples for untouchables and caste-Hindus since this, in Gandhi’s view, would not create religious equality or acceptance. What was acceptable, however, was restricted access inside the temple and restricted hours in which the untouchables could enter. Interestingly, the compromise of separate temples for untouchables was not as easily dismissed in the travelling campaign against untouchability one year later –

In addition to viewing the temple as the centre for acceptance for Hindus, Gandhi also wrote an article in *The Hindu* of what a perfect temple was. The perfect temple would be one where the priest was a devoted man of God who had the least of needs and personal ties. His sole concern would be the welfare of his people. The temple would have to be accessible to the untouchables and other poor in clean surroundings and without discrimination. Around the temple there would be a school, a dispensary, a library and a guesthouse – all under the administration of the temple

*Were Gandhi’s religious views known?*

As mentioned in Amin’s article, Gandhi was perceived as a religious figure wherever he went in what is now Uttar Pradesh in 1920 and 1921. But what is also interesting is that it was not well known what Gandhi’s views actually were: Amin makes it clear that Gandhi was considered as being —projections of the existing patterns of popular beliefs about the worship of the worthies’ in rural north India. Gandhi satisfied the signs of saintliness. Gandhi must have supported this at some level because he did not protest the use of the name —Mahatma.

There were also other ways in which Gandhi marked his connection to Hindu tradition. He reinvented the traditional Hindu view of courage into *satyagraha*, which he used in all of his campaigns. He also supported issues like cow-protection and the Hindu caste system – though in an idealized form. The name *Harijan* itself was symbolic: by renaming untouchables, Gandhi conveyed that the group had god-given rights on the same level as other Hindus, thereby showing his view that Hindus were all on an equal level. By dressing as an Untouchable, he communicated that he associated himself as part of the group, which again promoted his view of the caste system and asceticism. Some of Gandhi’s views were as a consequence visually apparent to Indian society, but Gandhi’s own interpretation of the symbols was not apparent to the same degree. The symbols could,
however, help illiterates place Gandhi in a context without having read any of his texts and thereby procuring him more supporters.

What had changed in the early 1930s was that the mass media was much more involved in Gandhi’s campaigns. Gandhi began publishing his own newspaper in 1933 named Harijan, which, in contrast to his previous two published newspaper, was wholly focused on unity within India and distributed in English, Hindi and Gujarati. In addition, texts and interviews were also published in other Indian newspapers such as The Hindu, The Hindustan Times and The Bombay Chronicles. This meant that Gandhi’s ideas were spread over a much larger area than previously, making it easier both to understand what Gandhi’s views were and to criticise them. The criticisms ranged from Gandhi being too religious to not being religious enough and came from many layers of society.

One reservation has to be made, however: the number of illiterates in India at the time of the temple-entry campaign was very high. Although Gandhi had the opportunity to spread his views to more Indians than in earlier campaigns, the scope of Indians was still largely dependent on literate Indians.

**Opposition**

A group within orthodox Hindu community called sanatanists showed their opposition to Gandhi’s religious views through the media and demonstrations. Gandhi defined sanatanists as a devoted following of the four holy books of Hinduism and highly regarded in the Hindu community. The sanatanists claimed that Gandhi was a renegade influenced by Christianity and Islam and that his actions were more equal to that of an atheist than of a Hindu: —I solemnly warn you that you do not appear to be acting as a God-fearing Hindu; and although you may succeed in forcing the entry of the untouchables into our temples all honest sanatanists will always regard your act as a sacrilegious deed becoming an atheist.

Ironically, Gandhi himself was a self-proclaimed sanatanist, with the reservation of only adhering to the message of the Gita. The group claimed that Gandhi was distorting Hinduism by promoting his views and campaigning for the untouchables. In their view, Gandhi was not religious enough. Gandhi, however, insisted that the issue between him and the sanatanists was based on a misunderstanding: Those who claim to be sanatanists have put themselves in a state of rage as if I was about to violate all that is good in Hinduism, and they have rendered themselves incapable, first, of understanding what I am after, and then, of knowing what they are attacking. I can safely say that no two letters from among the mass of letters I am receiving from sanatanists have agreed about the definition of untouchability. They either swear at me or enter into argument that has no bearing on the subject. All this cannot be good for sanatan dharma. The correspondence I am having is to me a painful sign of decadence of Hinduism.
Gandhi thereby pointed out that there were differences among sanatanists of what their differences with Gandhi were and how they viewed untouchables. According to other correspondence, however, the sanatanists did not deny that untouchables had been wronged. As Gandhi presented it, sanatanists just did not want to include untouchables with caste Hindus, nor share temples with them:

Almost every letter that I have received from the sanatanists makes these startling admissions:

1. We admit that there is much to be done for the amelioration of the condition of the Harijans;
2. We admit that many caste Hindus are ill-treating the Harijans;
3. We admit that their children should receive education and that they should have better quarters to live in;
4. We admit that they should have proper arrangement for bathing and drawing water for them-selves;
5. We admit that they should have full political rights;
6. We admit that they should have ample facilities for worship and
7. We admit that they should have all the civic rights that the others have.

Ambedkar questioned Gandhi’s intentions towards the untouchables by asking —how can they believe him to be their friend when he wishes to retain caste and abolish untouchability, it being quite clear that untouchability is only an extended form of caste and that therefore without abolition of caste there is no hope of abolition of untouchability. For Ambedkar, Gandhi’s religious vision did not include what was best for the untouchables, namely equal civil rights, but sought to retain the caste-system – a system Ambedkar believed had to be eradicated.

**Temple-entry**

With the new year of 1933, Gandhi and his associates widened the scope of the campaign. There were now two goals for the campaign: the first was to open as many temples as possible to Untouchables, and the second was convincing untouchables to conform to the common requisites of temple-entry. Access to all temples was self-explanatory in that it was a logical continuation of the campaign for opening the Guruvayur-temple, but there was one thing that has to be taken into consideration before continuing with the campaign: temples were not uniform.
The temple in Guruvayur was a public temple, open to caste-Hindus in the community. A private temple, on the other hand, was built by one person or group and therefore the owners could select who could and could not enter the temple. No potential law could affect the private temples. If the owner wanted untouchables to enter the temple, not law could prevent him. If the owner did not want them to enter, a law could not force him to do so. With the public temples, a law positive to temple-entry would have to be followed. But since there was no such law, taking a referendum or convincing caste-Hindus that untouchables had equal right to enter temples could change the environ, but could not get untouchables into other temples. As a consequence, the temple-entry campaign was mainly focused on opening private temples all over India.

As to the second goal of having untouchables conform to the religious rules of the temples, Gandhi and his followers were in favour of the untouchables being accepted into temples on the pre-existing conditions. Since, as we have seen earlier, Gandhi believed that there was no such thing as untouchability by birth, every Hindu could rid himself of impurity. Purity could be achieved by not consuming beef or carrion, to take daily absolutions and to wear clean clothes. Gandhi proclaimed that untouchables should accept the views of caste-Hindus and convince them of the right to temple-entry through conformity and adaptation:

If you are polluted by my presence or by my touch, I am quite prepared to consent to a separate period being reserved for you to offer worship by yourselves and give you the same credit for sincerity that I claim for myself. You are as much entitled to worship in the temple as I think I am. Therefore you offer worship in your time, and I shall offer worship, along with the reformers, during the period reserved for us, and since by tradition you have been taught to think that the efficacy of the idol is diminished by my entering the portals of the temple gate, though I do not believe in it myself, let the priest perform the purification ceremony.

Gandhi and his followers, the main component being the Harijan Sevak Sangh with its provincial branches, therefore propagated cleanliness, sending reformers – including a large number of students – to different towns and villages. This meant that the focus was no longer only on the temples, but on how the lives of the untouchables would have to change in order to gain access to them.

In January of 1933, Gandhi was still in goal where he gathered information on the progress of the temple-entry campaign. Reports from supporters all over India were flowing in telling of open temples and the purification of untouchables. By the end of January, Gandhi estimated that no less than five hundred temples had been opened up to untouchables. Politically, there was a new bill presented to the legislative assembly of the Madras Presidency called the Madras Bill. It contained several of Gandhi's suggestions,
such as organizing a referendum in every temple the untouchables wanted to enter, thereby letting the majority decide. Untouchability from birth was also to be abolished, giving untouchables the same rights in the use of public facilities like wells, roads and schools. The fact that temples were closed to untouchables was described in the draft text as a —social disability imposed by custom—that had to be removed by Hindu leaders where the opinion was ripe.

The passing of the Madras Bill was of such importance to Gandhi that in early February he proclaimed that in addition to the two goals of the temple-entry movement, the bill would be added as a third goal. Gandhi believed that—if the Bills are not passed, it is obvious that the central part of the reform will be hung up almost indefinitely. Meetings were to be held all over the country urging the Government of India to provide all facilities in their power for the consideration of the Bill and appealing to the members of the House not to obstruct it. Their appeal should be that the Bill did not interfere with anybody's private faith and that it would be liberating because it would provide Hindu conscience with—complete freedom of action regarding untouchability. The Madras Bill was regarded as a modification of Dr. Subbaroyan’s bill, but they both suffered the same fate. Though it did not become a law, it proved that Gandhi and his followers believed a law would help them and that there was political sympathy for the religious temple-entry movement.

The newspaper *Harijan* had had an essential role in publishing articles in favour of the opening of the temple in Guruvayur in addition to spreading Gandhi’s views. With the new national temple-entry movement, *Harijan* was given an even larger role as Gandhi’s mouthpiece. In addition to the English, Hindi and Gujarati versions of the paper, arrangements were made to publish the newspaper in Bengali, Marathi and Tamil—thereby not only covering larger areas of the country geographically, but also larger parts of the literate population. But there was one hiccup: although the newspaper was published in larger areas, the newspaper had problems being spread in the south of India. The reformers in northern India, therefore, could get more information on the campaign in other corners of the subcontinent.

Another attempt to make the removal of untouchability known was made by Gandhi in April, namely the proclamation of Harijan Day. Harijan Day was supposed to be a day with greater dedication, prayer and intensive work for the cause—arranged once every month or every six weeks. In places where work for the untouchables was not possible, the day should be spent collecting money for the untouchable cause.

The day was topped by Gandhi announcing a twenty-one-day fast on behalf of untouchables, believing that the campaign alone was not going to remove untouchability:
It will not be eradicated by money, external organization and even political power for Harijans, though all these three are necessary.

**Khadi**

*Economic reform in the villages*

In the decade before the travelling campaign, Gandhi had promoted his view that *khadi* or Indian hand-spun and hand-woven cotton would solve many problems in villages. First, *khadi* was Indian cotton and not imported as other kinds of cotton and it was therefore available to a larger part of the Indian society. Second, spinning cloth and distributing it would provide a second income that was needed in villages, where wages were low and villagers could be without work for up to one third of the year. Third, *khadi* would eliminate the need for cotton mills and foreign goods in the villages. Fourth, wearing *khadi* would mean that there would not be large differences in clothing among villagers. If everyone in addition kept to the rules of religious cleanliness, there would be no outward difference between an untouchable and someone of a higher caste. In 1934 Gandhi exclaimed that his view of *khadi* had not changed since he had first tried to implement the spinning of *khadi* in 1919. On the contrary, he was even more dedicated to promoting *khadi* and claimed that —*khadi* is the only solution for the deep and deepening distress of the untouchables. *Khadi* has been said by, among others, Brown to be Gandhi’s attempt at an economic reform in India. Brown explains that in contrast to other leading figures such as Ambedkar, Gandhi wanted to avoid the organisation of labour and class struggle as seen in Europe. He wanted to solve the problems in India with solutions originating on the subcontinent.

*Khadi* was one of these solutions along with temple-entry for untouchables. The main reason for Gandhi’s emphasis on spinning was that it was universally applicable in all of India. This part of his rhetoric could therefore appeal to more Indians than could temple-entry, for instance. In addition to the positive aspects of *khadi* such as its availability and universal applicability together with the prospect of having an additional income, the spinning of *khadi* lessened the gap between rich and poor in some areas. Gandhi believed that the spinning *khadi* privately could give a small profit to a family or a village, but working in mills provided only limited earnings for a limited number of workers. The profit in the cotton industry lay only in the hands of a handful of people, making them much richer off the labours of others. The spinning of *khadi* was completely different, creating only differences when it came to how much cotton a family or village could produce and sell.

Even though *khadi* was one way of improving a family or a village economically, the historian Lisa Travedi explains that the cloth was not cheaper than mill-spun cloth in general, because of the volume mills could produce in a shorter time. How could the
average person afford to buy *khadi* when it was more expensive than other clothes? Travedi’s impression is that Gandhi and his followers never really faced this criticism but rather focused on how to teach poor villagers how to spin their own clothes. In Gandhi’s view, since the profit of *khadi* went to the poor, as opposed to mill cloth profit, *khadi* was worth the expense.

Brown reveals that many Congress politicians had a vision for India that differed from that of Gandhi’s. They wanted for India to —hold its own as a modern, industrialized nation. The thought was that other countries exploited countries that were not industrialized. India therefore had to develop industry in order to be independent and self-sufficient. The priority in Gandhi’s economic vision was, according to Brown, the creation of a non-violent society. Such a society could only exist with a rural economy because it eschewed exploitation – and exploitation led to violence. Becoming industrialized to Gandhi meant that the country moved away from traditional values and opened up to exploitation and dependence. Although the economic vision for India differed between Gandhi and other congress politicians, the common goal was that both sides wanted an economically strong and independent India.

Viewing the spinning of *khadi* in connection to one of Gandhi’s overall goals of the campaign, namely mobilization of Indian society, it is possible to see why emphasis was put on *khadi*. Firstly, it was an Indian product in a time when large parts of the subcontinent were under foreign control by the colonial power. Secondly, *khadi* provided an additional opportunity to an income or means to make one’s own clothes. Finally, *khadi* could be applied in all of India and was therefore a common denominator that could help Indians connect beyond local communities. *Khadi* could be related to Indians independent of religious or social differences, and therefore had the potential of increasing the number of Gandhi’s supporters.

In 1934, Gandhi’s focus was on the internal issues of the Indian society, which explains why *khadi* acquired an even greater role than previously. Efforts to implement spinning and the use of *khadi* were on a grander scale than earlier. Also, as a result of Gandhi’s popularity and his many supporters, more Indians had access to information on *khadi* than in the campaigns of the 1920s.

*Village India*

Gandhi is well known for his opposition to values he believed were brought into India by the colonial power. He was strictly opposed to increasing urbanisation and emphasis on material goods, and believed that traditional Indian society consisted of self-supporting villages, a condition preferable and natural in India. Brown explains that Gandhi believed that villages were the essence of the Indian way of life representing equality and
peaceful neighborliness, an equilibrium disturbed by the spread of the Western influence. This belief, says Brown, is present in much of his social and political programme.

In 1910, Gandhi wrote in *Hind Swaraj* that The Indian village has for centuries remained a bulwark against political disorder, and the home of the simple domestic and social virtues. No wonder, therefore, that philosophers and historians have always dwelt lovingly on this ancient institution which is the natural social unit and the best type of rural life: self-contained, industrious, peace-loving, conservative in the best sense of the word.

Idealizing the village as a social unit was not unique in India or the rest of the world. Gandhi was inspired by utopians such as Leo Tolstoy and John Ruskin and was convinced that they, like him, believed that the lives of the lowest in society or the workers of the soil were the lives worth living. During the civil disobedience campaigns of the 1920s, Gandhi translated Ruskin to Gujarati and distributed the work in meetings. As a result, both Gandhi’s *Hind Swaraj* and Ruskin’s books were banned by the colonial regime. Gandhi continued spreading his view of village life and emphasized village reform in the travelling campaign against untouchability. That did not mean that Gandhi’s reform was exclusive to villages alone.

Gandhi differentiated between villages and towns or cities in his campaigning. While the campaign in the cities was to concentrate on supplying funds for untouchables by collecting money and subscriptions to the *Harijan* through meetings and house to house canvassing, campaigning in the villages was more difficult. Gandhi’s ultimate goal was for every Indian to be equal and share every service in the villages such as temples, wells, schools and clothes. Gandhi’s supporters reported, however, that working in the villages was difficult because they were outnumbered by resisting caste Hindus. A compromise he had not accepted in the campaign for temple-entry was therefore made: there would be room for the creation of separate temples, wells and schools for the untouchables. Gandhi saw the compromise as one step towards equality and his ultimate goal. It gave, in Gandhi’s opinion, his organization and reform workers an advantage as it would be easier to compromise first and change the hearts of caste-Hindus later.

While Gandhi idealised village society, Coward explains that untouchables – with Ambedkar in the lead – saw villages as places where the social strata of varnas were thriving: untouchables were forced to live in separate quarters, often in the outskirts of a village, so as not to pollute caste Hindus. Untouchables had in addition restrictions on movement, apparel, houses, occupation and the acquisition of land. Ambedkar insisted that —in this traditional village structure, the law is made by the Touchables and the Untouchables have no choice but to accept it and obey. Untouchables have no rights or equality; they can only ask for mercy and be content with what is offered. Gandhi’s suggestion of preserving village society was unacceptable to Ambedkar and other
untouchables. In their view, untouchables would there remain the subjects of tyranny and oppression. The village system would have to be reformed in order to protect untouchables from abuse.

According to this, Ambedkar did not view Gandhi’s initiatives in the villages as reform but as prevention of reform. Ambedkar’s solution was government control of the villages. First, untouchables should be moved from the outskirts of a village and form a separate village away from and independent of other castes. Second, the government should provide land that could be cultivated by untouchables. This would enable untouchables to extract themselves from the close-knit association to the caste Hindus in the same village. As Ambedkar explained, India is admittedly a land of villages and so long as the village system provides an easy method of marking out the Untouchable, the Untouchable has no escape from Untouchability. It is the village system which perpetuates Untouchability and the Untouchables therefore demand that it should be broken and the Untouchables, who are as a matter of fact socially separate should be made separately geographically and territorially also, and be grouped into separate villages exclusively of Untouchables in which the distinction of the high and low and of Touchable and Untouchable will find no place.

One important aspect of Ambedkar’s opposition to Gandhi’s idealisation of rural India must be mentioned: Ambedkar believed that villages were the place for traditional abuse of untouchables, but he did not discuss the treatment of untouchables in the larger cities on the subcontinent. Coward asserts that the social division between touchable and untouchable was rigid in the modern towns as in the villages, and Pauline Kolenda provides examples that strengthen his claim. Kolenda explains that in the cities a caste or kin-community helped each other materially and emotionally through proving housing, work and a social base. A caste thereby excluded other castes of kin-communities and retained a pattern of social stratification. However, Kolenda shows that there were changes in urban areas in the 1970s, decades after the travelling campaign. There, rules of purity and impurity were not as strong in public as in villages: —Hindu men are not much concerned with pollution from contact with lower-caste persons in city-streets, in buses or trains, in office, factory or shop. Traditional customs, including rules of purity and pollution, may be followed in the home; but they are largely ignored at work.

Though Gandhi idealized the village, he too wanted reform. But, in contradiction to Ambedkar, Gandhi wanted not to modernize the village but to reinstitute what he referred to as a —golden age , a concept he used as part of his rhetoric for explaining his ideal Indian society. On several occasions Gandhi tried to explain his view of the period he called Satya Yuga (the age of truth) and what made it desirable. In 1919, he defined the age as the time when —men and women in India spontaneously and automatically spoke only the truth. Women in those days maintained their chastity. In those days even when
men and women got together, they did not have lustful thoughts in their minds. That is how things were in the Satya Yuga or the Golden Age. In 1925 Gandhi claimed that in the golden age there were no semi-starved millions in the country.

iii) Educational reform in the villages

Gandhi’s experience with education had begun long before the travelling campaign against untouchability. In South Africa he had started a school where the emphasis was on physical labour in education. Gandhi’s first attempt at educational reform in India came in Champaran in 1919. There, Gandhi and a handful of volunteers started schools in five neighboring villages. The teacher was not only an educator but also a social worker: first, hygiene and sanitation had to be taught and implemented among the pupils. Second, the pupils were taught the alphabet and numbers. During the day, the pupils consisted of the children in the village. At night, adults of both sexes attended school and were taught medical aid in addition to hygiene and reading. The teachers also visited different quarters of the villages and cleaned them together with the villagers.

Gandhi’s efforts in Champaran were in 1919. In the campaign against untouchability 15 years later, however, with more experience and having seen more of the Indian subcontinent, Gandhi had added curricula to a reform of village education. Subjects such as history, geography and arithmetic should be taught in addition to handicrafts and the spinning of cotton cloth. Gandhi also had specific instructions as to what should be taught in the different subjects. He wanted the education to become Indian. It was Gandhi’s impression that education in India was British, not Indian: school books were imported and not adapted to the needs of Indian children, and especially not untouchable Indian children. Teachers should therefore adapt to the needs of the individual villages and be a caring parent for the pupils.

The reform of education in Indian villages in the campaign worked on all levels: British books were to be substituted by tutoring based on the needs of villagers. This often meant that the vocabulary was that which was relevant to them, words they used on a daily basis. Arithmetic was based on the daily need of the pupil, such as how to count earnings or houses in the village, and the history was mostly current. The basic use of the subject was taught first and then expanded. Local personalities and events were taught first, regional second and then national history. Spinning and other physical labour was a means to teach pupils the advantages of learning a trade, making their own clothes and also the possibility of an additional income.

Gandhi’s attempt at educational reform in the travelling campaign against untouchability had consequences in the aftermath of the campaign: upon his return to politics in 1937 Gandhi’s proposal for educational reform was put forward in seven provinces. The demand was first and foremost for compulsory free education for all children,
emphasizing that all children were equal and therefore had equal rights. School were—to be an integral part of its social and economic environment, and learning a realistic participation in the economic and cultural activities of the community. Manual labour was to be central in the education, teaching children cooperation and self-realization. The idea was that a blend of vocation and aptitude would create a greater sense of personal worth and dignity and in addition deepen reverence for cultural and moral values.

Anti Communal Programmes

Mahatma Gandhi devoted his entire life for propounding communal harmony. He wished in ‘India of his dream’, “I shall for an India, in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people; [and above all] an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony.”

Not only in India but also all over the world, scholars and subject-specialists have defined communalism in different manners. And, all these definitions, unfortunately, do not reveal the complete meaning or sense of communalism in clear-cut terms. However, Richard C. Lambert, who has given the definition of community according to the conditions prevailing in the country, provides us a correct picture regarding the position of communalism in India.

According to Richard C. Lambert, “The word Community is used in India for the unequal social units.” It may be said that communalism is the negative aspect of the community. That is to say, when the people of a particular community care only for their own narrowly concerned interests, through the means of their religious faiths, old customs and conservative practices, disregarding the interests of whole society, then it may be termed as communalism.

In general, following four main things can be found in a state of communalism:

- Negativeness;
- Narrowness;
- Unfair means; and
- Disregard to the interests of society.

The unfair means that are adopted in a state of communalism, neglecting the interests of society, instigation on the basis of religious sentiments is the main among them, which can be observed clearly in communal violence that occurred during the last 57 years in India.

India has a history of communal riots. The problem of communalism, especially relating to the modern age, and seeds of which were sown during the 19th century, is a
gift of colonial rulers to India. In other words, the colonialists played the main role in starting communal tension in India in the 19th Century. Along with this, some people from a particular religious community were also involved in this act, who keeping aside the interests of entire Indian Society and filled with narrow-minded thoughts, joined hands with the colonialists. They were also in favour of bargaining with the colonialists for the benefit of their co-religionists. It was an easy task for them. India is a country of diversities, a land of different religious communities and sects. In such a country, if the government protects the people of a particular community who are ready to fulfill their own interests even by spreading communalism, what can be difficult for them? They can do so without any fear.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who was one of the great political leaders of India at that time, started “Ganesh Pooja” and “Shivaji Mahotsav” in Southern India, especially in Maharashtra and its nearby regions, with the aim of creating awakening among the masses. I hope, even today, nobody can believe that while starting “Ganesh Pooja” or “Shivaji Mahotsav” programmes, he would have contemplated about Hindu-Muslims, or there would be any thought in his mind in the interest of Hindus – his co-religionists. He was one who always thought and worked for Indians, Indian nation and Indian nationalism. The programmes related to “Ganesh Pooja” and “Shivaji Mahotsav” was not initiated to support the interests of Hindus. However, both “Ganesh” and “Shivaji” were associated with the emotions of a number of Hindus.

A procession connected with the above programme was passing through the streets of Mumbai in the year 1893. When it reached near a place of prayer of another religious community, it was pelted with stones. The quarrel ensued between those participating in the procession and attackers, and finally resulted in a communal riot. Similarly, another incident occurred in the coming year, i.e. in 1894 at Pune. Behind both these incidents was the support of colonial rulers to the narrow-minded people involved in the acts.

From here, started communalism, which was also evident on some occasions in the Gandhian era of the national liberation movement of India? Mahatma Gandhi, as I have already said, was committed to communal harmony. He was of the firm belief that if the followers of two principal religious communities – Hindu and Muslim walk hand in hand, come forward together to solve the problems, small or big, become identical to nationalism, only then the progress of the country will be possible in real sense and the cultural heritage of India will be protected.

According to his firm belief, Mahatma Gandhi entered in the “Yajna” of national freedom along with others, whether they were Sikhs or Buddhists, Parasis or Jains,
Christians or Muslims, or his own co-religionists. He, as all know, accepted *ahimsa* as both, means and goal. He made it the basis for achieving freedom for India. In my opinion, *ahimsa* holds its due place in all religious communities. I do not believe that it does not help the followers of any community to perform his or her duty. Rather I believe that it is *ahimsa* alone that assists to enable us to fulfill our duties in the best possible manner.

But it was unfortunate that many people could not become identical with the firm and true message of Mahatma Gandhi pertaining to non-violence. Even then, he, time and again, repeated his message of *ahimsa* till the last breath of his life; worked for communal harmony declaring it a value supplementary to non-violence. He, time and again, conveyed suggestions for peace brigade and for volunteers to work for harmony. These suggestions are more or less important even today for a country like India.

The colonial state had promoted the communal ideology and patronised politics based on it as part of the divide-and-rule policy. Communal organisations and ideologues continued their work under the benign, if not benevolent, colonial umbrella. Their opponents, the secular nationalists, had no such advantage. They had to carry on their ideological struggle in the face of the active hostility of the state. The colonial state, which used brutal repression to suppress non-violent civil disobedience, often turned a blind eye to communal violence. The situation changed with the intimations of independence. The Congress could wield at least partial state power at the Centre when it joined the Interim Government in September 1946 with Jawaharlal Nehru as its head.

The call for ‘Direct Action’ by Jinnah and the Muslim League in August 1946 had inaugurated a new stage in communal politics. The resultant ‘Great Calcutta Killings’ placed a new challenge before the Congress leadership. The Interim Government had not yet been formed in August, and by the time it was set up in September, the situation was already growing worse. In early October, violence erupted in Noakhali, a remote district of East Bengal, with a majority Muslim population. The Muslim League Government led by Suhrawardy in Bengal failing to take strong action, the situation deteriorated rapidly.

The Mahatma had, with unerring instinct, sensed that the battle for India’s soul would be fought and won not in the in the broad avenues of New Delhi but in the by-lanes and winding paths of Noakhali, Bihar, Calcutta, Delhi, and Punjab, that is, wherever the communal monster surfaced, and that his place was there, as always, with his people. The ideals for which so many had sacrificed their all seemed to be slipping out of reach at the very moment of victory. Struggling to find an answer, Gandhiji embarked on what was to be his most amazing, awe-inspiring heroic experiment with India’s civilisational truth.
There are few tales more worth recounting than that of the Master at work on his experiment. Torn with doubt and wracked by despair that his methods of non-violence and love rather than violence and hate had failed, he threw everything he had into the balance. “Do I represent this _ahimsa_ in my person? If I do, then deceit and hatred that poison the atmosphere should dissolve.” Elsewhere he said: “It is to demonstrate the efficacy of that way I have come here. If Noakhali is lost, India is lost.” With his small band of devoted comrades, he went into the villages of Noakhali, not for a visit, not for a tour, not for an on-the-spot survey, as leaders are wont to do, but to stay as long as it was necessary. He stayed from November 6, 1946 till March 4, 1947, almost _four months_, in this remote corner of India. It is difficult even today to comprehend how the most revered leader of a vast country in the throes of difficult negotiations, charting out its path to independence from a colonial power, could spend such a long time almost out of reach of his own movement.

Gandhiji looked upon Noakhali as he had thought of Champaran and Bardoli, a laboratory, “an ideal situation for testing whether _ahimsa_ (non-violence) could effectively be used by a small number of people against an almost sullen, if not hostile majority all round”. He spent the first two weeks visiting the villages and towns in the affected area and meeting large numbers of people. He then settled down in a village named Srirampur and spent the next 43 days there. He soon sent off all his associates except two, Parasuram, his typist, and Nirmal Kumar Bose, his interpreter, thus depriving himself of even basic care and small comforts. As if this was not enough, he followed it up with a _padayatra_ in which he did not sleep for more than one night in any one village. The satyagrahi was trying, by his own suffering, to melt the heart of the opponent and win him over. He was also sharing, through the crucifixion of his flesh, the pain of the victims and expressing the torture of his own soul. Thus, when broken glass and excreta were thrown in his path to dissuade him, his answer was to remove even his simple sandals and walk barefoot. ‘_Ekla cholore_’, Tagore’s apt song, was often on his lips as it seemed to have been written for him.

His message to the terrorised Hindus was: Shed your fear. Go back to your homes. To the women, who were afraid to wear _sindur_ and bangles in public, as these were markers of their religious status, he said, assert the right to your culture. Since the focus of the oppression was on obliteration of religious symbols, the resistance too had to take the form of assertion. Forced conversions, forced marriages had been among the chief forms adopted by the communalists. Gandhiji repeatedly said that he had come not to offer consolation but to give courage. He refused to accept the Hindu Mahasabha demand that Hindus live in separate areas. This would lead to ghettos, and defeat the whole purpose of his work. He was also not in favour of cases against perpetrators of violence being dropped, as the guilty must accept punishment.
He was particularly disheartened at the role played by religious figures in the whole affair, encouraging the violence and the forced conversions and marriages. As a believer, religion for him represented the highest moral and ethical values, and its use to justify violence and forced conversions and the like was abhorrent to him. He openly questioned the belief that Islam sanctioned this kind of inhuman behaviour. He appealed to the Muslims to provide assurances of security to enable their Hindu neighbours to return to their homes.

Gandhiji’s satyagaraha in Noakhali provides a wealth of extremely valuable material for analyzing and learning secular practice at the grassroots, in the most hostile of situations. We also need to understand why, despite the brave and heroic deeds of Gandhiji and his co-workers, success was limited. Few Hindu refugees returned, the feeling of insecurity was still there to a very great extent, Muslims were sullen, and their presence in the daily prayer meetings conducted by Gandhiji was reported to have fallen towards the latter part of his stay.

One major reason for this perhaps was that the power of the state was ranged against him or at the best of times neutral, and was certainly not on his side. Providing a sense of security to Hindus when the state authorities including the police were guilty of conniving with the perpetrators of the carnage was an almost impossible task. For the Muslims, too, perhaps the cost of listening to the voice of sanity and humanity was too high when it was ranged against the might of the state and of religion.

In contrast, Nehru as head of the Interim Government and the provincial Congress Government which was in power in Bihar were able to effectively control the large-scale communal violence that broke out in October 1946. The situation in Bihar had started to deteriorate with the spread of the news regarding the Biharis killed in Calcutta in August and later on the Noakhali happenings. The observance of Noakhali Day on October 25 acted as a trigger and soon the conflagration enveloped the rural areas of three large districts: Patna, Gaya and Monghyr. Horrific news was received of entire villages of Muslims being wiped out at the hands of bands of Hindu peasants. Nehru got the news in Calcutta where he had gone to take stock of the situation in Noakhali. He instantly rushed to Bihar and backed to the hilt the provincial Congress Government in its efforts to suppress the violence and restore normalcy. From November 4 to 9, 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Azad, Acharya Kripalani, Jaya Parakash Narayan, Anugraha Narain Singh and other Congress leaders toured the countryside, holding big and small meetings, meeting people, giving succour to the victims, warning the perpetrators to give up their madness.

Nehru was unequivocal in his stand:”I will stand in the way of Hindu-Muslim riots. Members of both the communities will have to tread over my dead body before they can strike at each other.” Nor did he hesitate when it came to the need to use force against
those indulging in violence, despite his strong faith in non-violence, and democracy and civil liberties. The conviction that the danger posed by communalism, which he regarded as a form of fascism, was very grave, helped him overcome his instinctive reservations about the use of coercion.

He warned the people that “Machine guns, bombs and all the force of the government will be put in motion to stop bloodshed”. “Lawless-ness can never be tolerated....mob rule cannot be allowed.” “If required to control fresh recru-descence of communal trouble the government will not hesitate to employ mighty military forces to suppress such hooliganism.”

Congress workers were asked to “go round the villages and bring round everyone to sanity. I do not want to hear from Congress workers that they cannot control people. If they cannot control they must sacrifice their lives in the attempt.” Students were urged to suspend their studies and “go round the rural areas for bringing the people back to their senses and restoring peace and sanity. Even if a few of you die in such an endeavor, it will be worth it, and I shall personally congratulate you for such acts of sacrifice.”1 Peasants were asked “to take a pledge, with arms upraised, not to indulge in any mis-behaviour”.

By November 8, Nehru was writing: “the chances of any major incident or any large scale military action are now very little. This is due to many reasons—Gandhiji’s announcement that he might fast, the personal appeals and visits of a number of Congress leaders, the good work done by some very earnest Congress workers in the cities and villages, and finally, the fear of the military.”

The Bihar example demonstrates that the winning combination was when the power of the state and the ideological weapons were on the same side. Threats and actual use of force against communal violence created the space in which appeals to peace and amity could be heard. Force stopped the people in their tracks and then they had the chance to pause and think and give an ear to those who were telling them that they were on the wrong path.

In Noakhali, with the power of the state ranged against him, and the majority community hostile, Gandhiji’s non-violence had to be equal to the task of first creating that civic and political space in which a dialogue could begin. This was Gandhiji’s challenge. That is why he was so tortured. There were no easy answers.

And yet, through non-violent heroism of an extraordinary kind, he and his band of warriors did succeed in carving out enough space to begin the process of dialogue. They demonstrated the possibility of political action when none seemed possible.
Hindswaraj

CONCEPT OF' SWARAJ

Gandhiji’s concept of Swaraj was not merely confined to freeing India from the British yoke. Such freedom he desired but he said that he did not want to exchange 'king log for king stork'. Swaraj is not transfer of political power to the Indians. Nor does it mean, as he emphasised, mere political self-determination. For him, there was no Swaraj in Europe; for him the movement of Swaraj involved primarily the process of releasing oneself from all the bondages one is prey to both internal and external. It involves a movement of self-purification too. It is not the replacement of one type of authority by another. He felt, "the real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused". Swaraj, he used to say, is power of the people to determine their lot by their own efforts and shape their destiny the way they like. In other words, "Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority". Swaraj is usually translated in English as 'Independence'. Gandhiji, however, gave this term a much deeper meaning. 'The word Swaraj is a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning selfrule and self-restraint and not freedom from all restraint which 'independence' ofien means". He saw swaraj as freedom for all plus self-control by all. It is related to the inner strength and capacity of a people which enable them to understand and control their social world: "The outward freedom that we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment. And if this is the correct view of freedom, our chief energy must be concentrated upon achieving reform from within". Freedom from within means control over oneself, which, in turn, means a life based on understanding one's own self. Gandhi perceived non-violence as the key to attain such freedom and self-control. Non-violence needs to be imbued in our thought, words and deeds. Once non-violence as Love takes possession of these dimensions of the person then a sense of duty prevails over those of rights. We tend to do things for others without expecting returns thereon. "In Swaraj based Ahimsa, people need not know their rights, but it is necessary for them to know their duties. There, is no duty that does not create corresponding rights and those rights alone are genuine rights, which flow from the performance of duty. Swaraj is thus a basic need of all. It recognises no race, religion, or community. "Nor is it the monopoly of the lettered persons ... .. Swaraj is to be for all, including the former but emphatically including the maimed, the blind, the starving, toiling millions. A stout hearted, honest, sane, literate man may well be the first servant of the nation." Swaraj will necessarily be inclusive of the poor and the toiling masses. Therefore, he adds, "Let there be no mistake as what Purna Swaraj means. .... It is full economic freedom for the toiling millions. It is no unholy alliance with any interest for their exploitation. Any alliance must mean their deliverance." (Young India, 16.4.1931, p.77). In the same vein, Gandhiji made it very
clear that India's Swaraj did not mean the rule of majority community. Every community would be at par with every other under the Swaraj constitution. Swaraj, implying government based on the consent of the people is not a gift which comes from above, but it is something that comes from within. Democracy, therefore, is not the exercise of the voting power, holding public office, criticizing government; nor does it mean equality, liberty or security, though important as they all are in a democratic polity. It is when the people are able to develop their inner freedom which is people's capacity to regulate and control their desires impulses in the light of reason that freedom rises from the individual and strengthens him. His Swaraj had economic, social, political and international connotations. Economic Swaraj, as he says himself, "stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life." Social Swaraj centres on "an equalization of status." Political Swaraj aims at "enabling people to better their condition in every department of life." In the international field, swaraj emphasised on interdependence. "There is", he says, "No limit to extending our services to our neighbours across state-made frontiers. God never made those frontiers."

Gandhi’s vision for Indian society was swaraj, meaning —independence or —self-rule. In contrast to the political goal of swaraj which Congress politicians used as the term for independence from the colonial power, Gandhi added that swaraj also included solving what he considered to be the major problems within Indian society. In Gandhi’s opinion, the key to achieving swaraj lay in fulfilling three conditions alone, namely the spinning-wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity and in the removal of untouchability. In order to achieve Swaraj Indians also had to undergo personal reform, a —change of heart that would ensure the abolition of untouchability. Gandhi’s first discussion of swaraj and its conditions can be found in his only book of political theory Hind Swaraj, translated as —Indian self-rule, which was published in 1909 when Gandhi lived in South Africa and later banned by the colonial power.

One obvious objection to Hind Swaraj can be that the text was written over two decades before the period with which this thesis is concerned – two decades filled with a plethora of initiatives and campaigns against the colonial power where Gandhi’s influence had begun as marginal in 1909, but become highly consequential in 1932. But the explanation is that even though parts of Hind Swaraj may only have been relevant in the immediate temporal context of which it was written, the conditions for the fulfillment of swaraj remained unchanged and paramount to Gandhi. It is therefore essential to see how Gandhi used his vision of Hind Swaraj in his campaigns before the period with which this thesis is concerned.

Hind Swaraj was written in the form of a discussion between an —editor and a —student. As the text was concerned with Indian Independence in every form, discussions were on
issues that highlighted differences between India and the colonial power. Gandhi’s goal of distinguishing these differences was to show that India could evolve beyond the colonial power: —The tendency of the Indian civilization is to elevate the moral being, that of the Western civilization is to propagate immorality. The latter is godless, the former is based on a belief in God.

Gandhi used examples from the colonial power and compared them to his vision for India. One example of this concerns the spinning and weaving of khadi, which was central in the travelling campaign against untouchability. Gandhi was dissatisfied with an economy based on money and not sustenance. The former he believed had been initiated wholly by the colonial power. His concern was with the cotton industry: before the colonial power had entered, Indians had used khadi or Indian hand-spun cotton to make cloth. The colonial power found khadi inadequate and implemented the use of machine-spun cotton, which was distributed to cotton mills. Raw cotton was then exported to England and later imported back to India as a finished product so that Indians were dependent on buying foreign cloth that had originated in their homeland Gandhi’s solution was swadeshi, the use of things from one’s own land. First and foremost in the idea of swadeshi was the spinning of khadi in private homes as it could become a second income to poor Indians and at the same time prevent the purchase of foreign cloth. This, in turn, would make India less dependent on the colonial power and become one step closer to swaraj.

Gandhi used khadi as a focal point in many of his campaigns. In 1919 Gandhi encouraged Indian women to spin, and several shops selling only khadi cloth were opened in Bombay. The same year, Swadeshi Sabha was started, an organisation with the goal of implementing swadeshi on a national level. To achieve this, the production of khadi had to be increased dramatically and the importance of swadeshi had to be explained to Indians.

In 1920, the spinning of khadi became part of a non-cooperation programme approved in the Indian National Congress. In both 1920 and 1921 Gandhi travelled around the country to promote the non-cooperation campaign – much like in the travelling campaign against untouchability in 1933. Gandhi’s power of mobilization was considerable, causing crowds to gather wherever he visited. Gandhi and his supporters also established schools that were to follow the principles of swadeshi and teach spinning to the poor, but the initiatives were only temporary and the schools did not last.

Brown explains that although Gandhi’s attempts at non-cooperation did no considerable harm to the colonial power, his means of mobilizing Indians through propagating khadi as part of swadeshi helped gather more Indians around a common goal than previously: the participants were from a wider range of Indian society and Indian-made cloth increased in popularity.17 Although Gandhi did not emphasize that it was untouchables in specific that were to benefit from khadi in the campaigns of the 1920s, he did believe khadi to be an
economical solution for poor in India. It was this conviction Gandhi carried with him to the temple-entry campaign and the travelling campaign against untouchability.

A second aspect of *Hind Swaraj* that was part of the mobilization in Gandhi’s campaign was *satyagraha* or —truth force, often connected to nonviolence, but not synonymous to it. Gandhi believed *satyagraha* to be at the core of traditional Hindu values.
Module IV

Critique of Gandhi

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was an outstanding literary figure of India who exerted considerable influence on human thinking in the contemporary world. This influence extended to the political arena as well by his lucid elucidation of important concepts like nationalism, freedom, human rationality and his many differences with Mahatma Gandhi's (1869-1948) philosophy and strategies. While Gandhi was a political and social activist and Tagore was a poet, there was remarkable consistency in the enunciation of their major political themes, which they developed and refined reflecting on major events of their time. Furthermore, in Tagore there was a quest of a poet for human perfection and completeness and not merely a pragmatic analysis of a particular problem or a situation. His expression was an eloquent appeal of his faith in the human spirit and the optimism by which the entire humankind could think of realizing freedom, breaking all artificial barriers, which had been built over the years. These barriers built on prejudices and hatred were the stumbling blocks in the way of achieving the ultimate aim of a beautiful and harmonious world for all paving the way for human perfection with flowering of human creativity and with triumph of humanity and dignity. The modern Indian political tradition of assimilating the Western ideas with the Eastern ones, which began with Ram Mohan Roy, reached its culmination in Tagore.

DIFFERENCES WITH GANDHI

The essence of Gandhi's entire political philosophy is in the Hind Swaraj (1908) and Tagore's in Swadeshi Sabzaj (1904). Both of them had a great deal of respect and reverence for one another, though this mutual respect did not prohibit them from expressing basic disagreements about their respective perceptions of contemporary reality and the desired nature of the movements in the given Indian situation. A major controversy erupted between them following Gandhi's return to India from South Africa and his meteoric rise in Indian politics culminating in the non-co-operation movement and Tagore's articulation of a philosophy of universalism and his criticism of the cult of nationalism during the First World War.

Tagore, regarded India's basic problem to be social and not political, though like Gandhi, he was conscious of the acute differences and conflicts in the Indian society. As such society and not politics was his primary area of focus. He could perceive that the triumph of science had united the whole country into one, which made possible for seeking a unity that was not political. This perception led him to conclude that India could
offer a solution in this regard for she "never had a real sense of nationalism". Regarding the nationalist upsurge lie was convinced that it would popularize the struggle for independence but would be unproductive in the overall context of its own development for the quest of freedom would imperil its realization.

Tagore developed this argument after a careful scrutiny of the Gandhian leadership and strategy. He derived the basic framework of this evaluation from his earlier experiences during the days of agitation against Bengal partition of 1905. In that movement, initially Tagore took an active part popularizing *Raksha Bundhan* and nationalistic songs. It was immediately during the period after the publication of *Swadeshi Samuj* that he passionately pleaded for the revitalization of the decaying villages and creation of new awareness amongst the ordinary people. Though initially he was in the forefront of the movement, he became disillusioned since he could very clearly see that there was no concern about the need for mass awareness and that the city-based middle class were keen on protecting its own selfish interests. After withdrawing from the movement he made serious attempts to rebuild the village life within the Zamindari system, then prevailing system. This background is important for comprehending his basic disagreements with Gandhi. Tagore's first written evidence about Gandhi's preferences and policies were in a letter written on 12th April 1919 from *Shantiniketan* advising Gandhi to be cautious about the programme of non co-operation for in no way did it represent India's moral superiority. He took note of the important changes that came with the rise of Gandhi in Indian politics. He thought very highly of Gandhi's leadership and could also see that the proposed non cooperation movement would engulf the whole country and would be much bigger than the anti-partition movement of Bengal. He could also grasp the important difference between the present phase and the earlier ones. Earlier the political leaders did not look beyond the English educated people, whereas in contrast, Gandhi emerged as the spokesperson of millions of poor illiterate Indians. He spoke their language and wore their dress. Though his precepts were practical and not bookish they lacked logic and scientific reasoning. They did not contain a philosophy for awakening the nation. Instead of following the path of truth, Gandhi attempted a shortcut by taking the easy path. Subsequently he was perturbed by the fact that everyone talked in the same voice and made the same gestures and characterized this development as symbolizing the worst manifestations of nationalism for it indicated a slavish mentality and had nothing to do with the alien rule. What he resented most was the fact that the Gandhian directives, which included manual spinning of yarn and burning of foreign cloth, were medieval in nature. None of these stipulations were dissected critically and were accepted as dogmas. The Gandhian directives were followed mechanically and not rationally. Moreover the emphasis on simplicity would retard economic advancement for the narrow form of *swadeshi* could only result in restrictive provincial attitude, isolationism and provoke
unnecessary hostility in the rest of the world. Gandhi’s plans would lead to India’s isolation preventing western knowledge and advancements from reaching India. Disagreeing with Gandhi, Tagore pointed out that it was not possible to estimate the exact magnitude of idle time among the middle class and that peasants who constituted eighty percent of the Indian population without a meaningful occupation for six months in a year. He wondered whether it was desirable to popularize the use of the spinning wheel. Instead he preferred constructive programmes like co-operative agriculture for that would eliminate the malaise of small unproductive holdings and fight poverty. He felt that popularizing a scientific concept like co-operative agriculture would be important than any political action. He thought it was wrong of Gandhi to instruct Indian women to stop reading English and also opposed Gandhi’s call for boycott of government schools. Though critical of the existing system he felt that in the absence of a better alternative it would only result in perpetuating ignorance, superstitions and backwardness. In 1928 Tagore criticized Gandhi’s defense of varnashrarma by auguring that the system was inefficient as the occupation follows birth and not individual capacity. Hereditary occupation was mechanical, repetitive, obstructed innovation and retarded human freedom, he lamented that a true kshatriya was conspicuous by its absence in India. Similarly he dismissed Gandhi’s blame on untouchability as the cause of the Bihar earthquake 5\textsuperscript{th} February 1934, as unscientific, unreasonable and that it failed to explain the fact as to why the poor and the lower castes suffered more than the privileged and upper castes. On 20\textsuperscript{th} May 1939 in a letter to the Congress he warned against the worship of power within the Congress when some of Gandhi’s followers compared Gandhi to Mussolini and Hitler thus insulting Gandhi before the entire world. As a desired alternative, Tagore pleaded for "universal humanity and gave a call for recognizing the vast dimensions of India in its world context" because "hence Forth any nation which seeks isolation for itself must come into conflict with the time-spirit and find no peace. From now onwards the thinking of every nation will have to be international. It is the striving of the new age to develop in the mind this faculty of universality".

In response to these charges Gandhi replied that "Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian". He defended the use of the spinning wheel for that was the only way to realize the essential and living one-ness of interest among India’s myriads". Its purpose was to symbolize "sacrifice for the whole nation". To the charges of narrow provincialism and dangers of his kind of nationalism he pointed out: "I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great poet. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any". Furthermore, Gandhi did not regard his patriotism to be exclusive; "it is calculated not only to hurt any other nation
but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world" Tagore too shared the same attitude toward cultural diversity but was more cautious than Gandhi for his perception of the possible decay and degeneration as he saw in the later developments at the time of the partition of Bengal in 1905. Rolland characterized Tagore's revolt against Gandhi as "the revolt of the free soul" (1976: 64). C.F. Andrews expressed similar views about Tagore. Nehru wrote in 1961 "Tagore’s article The Call of Truth and Gandhi's reply in his weekly Young India which he called 'The Great Sentinel' made wonderful reading. They represent two aspects of the truth, neither of which could be ignored". Tagore's role was that of a critical but sympathetic observer of the nationalist upsurge in India, which wanted to be based both on reason and a concern for the masses, He criticized Gandhi whenever he felt that the Mahatma was deviating from these planks. He not only criticized but also provided an alternative perception to that of Gandhi. He acknowledges his greatness and lauded his role in fighting casteism, untouchability and communalism but was equally forthright in pointing out the limitations of the Gandhian schemes. For instance he criticized Mahatma's basic education scheme of 1937 popularly known as the Wardha Scheme on two grounds. First, he questioned the desirability of the precedence of material utility over development of personality. Second, the scheme of a special type of education for the rural poor would limit the choice of their vocation and that it is unfortunate that even in our ideal scheme education should be doled out in insufficient rations to the poor". He identified the lack of basic education as the fundamental cause of many of India's social and economic afflictions and desired lively and enjoyable schools. Tagore had the courage of conviction to point out the in-adequacies of Mahatma's vision. Since some of his criticisms are well founded, it is time to work out a synthesis with the experience of last five decades particularly in the major areas of our shortcomings like rural reconstruction, education and provide the requisite incentive for the rural poor to lead a decent and dignified life.

Ambedkar and His programmes

B. R AMBEDKAR

Babasaheb Ambedkar is one of the foremost thinkers of modern India. His thought is centrally concerned with issues of freedom, human equality, democracy and socio-political emancipation. He is a unique thinker of the world who himself suffered much humiliation, poverty and social stigma, right from his childhood, yet he rose to great educational and philosophical heights. He was a revolutionary social reformer who demonstrated great faith in democracy and the moral basis of a society. He was one of the principal critics of India's national movement led by M.K. Gandhi. He built civic and political institutions in India and criticized ideologies and institutions that degraded and enslaved people. He undertook several major studies on the economy, social structures
and institutions, law and constitutionalism, history and religion with in a methodological
vigor and reflexivity. He was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian
Constitution and defended its key provisions with scholarly precision and sustained
arguments without losing sight of the ideals it upheld while, at the same time; holding
firmly to the ground. He embraced Buddhism, recasting it to respond to modern and
socially emancipator urges, with hundreds of thousands of his followers and paved the
way for its resurgence in Modern India.

Ambedkar wrote several books. Unlike his contemporaries, he had done a
lot of original researching on his texts. Apart from writing the Indian Constitution as the
Chairman of its Drafting Committee and defending it in the marathon debates of the
Constituent Assembly, he wrote several books that reflect systematic thinking. Apart from
his doctoral dissertations on *The Problem of the Rupee* (1923) and *The Evolution of
Finance in British India* (1925) he wrote *Annihilation of Cast*, *Thoughts on Pakistan*
(1940), *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables* (1945), *Who were the
Sudras?* (1946), *The Untouchables: who were They. And why they became Untouchables?*
(1948), *States and Minorities* (1947), *Thoughts on Linguistic states* (1955) and his
magnum opus *The Buddha and his Dharma* (1957) are the most important. Apart from
them he wrote numerous articles, submitted learned memoranda, delivered lectures and
commented on the issues in the journals he published.

Ambedkar's thought has in any dimensions. There were very few issues that he left
untouched. He formulated his opinion on many crucial questions that India was
confronting during his times. His versatility is reflected in his social and political thought,
economic ideas, law and constitutionalism

Ambedkar described himself as a 'progressive radical' and occasionally as a
'progressive conservative' depending upon the context of demarcation from liberals,
Marxists and others as the case might be. He was an ardent votary of freedom. He saw it
as a positive power and capacity, enabling people to make their choices without being
restrained by economic processes and exploitation, social institutions and religious
orthodoxies and fears and prejudices. He thought that liberalism upheld a narrow
conception of freedom which tolerated huge accumulation of resources in a few hands and
the deprivation and exploitation that it bred. He thought that liberalism is insensitive about
social and political institutions which, while upholding formal equality, permitted massive
inequalities in the economic, social and cultural arenas. He argued that liberal systems
conceal deep inequalities of minorities such as the conditions of the Blacks in U.S.A. and
Jews in Europe. He further argued that liberalism was often drawn to justified colonial
exploitation and the extensive injustices it sustained. Liberal stress on the individual
ignored community bonds and the necessity of the latter to sustain a reflective and creative
self. Further liberalism ignored the repression and the alienation of the self that
exploitative and dominant structures bred. He found that liberalism has an inadequate understanding of state and the measures that state has to necessarily adopt to promote and foster good life. He felt that the principle of equality before law is truly a great advance as compared to the egalitarian orders that it attempted to supplant but is not adequate. He advanced stronger notions such as equality of Consideration, quality of respect and equality of dignity, He was sensitive to the notion of respect and the notion of community was central in his consideration. Ambedkar identified certain crucial areas on which he was in tune with Marxism. He argued that the task of philosophy is to transform the world, as Marx suggested in his Theses on Feuerbach, and he saw the central message of the Buddha as demanding the same, There is conflict between classes and class-struggle is writ large in social relations, he argued that a good society demands extensive public ownership of the means of production and equal opportunity to everyone to develop his or her self to the fullest extent, he, however, rejected the inevitability of socialism without the intervention of human agency concretely working towards it; the economic interpretation of history which does not acknowledge the crucial role that political and ideological institutions play and the conception of the withering away of the state, he decried the strategy of violence as a means to seize power and called for resolute mass action to bring about-a good society. He underscored the transformative effect of struggles in transforming those launching the struggles and the social relations against which they are launched. He further argued that a desirable political order can be created only by acknowledging a moral domain which he saw eminently expressed in the Buddha's teachings.

He was very critical of the Brahmanical ideology which, he felt, has been the dominant ideological expression in India. He argued that it reconstituted itself with all its vehemence by defeating the revolution set in motion by the Buddha. It subscribed to the principle of graded inequality in organizing social institutions and relations; defended the principle of birth over the principle of worth; undermined reason and upheld rituals and priest-craft. It reduced the shudra and the untouchable to perpetual drudgery and ignominy. It defended inequality. And unequal distribution of resource and positions and sanctified such measures by appeal - to doctrines such as karma-siddhanta. It upheld the principle of the superiority of mental labour over manual labour. It had little sympathy towards the degraded and the marginalized. It left millions of people in their degraded condition, away from civilization, and defended their above mineable condition. It had little place for freedom and for re-evaluation of choices, it compartmentalized society into umpteen closed groups making them unable to close ranks, foster a spirit of community and strive towards shared endeavors. It took away from associated life its joys and sorrows, emasculated struggles and strivings and deplored sensuousness and festivity. He constructed Brahmanism as totally lacking in any moral values and considerations based on such values. Arnbedkar was a bitter critic of Gandhi and Gandhism. He attacked
Gandhi’s approach to the abolition of untouchability, an approach that denied its sanction in the shastras and which called upon caste Hindus to voluntarily renounce it and make reparations for the same. Ambedkar felt that rights and humanity cannot be left to the mercy and prejudices of people who have developed a vested interest in undermining them. He did not demarcate the caste system and Varna system, as Gandhi did, but saw both of them as upholding the same principle of graded inequality. Even if untouchability is abolished through the Gandhian appeal to conscience, which Ambedkar did not think possible, untouchables will continue to occupy the lowest rung of society as a layer of the shudras. He saw Gandhi not merely caving in to Hindu orthodoxy but reformulating such orthodoxy afresh, Gandhi was dispensing moral platitudes to untouchables and trying to buy them with kindness while letting others to promote their interests, without hindrance. He rejected the appellation 'Harijan' that Gandhi had bestowed on untouchables and poured scorn on it. Ambedkar rejected many central notions as propounded by Gandhi such as Swaraj, nonviolence, decentralization, Khadi, trusteeship and vegetarianism. He subscribed to a modern polity with modern economy. This-worldly concerns were central to his agenda rather than other-worldly search. He felt that an uncritical approach to Panchayat Raj will reinforce the dominant classes in the countryside handing over additional resources and legitimacy to them to exploit the social classes and groups below them.

**Reason and Rights**

Ambedkar saw the modern era as heralding a triumph of human reason from myths, customs and religious superstitions. The world and man, he argued, can be explained by human reason and Endeavour. The supernatural powers need not be invoked for the purpose. In fact the supernatural powers themselves reflect weak human capacities and an underdeveloped state of human development: He therefore saw the expression of human reason in manifest in science and modern technology positively. If there are problems with regard to them then the same reason is capable of offering the necessary correctives. Further, he saw knowledge as eminently practical rather than speculative and esoteric. He felt that speculative knowledge divorced from active engagement with practice leads to priest-craft and speculation. Ambedkar's attitude to religion remained ambivalent. While he did not subscribe to a belief in a personal God or revelation, he felt that religion, as morality, provides an enduring foundation to societies and enables collective pursuit of good life. Such a religion elevates motives, upholds altruism and concern for others, binding people in solidarity and concern. It cares and supports and strives against exploitation, injustice and wrong-doing.

He argued that freedom, equality and fraternity are essential conditions for good life and a regime of discrete rights need to be constructed on them as the foundation. He understood rights not merely within the narrow confines of liberal individualism but as individual and group-rights. The defense of both types of rights in the Constituent
Assembly debates. Further he argued for both civil and political right. And social and economic rights. He did not see them in opposition but as reinforcing one and other. If there is a conflict between them, they have to be negotiated through civic and political forums. He also subscribed to the rights of minorities and cultural groups to maintain their distinctive belief's and identities while at the same time affording them proper conditions to take their rightful place in public affairs. He defended preferential treatment accorded to disadvantaged communities not only for reasons of equality but also on grounds of egalitarian social structures, and for the pursuit of a sane and good society.

**Subhash Chandra Bose and His ‘Mission’**

Subhas Chandra Bose was most dynamic leader of India’s struggle for independence. He is more familiar with his name Netaji. His contribution towards India’s Freedom struggle was of a revolutionary. Subhas Chandra Bose was born on 23rd Jan, 1897 in Cuttack, Orissa, India. From his childhood he was a bright student and was a topper in the matriculation examination from the whole of Kolkata province. He graduated from the Scottish Church College in Kolkata with a First Class degree in Philosophy. Influenced by the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, he was known for his patriotic zeal as a student. He went to England to fulfill his parents’ desire to appear in the Indian Civil Services. He stood fourth in order of merit. But he left civil Service’s apprenticeship and joined India’s freedom struggle. During his service with the Indian National Congress, he was greatly influenced by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Sri Aurobindo. He did not agree with Gandhiji’s methods of achieving Independence through non-violence. He believed that the only way of achieving Independence was by shedding blood. He therefore returned to Kolkata to work under Chittaranjan Das, the Bengali freedom fighter and co-founder of the Swaraj Party. He was imprisoned for his revolutionary activities on various occasions. In 1921, Bose organized a boycott of the celebrations to mark the visit of the Prince of Wales to India for which he was imprisoned for the first time. Bose was elected to the post of Chief Executive Officer of the newly constituted Calcutta Corporation in April 1924. That same year in October, Bose was arrested on suspicion of terrorism. At first, he was kept in Alipur Jail and later he was exiled to Mandalay in Burma. Bose was once again arrested on January, 1930. After his release from jail on September 25, he was elected as the Mayor of the City of Kolkata. Netaji was imprisoned eleven times by the British over a span of 20 years either in India or in Rangoon. During the mid 1930s he was exiled by the British from India to Europe where he championed India’s cause and aspiration for self-rule before gatherings and conferences. Throughout his stay in Europe from 1933 to 1936, he met several European leaders and thinkers. He travelled extensively in India and in Europe before stating his political opposition to Gandhi. Subhash Chandra Bose married Emilie Schenkl, an Austrian born national, who was his secretary, in 1937 in German. Bose wrote many letters to Schenkl of which many have been published in the book "Letters to Emilie Schenkl", edited by Sisir Kumar Bose and Sugata Bose. Subhas
Chandra Bose became the president of the Haripura Indian National Congress against the wishes of Gandhiji in 1938. He was elected as the president for two consecutive terms. Expressing his disagreement with Bose, Gandhi commented "Subhas` victory is my defeat”. Gandhi’s continued opposition led to Netaji’s resignation from the Working Committee. He was left with no alternative but to form an independent party, the "All India Forward Bloc".

In his call to freedom, Subhas Chandra Bose encouraged full participation of the Indian Masses to strive for independence. Bose initiated the concept of the "National Planning Committee" in 1938. His correspondence reveals that despite his clear dislike for British subjugation, he was deeply impressed by their methodical and systematic approach and their steadfastly disciplinarian outlook towards life. The contrast between Gandhi and Bose is captured with reasonable measure in a saying attributable to him ""If people slap you once, slap them twice". Having failed to persuade Gandhi for the mass civil disobedience to protest against Viceroy Lord Linlithgow’s decision to declare war on India’s behalf without consulting the Congress leadership, he organized mass protests in Kolkata. The disobedience was calling for the `Holwell Monument` commemorating the Black Hole of Kolkata. He was thrown in Jail and was released only after a seven-day hunger strike. Bose’s house in Kolkata was kept under surveillance by the British. With two pending court cases; he felt that the British would not let him leave the country before the end of the war. This set the scene for Bose’s escape to Germany, via Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. In Germany he instituted the Special Bureau for India under Adam von Trott zu Solz, broadcasting on the German-sponsored Azad Hind Radio. Here he founded the "Free India Centre" in Berlin, and created the Indian Legion consisting of some 4500 soldiers who were the Indian prisoners of war. The soldiers had previously fought for the British in North Africa prior to their capture by Axis forces.

Indian National Army

The Indian National Army was an armed force formed by Indian nationalists in 1942 in Southeast Asia during World War II. The aim of the army was to secure Indian independence with Japanese assistance. Initially composed Indian prisoners of war captured by Japan in the Malayan campaign and at Singapore, it later drew volunteers from Indian expatriate population in Malaya and Burma. The INA was also at the forefront of women's equality, and the formation of a women's regiment, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was formed as an all-volunteer women's unit to fight the British Raj as well as provide medical services to the INA. Initially formed in 1942 immediately after the fall of Singapore under Mohan Singh, the First INA collapsed in December that year before it was revived under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose in 1943 and proclaimed the army of Bose's Arzi Hukumat-e-Azad Hind (the Provisional Government of Free India). This second INA fought along with the Imperial Japanese Army against the British and Commonwealth forces in the campaigns in Burma, Imphal and Kohima, and
later, against the successful Burma Campaign of the Allies. The end of the war saw a large number of the troops repatriated to India where some faced trial for treason and became a galvanizing point of the Indian Independence movement.

The legacy of the INA is controversial given its associations with Imperial Japan and the other Axis powers, the course of Japanese occupations in Burma, Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia, as well as Japanese war crimes and the alleged complicity of the troops of the INA in these. However the INA contributed to independence for India, as after the war, the trials of captured INA officers in India provoked massive public outcries in support of their efforts to fight for Indian independence against the Raj, eventually triggering the Bombay mutiny in the British Indian forces. These events are accepted by historians to have played a crucial role in hastening the end of British rule.

Japan and Southeast Asia were major refuges for Indian nationalists living in exile before the start of World War II. Japan had sent intelligence missions, notably under Major Iwaichi Fujiwara, into South Asia even before the start of the war to garner support from the Malayan Sultans, overseas Chinese, the Burmese resistance and the Indian movement. These missions were successful in establishing contacts with Indian nationalists in exile in Thailand and Malaya, supporting the establishment and organization of the Indian Independence League (IIL).

On 15 February 1943, the Army itself was put under the command of Lt. Col. M.Z. Kiani. A policy forming body was formed with the Director of the Military Bureau, Lt. Col Bhonsle, in charge and clearly placed under the authority of the IIL. Under Bhonsle served Lt. Col. Shah Nawaz Khan as Chief of General Staff, Major P.K. Sahgal as Military Secretary, Major Habib ur Rahman as commandant of the Officers' Training School and Lt. Col. A.C. Chatterji (later Major A.D. Jahangir) as head of enlightenment and culture.

On 4 July 1943, two days after reaching Singapore, Subhas Chandra Bose assumed the leadership of the IIL and the INA in a ceremony at Cathay Building. Bose's influence was notable. His appeal not only re-invigorated the fledgling INA, which previously consisted mainly of POWs, his appeals also touched a chord with the Indian expatriates in South Asia as local civilians, without caste, creed and religion- ranging from barristers, traders to plantation workers, including Khudabadi Sindhi Swarankar working as shop keepers – had no military experience joined the INA, doubled its troop strength.

An Officers’ Training School for INA officers, led by Habib ur Rahman, and the Azad School for the civilian volunteers were set up to provide training to the recruits. A youth wing of the INA, composed of 45 Young Indians personally chosen by Bose and affectionately known as the Tokyo Boys, were also sent to Japan's Imperial Military Academy to train as fighter pilots. Also, possibly the first time in Asia, and even the only time outside the Soviet Union, a women's regiment, the Rani of Jhansi regiment was raised as a combat force.
Jawaharlal Nehru

Nehru's Nationalism and his role in the Freedom Movement are closely interrelated, since it was the nature of Nehru's Nationalist ideas that dictated his course of action in the freedom movement of India. Nehru's Nationalism: Nehru's nationalism was not one of mindless jingoism. He was able to reach a common ground between an erudite internationalism and a very keen understanding of the Indian condition. Nehru's nationalism was marked by a fiery pride in the heritage of the country. But he was willing to temper this pride with his readings and his rationalist views that he received from his Western education in the West. Jawaharlal Nehru's role in the freedom movement of India has probably not received as much historical attention as it deserves. That is, of course no surprise, as Jawaharlal Nehru's astounding success as a statesman who ushered in a new era of international relations through the formation of the NAM, and his stature as the first prime minister of independent India often adumbrate his position as a significant figure in the freedom movement of India. With his charm, highly impressive educational background, and selfless service to the nation, Nehru presented the face of a new and active India to thousands of Indians who looked up to him as a role model and a guide.

Early Years of Nehru in the Freedom Movement of India:
Jawaharlal Nehru was born into politics. His father Motilal Nehru was a veteran Congressman and committed to the cause of India's freedom for a very long time. Nehru spent much of his educational years in England studying first at Harrow and then at Trinity College, Cambridge. However, the freedom of India was always on his mind. It was therefore no surprise that after his return from the British shores in 1912, the job of a lawyer was the last of Nehru's priorities. As a student he already felt himself closely attached to the cause India's freedom, and had his sympathies with the Extremist leaders of Congress. After his return, he involved himself directly into the political scenario of the country. However, Nehru was still comparatively without a firm direction in these early years, not sure which path was the right path that would lead towards India's freedom. His father's moderate ideologies and elitist way of life disturbed him, as he thought him, like many other Congressmen of his generation, to be much dissociated from the ground realities of the land and the lives of the common people of India. He also realized that the direct application of Socialist measures would not suit India's socio-economic profile. It was at that time that he found a direction in the mode of civil resistance as preached by Gandhi. Gandhi's success in Champaran and Ahmedabad renewed and established his belief in Satyagraha. He was not slow to adopt the cultural aspects of Satyagraha as well. He read the Indian scriptures of India, and dressed in home-spun clothes becoming a staunch Gandhian in all senses. Motilal and his entire family adopted the Gandhian way of life. Nehru traveled across India, and was warmly received by the masses. This filled him with a renewed sense of self-confidence. It was time he decided to whole-heartedly commit himself to the cause of Indian freedom.
Jawaharlal Nehru and the Non-Cooperation Movement:
The first big involvement of Jawaharlal Nehru came at the onset of the noncooperation movement in 1920. Nehru joined in whole-heartedly in this Satyagraha based movement that stormed India. Nehru was arrested on charges of anti-governmental activities and was released a few months later. In the rift formed within the Congress following the sudden closure of the non-cooperation movement after the Chauri Chaura incident, Nehru remained loyal to Gandhi's camp and denied to join the Swaraj Party formed by Motilal Nehru and CR Das. After his release, Nehru's fame as a dynamic Congress leader was well-established. He soon became the President of the Allahabad Congress Committee in 1923. However, towards the end of the decade, Nehru grew increasingly impatient with the pacifist nature of the senior Congressman. Along with Subhas Chandra Bose, Nehru was intent on complete freedom and believed in giving an ultimatum to the British Government to grant India dominion status. The senior leaders were bent on a slower and more patient approach. The Calcutta Congress of 1928 brought the rift into the open. Jawaharlal openly decried the Nehru Commission framed by Motilal Nehru, and it needed the intervention of Mahatma Gandhi to persuade Nehru to abandon his fiery stance of more direct action.

Nehru and the Civil Disobedience Movement: The Lahore Congress of 1929 was monumental in the political career of Nehru as well as the history of India's freedom struggle. Nehru was elected the president of Congress for the first time at a young age of forty. He used the platform of the Lahore conference to declare the goal of complete freedom or Purna Swaraj. The Civil Disobedience movement was formally launched after the Lahore Congress, and Nehru whole heartedly plunged himself in the non-violent protests and picketing that took the nation by storm. Nehru was arrested again in 1930, beginning the second and the longest phase of his prison stays. On his release, he formed the Socialist party within the Congress and insisted on more stern and immediate measures to realize the goal of India's freedom.

Nehru and the last days of Indian Freedom Struggle: The Government of India Act of 1935 called for nation-wide elections. Nehru campaigned vigorously for Congress, although he himself did not contest directly in the elections. With Gandhi concentrating on the spiritual development of his followers and gradually dissociating himself from direct political action, the stature of Nehru within the Congress ranks was now more than ever. He became the Congress President in the consecutive years of 1936 and 1937. By 1938, the rift in Congress was clear. With Bose and Gandhi forming the two feuding camps, Nehru was once more faced with a political dilemma. However, he decided to side with Gandhi and his methods. Bose resigned as the Congress president, and Nehru's status in the Congress reached a height previously unattained. This
year started a new phase in Nehru's career, especially after his denial to come to a compromise with the Muslim League.

With the clouds of World War II looming large in the horizon, Nehru's skill in international relations would be tested once more. Nehru did not support Bose's policy of siding with the Axis forces, and intended to extend support to the Allies. In the mean time, the Second Round Table conference failed and Gandhi launched the Quit India movement in 1942. Nehru was arrested and was released only in 1945. By the time the World War II was over and the new Labor Government of Britain seemed willing to grant India it’s long deserved freedom. However, the British Government wanted to adopt a policy of waiting and watching the result of the general elections of 1945. Nehru was once again at the center of activities. He was arrested. His refusal to comply with Jinnah's claims made partition inevitable, as Jinnah called for direct action. Although his fight for Indian freedom stood on the verge of success, Nehru knew his work was far from over. He had to build a new India and had to guide the nascent economy towards success.

**Congress socialists**

In 1934, after the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement, a section of Congressmen decided to enter into the legislatures to work for the Congress cause within the government. Mahatma Gandhi endorsed the line of action, adopted by these Congressmen who were known as the Constitutionalists. At this stage some socialists wanted to form a socialist party within the Congress organization so as to prevent the erosion of the revolutionary character of the Congress by entry into the legislatures. The Socialists within the Congress believed in Marxist the first All-India Congress Socialists’ Conference was convened at Patna by Jaya Prakash Narayan on behalf of the Bihar Socialist party in May 1934. The Conference was presided by Acharya Narendra Dev. In his presidential speech, Narendra Dev criticized the new Swarajist section of Congressmen who wanted to enter the legislatures and thereby run counter to the revolutionary character of the Congress. He asked the socialists to carry on their agitation for the adoption of their programme by the Congress. The Conference passed a resolution asking the Congress to adopt a programme that was socialist in action and objective. After this Conference the Congress Socialists worked hard to organise the All-Idia Congress Socialist party. As the Organizing Secretary, Jaya Prakash Narayan campaigned in different parts of the country to organise the provincial wings of the party.

The first annual session of the All-India Congress Socialist party was held in Bombay in October 1934 under the presidentship of Sampurnananda. It was attended by delegates from thirteen provinces. In this meeting the National Executive of the Congress Socialist party was constituted with Jaya Prakash Narayan as the General Secretary. Socialists should carry on their "Endeavour to influence the Nationalist Movement in the direction of socialism.” The Congress Socialists followed three lines of activities for the attainment of the twin objectives of freedom and socialism:
Inside the Congress they worked out anti-imperialist and nationalist programmes of the Congress as Congressmen,

Outside the Congress they mobilized the workers, peasants, students, intelligentsia, youth and women for the cause of socialism,

They also sought to integrate the above two lines of activities.

The Congress Socialists sought to mobilize the workers and peasants for their economic amelioration as well as the country's liberation from foreign rule

There was a mixed reaction among the Congressmen to the formation of the Congress Socialist party. The conservative or Right Wing Congressmen criticized the Congress Socialists "loose talk" about the confiscation of property and class war. Mahatma Gandhi also rejected their idea of class war. Gandhi did not believe in the necessity of the abolition of princely order, zamindary and capitalism. He wanted to bring about a change of heart in the princes, zamindars and capitalists so that instead of considering themselves the owners of the states, zarnindaries and factories they should behave as the trustees for their subjects, tenants and workers. But the leftist Congressmen like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose welcomed the formation of the Congress Socialist Party, though neither Nehru nor Bose joined the party. In the annual session of the Congress, held at Lucknow in April 1936, in his presidential speech Nehru espoused the cause of socialism. He said: I see no way of ending the poverty, vast unemployment, degradation and subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, ending vested interests in the land and industry as well as the feudal autocratic Indian states system. That means ending private property except in a restricted sense and replacement of the present profit system by the higher ideals of cooperative service. In 1936 Nehru inducted three Congress Socialists - Narendra Dev, Jaya Prakash Narayan and Achyut Patwardhan into the Congress Working Committee, besides another leftist, Subhas Chandra Bose. The Faizpur session of the Indian National Congress, held towards the close of 1936 under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru, adopted an agrarian programme, containing such items as reduction of revenue, abolition of feudal dues and levies, introduction of cooperative farming, living wage for the agrarian labourers and formation of peasant unions. In the meantime the Congress Labour Committee asked the Congress ministries, formed in the provinces in 1937, for adopting measures for safeguarding and promoting the interests of workers. The Congress Socialists played an important role in the Kisan (peasant) movement. Through the efforts of Prof. N.G. Ranga, Indulal Yagnik, and Swami Sahajanand Saraswati the All-India Kisan Sabha was organised. The first All-India Kisan Congress met at Lucknow in 1936. The Kisan organizations demanded the abolition of zamindary, reduction of land tax, and collective affiliation to Congress. The Congress Socialists changed the Congress Party's policy from aloofness to closer involvement in the affairs of princely states. The Congress socialist activists also took part in the democratic
movements of the people in the princely states against their autocratic rulers. And they agitated for civil rights and responsible government.
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