Political ideas of B.G. Tilak: colonialism, self and Hindu nationalism

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8. Svarājya as Self-Government: Final Years of Tilak, 1914-1920

Political landscape of Indian nationalist movement had completely transformed during the six years of Tilak's incarceration. The Swadeshi movement had completely crumbled. Tilak was hopeful that the INC would agitate for greater administrative and fiscal autonomy to India and put a strong defense against the Morley-Minto reforms (1909). However, the Moderate-faction, keen on developing the Congress into an Indian variant of the British Liberal party (Rothermund 1962), refurbished it by introducing a new Constitution during its Allahabad Convention (1908). G. K. Gokhale, the chief architect of the new Constitution and a temporary Congress spokesperson in England, proved tame and accepted the Morley-Minto reforms (Nanda 1977: 308-12). The British Liberal Party won the 1910 general elections. The new Indian Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, annulled the Bengal Partition in 1911 and put an end to popular resentment. The INC, once again, turned into routine forums for discussions and deliberations with its participation gradually dwindling between 1909 and 1915[105].

Simultaneously new political forces were taking shape in the Indian sub-continent which included numerous caste-based organizations, quasi-terrorist organizations indulging into sporadic violent acts, and religious-cultural and political organizations such as the Muslim League (1906), and the Hindu Mahasabha (1915). At the time of Tilak's release from prison Europe was on the cusp of the First World War. Tilak compared his return to a new world as a 'Rip van Winkle moment' (Kelkar 2012c: 14) and saw the impending War as an opportune moment for India to demand Self-government. However, the Moderates were unwilling to reignite a Swadeshi-style mass movement. Tilak, too, was reticent on mass agitation. He lent support to Britain in its War-efforts through a public statement published on 27th August, 1914 (Tilak 1976e: 243-45) sending political shockwaves amongst his peers and followers. The Moderates sneered at Tilak's 'change of heart' while his supporters within the Extremist camp were astonished. His biographer Dhananjay Keer refers to this statement as political subterfuge and a tactical move meant to ease the government surveillance on him, allowing him enough liberty to unite the disgruntled and divided nationalist forces (Keer 1959: 333-34)[106]. Gokhale was unwilling to admit Tilak back into the INC fearing that he would, once again, wreck the Party (Wolpert 1989: 268). But with Gokhale's death on 19th February, 1915

and Tilak complying to the Allahabad- Constitution (Tilak to Jinnah, 21st July, 1915) (Kelkar 2012c: 51-52), Tilak, once again, returned to the INC.

Historians have faced remarkable difficulty in tracing the evolution of Indian nationalist movement in general and Tilak's politics in particular during the years following the Congress-split at Surat and the inception of Non-Cooperation movement (1920). Scholars have identified Tilak's political work, between 1914 and 1920, "[…] as stringent and as uncompromising as ever [..]" and that Tilak continued to "[..] obstruct the imperial government to the constitutional limit" (Johnson 1973: 191). Ipso facto the Home-Rule League agitation culminating in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms symbolized years of "[…] confused national politics […]" (Johnson 1973: 191). Others, content on constructing nuances of the Moderates-Extremists conflict (confined to the Swadeshi agitation) see its culmination in the Morley-Minto Reforms [1909], effectively ending the age of Extremism (Tripathi 1967; Sarkar 1973). Seen as a divisive figure bordering on ethnic-religious chauvinism Tilak's significance to India's nationalist movement was reduced to a 'reversed mirror-image' against constitutional-liberal politics of Gokhale. Therefore, with Gokhale's death in 1915 historians were keen on searching for a substitute to his political ideology, which they readily found, in Mahatma Gandhi (Brown 1972; Wolpert 1989).

A similar lacuna can be traced in scholars' perception of the term Swaraj in modern Indian nationalist discourse. The idea of Swaraj, retraced to Naoroji's speech during the Calcutta-Congress [1906], has acquired considerable significance in India's nationalist movement. Over the years the term has been most famously associated with Gandhi's political program, not least since his first major work carried the term in its titled. Gandhi is held primarily responsible in granting moral, philosophical, political and conceptual density to Swaraj. Raghavan Iyer, for instance, traces high philosophical sophistication in Gandhi's construal of Swaraj and its indivisible connection with Swadeshi- "[…] *swaraj* is theoretically of a higher order of importance than *swadeshi* […] If *swaraj* is the end, *swadeshi* is the only legitimate means" (Iyer 1973: 348, italics in the original). Thus, on grounds of conceptual principles, self-rule carries greater weight than patriotism. Swaraj, in Gandhi's formulation, carried political and ontological concerns- self-rule in terms of collective sovereignty and self-rule in terms of agency over the Self. Gandhi envisioned Swaraj as a self-reliant moral economy with 'truth-seeking' as its highest virtue (Parekh 1989). Gandhi's conceptualization of Swaraj has been

identified as a theoretical and political breakthrough in India's nationalist movement whereas, under Tilak and Naoroji, it was "[…] narrowly ideological or [a] strategic cast, suggesting little more than the expulsion of the British from India" (Dallmayr 2001: 10). Tilak's invocation of Swaraj as a demand for 'India's national sovereignty' by disbanding the British Raj has persisted for a long time in modern Indian historiography (Iyer 1973: 347; Paranjape 2018:143). Such remarks reduce the complexity of 'self-rule' propagated by Tilak to simpler binary notions of sovereignty-non-sovereignty and does not take into account the conceptual evolution of 'Self-Rule/Home-Rule/Self-Determination' during the early 20th century.

I challenge these perceptions by arguing that the final years of Tilak's political agitation squarely rested upon a propagation for the need of limited but popular sovereignty or what he called 'Svarājya'. The Indian Home-Rule League (HRL) movement, inaugurated by Tilak (along with Annie Besant) was a definitive moment in India's nationalist politics which operated on the dual conception of increased representation to all Indians in domestic administrative and legislative bodies resulting into complete autonomy as per the principle of self-determination. The ideology of HRL developed by Tilak and his associates deeply influenced Congress' political strategy vis-à-vis the Muslim League, the impending Constitutional Reforms [1919] and the vision for India in post-War Britain. Tilak's struggle for 'responsible government' resulted into the formation of 'Congress Democratic Party' [1920].

I chart the growth of popular-constitutional sovereignty envisioned by Tilak under the auspices of greater representative power within the British Federal Commonwealth through three key moment- the political program of the HRL, the Lucknow Pact [1916] and Tilak's work in England [1918-19]. Of these, the first symbolizes popularizing India's claim to self-government, going beyond the annual Congress meetings which, in the preceding years, had been ideologically fractured and had failed to shed its inherent elitism. Tilak's attempt at negotiating political compromise with the Muslim League points towards a wider notion of Indian 'community' which transcended puritan Hindu connotations characteristic of his early years. And finally, his active support to the British Labour Party, during his sojourn in England, denotes a complex inter-dependence of metropolitan politics upon its colonies. Tilak's response to the impending Montagu-Chelmsford Reform and his indecisive approach to Gandhi's call for non-cooperation is also briefly explored in this chapter. The chapter ends with exploring the crystallization of Tilak's political philosophy through the formation of

'Congress Democratic Party' which, due Tilak's sudden death in 1920, failed to act as a political alternative to Gandhi's program.

8.1 British Imperial Federation and India: 'Greater Britain' and Colonial Politics in Early 20th century

Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke brought out his travelogue in 1869 and called it *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866-67*. Thereafter the term 'Greater Britain' became a favourite catch-phrase for Imperialists, Positivists, Socialists and Radicals during the Victorian period. The notion of 'Greater Britain' was meant to rearrange relations between the metropolis and its colonies along the principles of Imperial Federation. Imperial Federation followed one of the three broad forms of representations- a) extra-parliamentary-federation made up of high-ranking public officials who advised the British parliament on colonial matters and resulted into the establishment of the various Colonial Advisory Councils; b) parliamentary federalism- where the British Parliament accommodated popular representations from colonies; and c) supra-parliamentary federalism- a sovereign federal chamber would supersede various Imperial Councils as well as the Secretaries of State for colonies in enacting legislations (Ged 1973).

Transference of 'self-governing rights' to its North Atlantic and Caribbean colonies were followed by similar rights being granted to Canada and Australia (Ward 1976)[107]. Fearful of losing its hegemonic status in global politics, English politicians, journalists, academics, businessmen and lawyers participated in ferocious debates regarding the future of Imperial Britain and lent their weight to powerful organizations such as the Colonial Society (1868) and the Imperial Federation League (1884-1893) (Bell 2007: 6). Inadvertently, admission to the Imperial Federation of Greater Britain was offered only to countries made up of white setter-races. 'Inferior races' of Asia and Africa, supposedly incapable of 'self-government', were kept away. British Victorian political thought provided ideological and philosophical justification to such claims[108]. Under the heavy influence of racial superiority based upon biological affinities[109]English public opinion during the 19th century was deeply recalcitrant towards Egyptian, Irish or Indian nationalism against the British Empire (Matikkala 2011: 159-60).

The problem of granting political rights to its Indian colonies was found to be particularly difficult and complicated. The Queen's Proclamation (1858) had categorically promised all 'Princes, Chiefs and People of India' that the British Crown was bound by the same sense of duty and purpose which bound it to its own native British citizens. Commemorating the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's Proclamation, King Edward VII brought out a new Proclamation which stated that 'important classes', that is the Indian educated elites, could claim British citizenship as well as a greater share in formulating legislations and governing their respective native regions. However, such promises, although made by the British Sovereign, required British Parliamentary sanction. The Indian Councils Act [1909] was British government's chicanery. Changes in Indian representation in the Imperial and provincial councils was increased by a thin margin (Keith 1922: 98-107). The aim of the Act was to subdue popular revolt (arising out of the Swadeshi agitation) and pacify Indian Muslims (especially of eastern India) by granting them separate electorates (Das 1964; Wasti 1964). The Act also inspired some Indian Muslims to identify their community as a numerical minority (Tejani 2007: 116). Morley showed no inclination in expanding British Imperial Federation to India (Morley 1920: 149-205). And yet, the Congress-Moderates accepted the provisions of the Act enthusiastically, effectively retaining India's inferior partnership with the British Empire.

However, King Edward VII's Proclamation inspired Irish nationalists to undertake a vicious campaign for political autonomy. It resulted into the *Government of Ireland Act* (1914) and the subsequent birth of a separate Irish Parliament within the British Union[110]. Powerful Irish trade unions, radicalised during the agitation, lent unequivocal support to the British Labour Party, which they believed, represented Irish labour interests in England (Fitzpatrick 1996: 276-304). Mrs. Annie Besant, an Irish expatriate working in India, used this opportunity to drive forth India's claim to 'equal citizenship' within the expanded British Imperial Federation (Besant 1914). Besant's move inspired Congress-Moderates such as Ambica Charan Mazumdar who defended India's claim to self-government within the British Federation in no uncertain words- "The real goal of the Congress is to attain self-government within the Empire and the destiny of India which it professes to secure is a great Federal Union under the aegis of the British Crown- the establishment of a United States of India as an independent unit and an equal partner of the British Empire" (Mazumdar 1915: 419).

British approach towards its colonies (including Dominions and self-governing colonies) spread across the globe underwent important changes in the years preceding the First World War. Through semi-official 'study groups' such as 'The Round Table' (formed in 1910) policy makers were busy re-formulating British Imperial interests in its bid to protect the Empire from European competition and rising nationalism from the colonies (May 2010). Claims towards racial and biological inferiority of the colonised races, found in the 19th century imperial discourse, was gradually eroding, not because systematic racism had disappeared. Rather *real politik* gained priority. British Imperialism was in dire need of co-operation from its colonies and hence granting semi-sovereign control to its elected representatives was not completely ruled out (Kendle 1997). Issues such as imperial citizenship for the colonised subjects, greater political rights (especially the right to vote), freedom to elect domestic popular representative governments, and increased presence in the British Parliament to elected colonial representatives were severely debated and contested (Banerjee 2010). Right to Imperial citizenship, premised upon utmost 'loyalty' to the British Crown (Gorman 2006), was acceptable to most early 20th century Indians. However, it was to be complemented by "[..] full and equal participation *in* the British Empire" (Jayal 2013: 36, italics in the original) through the expansion of electoral-franchise.

8.2 Conceptualizing Svarājya as Home-Rule: The Beginnings of the Home-Rule League

During the Swadeshi agitation Tilak had, on few occasions, written and spoken on the subject of Svarājya. He pointed out that Svarājya, in layman's terms, meant rule by someone who shared religious, racial or caste affiliations with his subjects. Tilak argued that pre-condition of ethnological affiliations was irrelevant if the government was autocratic (and cited the examples of Peshwa rule in Maharashtra and Czarist Russia). Therefore, Self-government entailed transferring political power to the electorates. For Tilak, that government which safeguarded liberties and rights to its citizens and worked towards their prosperity could claim popular legitimacy. Self-government was incomplete if it were not supported by a vision of common good (Surājya) (Svarājya kī surājya', *Kesari*, 9th April, 1907) (Tilak 1976b: 59-64). Commending Naoroji for his speech at the Calcutta-Congress [1906] Tilak reminded that the 'Grand Old Man' of Indian nationalist politics had given the younger generation of India a formidable ideal-namely, self-government- "Swadeshi is the beginning of self-government and in Swaraj it will culminate" (Tilak 1976e: 562). The "[…] new start" in India's political awakening was restructured and reformulated in 1915 through the ideal of Home-Rule.

Through a long editorial published in four parts in late December, 1915 ('Hindi Svarājya Saṅgha', *Kesari*, 30th November, 7th December, 14th December and 21st December, 1915) (Tilak 1976b: 65-75) Tilak laid out the basic formulation of Home-Rule. He argued that "[…] a good government is that which runs in active consultation with its citizens and cherishes their welfare" (Tilak 1976b: 65, my translation). This, he considered, as the basic principle of all modern democratic governments. The 'English social contract tradition', which gave pre-eminence to 'rule via consent', had found its way into the Queen's Proclamation [1858] and reiterated by various Indian Viceroys, Governors of provinces and numerous British Parliamentarians over the years. The British government was gradually coming to terms in treating India as an equal partner in British Imperial network. Therefore, Tilak wrote, "[t]here is no reason for India to continue to serve England. The Master-Slave relation between England and India must end" (Tilak 1976b: 66, my translation). This was particularly important when thousands of Indian soldiers were defending British interests in Europe and fighting a bloody war against Germany.

The British government, some Congress leaders hoped, would reward India for its unstinting support during its period of crisis by granting Indians more political rights. Self-government was not a "gift" (bakśiśa) but a "natural right" (naisargika hakka) of all Indians (Tilak 1976b: 66, my translation) and added-

"The rightful demand for Svarājya that we are placing before the government is not to break away from the Empire. We are an unalienable organ of the British Empire and we seek our rights only from *our* British government […] we do not wish to secede from the Empire. Our demand, in no way, would alter the ordinary structure and functioning of the Empire" (Tilak 1976b: 67, my translation, italics added).

While the primary duty of a modern nation-state was to make its citizens self-reliant it also meant that they be allowed to govern themselves. Foreign British officials were incapable of fully comprehending the demands and distress of Indians. For hundreds of years, prior to the British Raj, India was ruled by the native rulers who were in a better position to connect with their subjects. The British government, realizing this crucial aspect of direct rule, allowed local self-governing bodies such as the Municipalities and local boards to be governed by elected native representatives. However, half of the elected representatives were Englishmen nominated by the government, thus robbing these institutions of their genuine

'representative' character. "Imagine", wrote Tilak, "that half of the members of the British Parliament are popularly elected while the rest are nominated by the King. In such a situation would the Britons believe in the autonomy of their Parliament?" (Tilak 1976b: 71, my translation).

Indian Home-Rule or Self-government followed principles of 'Imperial Federalism'. It claimed that all Imperial departments, including military and foreign affairs, be put under the direct control of the government of British India and that provincial governments (including the office of Governor and his Council) be popularly elected. The powers and duties of the Governor and his Council be defined through certain Constitutional provisions. This would then facilitate further decentralization all the way down to the village *panchayats* (grāma saṅsthā). Provinces be divided along linguistic lines. Since the Secretary of State and his Council held plenipotentiary powers and all laws regarding India were passed in British Parliament, Tilak suggested that the Secretary's Council be completely abolished while the Secretary of State for India could continue to act as a link between the British Parliament and the Imperial Legislative Council in India (Tilak 1976b: 70-75).

Following the political ideology espoused by him in favour of self-government Tilak submitted his proposal to establish an 'Indian Home-Rule League' (hereafter, HRL) to the 960 delegates present at the Bombay Provincial Congress (held at Pune on 8th and 9th May, 1915) (Kelkar 2012c: 36)[111]. Joseph Baptista, in his presidential address, urged upon the delegates to join the HRL in large number and said, "Since the Queen's Proclamation, the public mind of India has so expanded that it has completely outgrown that system. Indeed, the proudest day in English history of which Lord Macaulay spoke has arrived. Home Rule with Provincial Autonomy is the solution suggested by reason and by the laws of political growth" (*Mahratta*, 19th May, 1915) (quoted in Shirsat 1974: 41). Baptista also informed his audience that the growing trend in England was towards a 'Federation of the British Commonwealth' in which all the member-states within the British Empire would be granted representation in an Imperial Federal Council. India, amongst all of the British colonies, held a rightful claim towards its membership.

Tilak-led HRL was established on 28th April, 1916 under the auspices of Provincial Congress held at Belgaum[112] and opened branches in Central Maharashtra, the Bombay City, Karnataka, Berar and the Central Provinces (Owen 1968: 170-71). Much to the chagrin of its young

supporters, the HRL lend its support to the INC. The delegates also recommended the All-India Congress Committee Tilak's re-entry into the Party. A report in the *Times of India* on 30th April, 1916 declared that Tilak had 'captured Congress once again'!

Tilak delivered a speech at Belgaum on 1st May, 1916 where he deliberated on the 'idea of Svarājya' (Tilak 1919: 97-140). It was an undisputed fact, Tilak argued, that "[…] we [Indians] should secure our own good under the rule of the English people themselves, under the supervision of the English nation, with the help of the English nation, through their sympathy, through their anxious care and through those high sentiments which they possess. And I have to say nothing about this (cheers). Note this first" (Tilak 1919: 102). Tilak then invoked the Vedāṅta terminology to describe the British government (meaning the British Sovereign) as the "invisible" [avyakta] Brahman and the government of British India as the "visible" [vyakta] Māyā. Māyā is believed to be unstable and its nature is to change at every moment. Similarly, the government in India would change but the Sovereign like the Brahman would remain eternally stable (Tilak 1919: 103-04). Svarājya for India meant change in the visible government.

Tilak delivered two more lectures on Svarājya on 31st May and 1st June, 1916 at Ahmednagar. In the first speech (Tilak 1919: 141-172) he pointed out-

"Government has come into existence for giving effect to the things desired by a large number of people. And as that Government is not in our hands, if anything is desired by thousands of you but not by those who control the administration that can never be accomplished" (Tilak 1919: 144).

During the hundred years of British rule Indians had their authority to Self-rule. The British government was 'alien' for the natives, by which he meant, that the British government functioned from the "[…] alien's point of view […], their thoughts are alien and their general conduct is such that their minds are not inclined to particularly benefit those people to whom they are aliens" (Tilak 1919: 145-46). However, he was quick to add that "[b]y alien I do not mean alien by religion" and added that the Muslim rule in India strived towards growing indigenous industries, and made India their home-

"He who does what is beneficial to the people of this country, be he a Muhammedan [sic] or an Englishman, is not alien. 'Alienness' [sic] has to do with interests. Alienness is certainly not

concerned with white or black skin. Alienness is not concerned with religion. Alienness is not concerned with trade or profession. I do not consider him an alien who wishes to make an arrangement whereby that country in which he has to live, his children have to live and his future generations have to live, may see good days and be benefitted. He may not perhaps go with me to the same temple to pray to God, perhaps there may be no inter-marriage and inter-dining between him and me. All these are minor questions" (Tilak 1919: 146-47).

Tilak argued that each government had a duty to perform (a "religious duty" as he termed it) which was to work for the benefit of its citizens, failing which "[..] it is no Government at all" (Tilak 1919: 149). Political obligation between the citizens and the government was reciprocal. Indians had turned distrustful of the British government due to the arrogance of the British bureaucrats, the "[…] intervening middlemen […]", who impeded India's progress (Tilak 1919: 151). Indian soldiers, fighting on behalf of Britain, showed remarkable loyalty to the Crown. "We are not inferior to them [the British citizens] in point of bravery and education, we possess ability. Such being the case, why should we not get the rights?" (Tilak 1919: 155). Tilak appealed to his audience and fellow compatriots to make good use of the opportunity created by the War and help England win it. In return England would be obliged to grant many more rights to Indians for their loyalty.

In his second lecture (Tilak 1919: 173-220), he continued with his attack on British bureaucracy. He reprimanded the bureaucrats for manipulating Hindus and Muslims by dividing them along ethnic-religious lines. He pointed towards the success met by Canadian and Australian Imperial Councils after their incorporation into the British Imperial Federation. The HRL was demanding a similar arrangement for India, following which, it would also be possible to create separate federations of nationalities or linguistic-regional identities into a Union of States. He offered the following explanation-

"In the asking for *Swarajya* we ask that in the end there should be such States throughout India, that at first Englishmen coming from England and at last presidents elected by the people should be appointed in these States, and that a separate Council should be formed for disposing of questions relating to the whole nation. Just as there is an arrangement in Europe, America and the United States, and just as there are different small States and there is a Congress to unite them together so the Government of India should keep in their hands [sic.] similar powers of the Imperial Council" (Tilak 1919: 207-08, italics in the original). The demand

for self-government was not revolutionary in character nor did it propound revolutionary means to achieve it. As such the HRL was asking for amending the existing Government of India Act (1909) using perfectly legitimate means.

The Bombay government found Tilak's speeches seditious in character and slapped a lawsuit against him. He was charged under Article 124A of the IPC and produced before the Bombay High Court. However, the Court dismissed the case. In his judgement, Justice Batchelor stated that the intention of Tilak behind the three lectures was quite clear, viz., "[…] to obtain for Indians an increased and gradually increasing share of political authority and to subject the administration of the country to the control of the people or the peoples of India. I am of the opinion that the advocacy of such an object is not *per se* an infringement of the law […]" (quoted in Noorani 2010: 343, italics in the original). Tilak's speeches did not propagate "[…] hostility, or enmity or contempt" against the government but were meant to arouse dispassionate disapprobation of the Government "[…] for that it delay[ed] the transference of political power to the hands of those whom the speaker [Tilak] designate[ed] as 'the people'" (quoted in Noorani 2010: 344). Justice Shah concurred with Justice Batchelor's judgement and stated that the purposes of the lectures delivered by Tilak was merely to induce his audience to join the Home Rule League. The means adopted by Tilak were none other than "strictly constitutional" and therefore perfectly legal according to British jurisprudence (Noorani 2010: 2010: 349).

Following his acquittal Tilak urged his fellow Indians to join the HRL movement in large numbers ('Ṭiḷaka suṭale, pudhe kāya?', *Kesari*, 16th November, 1916) (Tilak 1976b: 97-102) and instructed the HRL to lead a mass agitation. In a rare burst of emotion, he noted-

"Mr. Tilak and Mrs. Besant could be the guiding light and good only till they are alive […] It is time for you to take charge of the movement. Remember that without your industriousness- consistent, strong and selfless dedication- nothing could ever be achieved. Individuals do not matter but a nation does. Individuals die but a nation lives for ever. And it is the duty of every successive generation to make sure that the lives of its compatriots become more and more happy and content" (Tilak 1976b: 101, my translation).

Failure of the Swadeshi agitation was a result of two inherent limitations - first, the agitation was largely Hindu-centric and second, it lacked strong institutional support from the

Congress. The former had resulted into alienating Indian Muslims, both from the INC and the larger Indian nationalist movement. Tilak, too, was partly responsible for the schism in the two communities. Issues troubling the Muslim community rarely appeared in Tilak's political vision. Eager to avoid mistakes of the past Tilak approached the Muslim League and the INC to sign a joint-declaration demanding Self-government for India. The joint declaration signed by the two parties came to be known as the Lucknow Pact.

8.3 The Lucknow Pact or the Congress-League Scheme: Communal Representation and Self-government

Despite garnering favourable provisions through the Indian Councils Act (1909) the All-India Muslim League was troubled with Britain's war against the Ottoman Turkish Empire. The Kanpur Mosque incident (when a rumour about demolition of the Machhli Bazaar Mosque led to serious riots in August 1913) added to Muslim discontent against the British government. Muslim leaders in Punjab, United Provinces and Madras fared rather badly in the provincial elections and realised that the provisions under the Morley-Minto Reforms were inadequate and illusory (Hasan 1979; Mcpherson 2010). Tilak, with the help of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, used the opportunity to bring the two communities together in their common struggle for 'self-government'.

Having been trained under the political tutelage of Dadabhai Naoroji, Pheroz Shah Mehta and G. K. Gokhale Jinnah believed in the secular character of the INC. He was opposed to communal electorates which, he believed, went against the constitutional character of Indian nationalist politics spearheaded by the INC. Jinnah was, therefore, instrumental in introducing changes in the Constitution of the Muslim League which allowed its members to simultaneously become members of the INC. He also espoused the need for self-government and inter-communal harmony (while safeguarding Muslim-interests) which were accepted as party-objectives by the Muslim League during its Bankipur session [1912]. In one fine stroke Jinnah brought those Muslims defecting to the British side back into the fold of Congress-led nationalist movement (Wells 2005: 24-32).

Jinnah tried to steer the Muslim League towards the INC and sought a rapprochement with it. Sir Sultan Mohamed Shah (Aga Khan III), the leader of the old guard, had left the Muslim League in 1915. The President of the Bombay session of the Muslim League Mazhar-ul-Haque,

in his presidential speech, urged the attending delegates to continue to support joint ventures of the Muslim League and the INC. He chastised some Muslim League members who believed that such joint ventures may embarrass the British government during its time of crisis and may also be perceived as the assimilation of the Muslim League into the Congress with the following words- "Nothing could be further from the truth. Communities like individuals love and cherish their individuality… When unity is evolved out of diversity, then there is real and abiding national progress" (Pirzada 1969: 330-31, quoted in Wolpert 1984: 39). The president of the Congress (1915) Satyendra Nath Sinha, also voiced similar ideas and gained support from the delegates to work jointly with the Muslim League.

The major source of disagreement between the two organizations was over separate electorates for Muslims. Speaking at the Bombay Provincial-Conference held in October 1916 Jinnah urged the Congress-delegates to support separate electorates for Muslims by stating-

"The question of separate electorates […] has been before the country since 1909 and rightly or wrongly the Musalman community is absolutely determined for the present to insist on separate electorates… I would, therefore, appeal to my Hindu brethren that in the present state of position, they try to win the confidence and trust of the Mohammedans who are, after all, in the minority in the country. If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demand" (Jinnah quoted in Wells 2005: 53).

When representatives of both organizations met on 17th and 18th of November 1916 at Calcutta an agreement over separate electorates applicable in Bombay, Madras, Bihar and Central Provinces was met amicably (Wells 2005: 52-60). The fact that Jinnah was himself an active member of Tilak's HRL and the President of its Bombay branch must have also played an important part in forging closer ties between the two organizations. He strongly believed that the HRL had the capacity for mass politics which the INC, under the Moderate leadership, sorely lacked.

In March 1916 Lord Hardinge was replaced by Lord Chelmsford as the Indian Viceroy. He was presented with a Memorandum signed by 19 members of the Imperial Legislative Council in September 1916 which demanded constitutional reforms at the end of the War, including a demand for proportional representations to Hindus and Muslims (reproduced in *India's Goal* n.d.: 1-7). A month later, speaking at the Bombay Provincial Conference at Ahmedabad on

21st October, 1916 Jinnah discussed these constitutional reforms in great details and covered topics such as the end to the power exercised by the Collectors and the excise Commissioners, changes in the fiscal policies at the local and provincial government levels, cessation of the unjust Defence of India Act [1915] to Indians, increasing Indian representation to the royal commissions and most significantly a gradual evolvement into 'self-government' (Wolpert 1984: 44). An editorial for *Mahratta* on 25th October, 1914 had already argued that it was time for the Congress to meet the Muslims of the country half-way and make suitable concessions to them so as to further develop and consolidate the political agitation in India.

Through the Lucknow Pact the Congress and Muslim League reached a consensus on a common goal viz. Self-government for India. In order to meet the goal the Congress-Muslim League joint-session deliberated on four steps- first, getting a majority elected in the Central and Provincial legislatures; second, demanding a complete handover of all domestic affairs and internal revenue the elected legislatures; third, seeking half of the seats in the Viceregal and Gubernatorial Executive Councils be drawn from the elected members of the legislatures, and fourth, that the Muslims (standing at roughly 21% of India's total population) be granted separate electorates using the principle of 'proportional representation', especially in areas where they were in numerical minority (INC Report 1917: 77-81; Owen 1972: 561).

Five members of the INC- Mrs. Besant, Bhupendra Nath Basu, Motilal Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Tilak- and two representatives of the Muslim League- Jinnah and Wazir Hasan- brokered the deal (Owen 1972: 577-78). Standard biographies on Tilak have underplayed his role in negotiating the Lucknow Pact[113] but is well-documented documented in Dadasaheb Khaparde's personal diary. Following the first round of meetings in the tent of All-India Congress Committee Khaparde sensed that the Moderates "[…] mean[t] trouble" (Khaparde 1978: 405). The Moderates declared that demanding separate electorates for Muslims went against the basic spirit of the Congress Constitution [1910]. Jinnah and Tilak worked jointly in opposing the Moderates (Khaparde 1978: 406). Ultimately a resolution on self-government was placed before the Congress.

Resolution XII on 'self-government' read as follows:

"a) That having regard to the fact that the great communities of India are the inheritors of ancient civilisations and have shown great capacity for Government and administration, and

to the progress in education and public spirit made by them during a century of British rule, and further having regard to the fact that the present system of Government does not satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people and has become unsuited to the existing conditions and requirements, this Congress is of the opinion that the time has come when His Majesty the King-Emperor should be pleased to issue a proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer self-government on India at an early date.

b) That this Congress demands that a definite step should be taken towards self-government by granting the reform contained in the scheme prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in concert with the Reform Committee appointed by the All-India Moslem League.

c) That in the re-construction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing Dominions" (INC Report 1917: 70-71).

Tilak spoke in favour of the resolution demanding 'self-government' for India (INC Report 1917: 84-85, reprinted in Tilak 1919: 221-227). He reminded the delegates of the first call for 'self-government' made a decade earlier in the historic Calcutta Congress by the then President Dadabhai Naoroji and although it took ten years for the dissension between the two factions within the Congress to come to terms with it; the demand for 'self-government' was finally placed before the Congress at Lucknow for vote. On the Congress-League Scheme he commented-

"It has been said, gentlemen, by some that we Hindus have yielded too much to our Mohammedan brethren. I am sure I represent the sense of the Hindu community all over India when I say that we could not have yielded too much. I would not care if the rights of self-government are granted to the Mohammedan community only (Hear, hear). I would not care if they are granted to the Rajputs. I would not care if they are granted to the lower and the lowest classes of the Hindu population provided the British Government considers them more fit than the educated classes of India for exercising those rights" (Tilak 1919: 223).

The Congress-League Scheme, formulated during the Lucknow joint-session, demanded definite constitutional changes to be made to the structure and functioning of the British colonial state. The Secretary of State was appointed from amongst the British Parliamentarians. Therefore, he answerable neither to the government of British India nor to

Indians. Bound by the rules and regulations of the British parliament any decision taken by the Secretary of State could be overruled by the Cabinet and/or the British Parliament. The new Government of India Act (1915) had allowed the Imperial Council to pass decisions in the presence of five of its members. However, decisions regarding financial matters approved by the Secretary of State could not be challenged by the Council-members. The Council-members, too, held office during the pleasure of the British Monarch but their removal had to be ratified by the British Parliament. Thus, the Imperial Council was designed to be more powerful than the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State, in the presence of irresponsible Anglo-Indian members of the Imperial Council, found it extremely difficult to make policies favouring India. Moreover, separation of power between the two offices was not clearly articulated. Therefore, the Congress- League Scheme (1916) placed the following demands:

a) that the office of the Council of the Secretary of State be completely abolished;
b) that the salaries of the Secretary of State be paid by the British Parliament;
c) that the position of the Secretary of State for India be the same as the position held by the 'Secretary for State for the Colonies' which have been already granted the self-governing dominion status;
d) that the Secretary of State for India be assisted by two under-Secretaries, one of whom will always be an Indian (Kelkar 1917: 50).

The Home-Rulers endorsed and adopted the Congress-League Scheme and added few of their own demands, especially over, the natives' right to Imperial citizenship. The Charter Act of 1833 had clearly spelt out the sentiments of the British Parliament regarding the territories under the control of the Company. These territories were to be held by the Company in trust for the Crown, and that the Company ought to allow Indians to hold official positions irrespective of their religion, place of birth, colour, descent, etc. The Charter Act of 1853 allowed the British Parliament to pass laws related to India and having, thus, a bearing upon the Company rule. The Queens's Proclamation of 1858 carried the following words – "We hold ourselves bound to the natives in our Indian territories by the same obligations and duty which binds us to all our other subjects" (quoted in Kelkar 1917: 69). The Acts of 1861, 1869, 1877, 1892 and 1909 partly adopted the promises made in the Queen's Proclamation (1858) and brought out "[…] a supplementary constitutional body of Government into existence to carry out a part of those intentions" (Kelkar 1917: 70).

Consequently, British legislations had granted various rights to the natives which amounted to quasi-citizenship. Kelkar classified them as follows: – those related to (i) personal liberty, (ii) personal security, (iii) right to hold private property, (iv) liberty of conscience, (v) equality before law, (vi) freedom of opinion and speech, (vii) right of assembly, (viii) right to representation in the country's government and (ix) right to hold office under the State.

Of these, (i)-(iv) were granted to India from 1773 onwards and had remained more or less unhindered. It was the remaining five rights which were the bone of contention between the British government and the natives since granting them would have amounted to full British citizenship to Indians. For the Indian Home Rulers, (viii) was of paramount importance. Even if the British government was to grant all other rights and deny right to representation (viii), the whole enterprise would be rendered meaningless. N.C. Kelkar wrote-

"It is, of course, important that the Indians should themselves carry on the executive Government of their country, by holding the highest posts under it; but it is far more important that the Indian people as a whole should have a pre-pandering share not only in framing the laws by which the country is to be governed, but also in enforcing responsibility, for carrying out those laws in a proper manner and in a faithful spirit upon the executive agency entrusted with the administration of those laws. The legislative authority which gives sanction to the executive government is of far greater consequence than executive power" (Kelkar 1917: 78).

Granting this would not only reverse the tide of a perceived despotic rule by the British but the natives too would earn the right of free expression and their effective representation within an institutional set-up.

The Home-Rulers believed that the British rule of more than 100 years, free press for 70 years and European education for 50 years had made Indians more responsible, reliant and trust-worthy. Apart from the fitness of the natives to rule themselves under the Imperial auspices there was one more, a "[…] far more important and transcendental reason […]" for India's right to self-government, namely- tectonic transformations in global order as a result of the First World War. Britain had the greatest and the largest Empire ever conceived in human history. But it faced constant external threats on its frontier provinces which resulted into domestic upheavals. India, undoubtedly, was its most profitable colony and Britain could rest

assure that India had no intention of defecting to other imperial powers. Therefore, a satisfied Indian colony would be of crucial help in stabilizing, maintaining and stabilizing the British Empire (Kelkar 1917: 107).

The Lucknow-Congress marked the "official" return of Tilak to the INC following the infamous Congress-split at Surat. Tilak was also formally made a member of the 'Subjects' Committee'. Ambica Charan Mazumdar, the President of the Congress, welcomed Tilak and Motilal Ghose and all those "[…] other brave comrades who [were] separated from us at Surat and have been happily restored to us at Lucknow. I rejoice to find that they are after all "of us" and "with us" and let us hope never, never to part again (Cheers)" (INC Report 1917: 16). Tilak in his address quipped in a tone of amusement over the reunion with the Congress, "[…] we [Extremists] have lived […] not only to see these differences closed, but to see the differences of the Hindus and Mohammedans closed as well. So, we are united in every way in the United Provinces and we found that luck in Lucknow (Laughter)" (Tilak 1919: 222).

Tilak spoke on the significance of the Pact on 30th December, 1916 at a meeting arranged by the Theosophical Convention in Lucknow (Tilak 1919: 228-231). He defended separate electorates by stating, "I think the objection is not rational. As a Hindu I have certainly no objection to making this concession […] We cannot rise from our present intolerable condition without the aid of Muslims (Tilak 1919: 228-29). The eminent jurist M. R. Jayakar confided in his memoirs that the Lucknow Pact signalled renewed fraternal solidarity between the two communities. The great achievement of the Pact, in Jayakar's words, was in the fact that "[…] it removed the hallucination which had been brought about by the facile remarks of Britons that the Hindu and the Muhammedan [sic] in India were constitutionally different and must always remain irreconcilable sections of the Indian population." (Jayakar 1958: 159). But in Jayakar's opinion communal electorates, for which Tilak and Jinnah fought so vehemently, would prove to be of temporary nature. Muslims, at some point in the near future, would abdicate their need for separate representation- a hope articulated by Jinnah as well during his evidence before the Southborough Commission (1919) (Jayakar 1958: 161).

While the demand for Self-government enshrined in the Lucknow Pact garnered popular support, the issue of 'separate electorates' turned out to be a bone of contention. Some orthodox Muslim leaders continued to voice their discontent against the Muslim League collaborating with a 'Hindu body' such as the INC. Conservative Hindus, disavowing Congress

patronage, embarked upon charting their own path for safeguarding the rights of Hindu community and found the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, established in 1915, strongly defending their cause (Johnson 1975; Hasan 1979: 88). It is equally important to recollect sudden volte-face amongst some supporters and signatories of the Lucknow Pact in subsequent years, gathered from the evidences collected by the Southborough Commission [1919]. While Ambica Charan Mazumdar (who presided over the Lucknow-session), R. N. Mudholkar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya objected to communal representation. D. D. Sathaye and N. C. Kelkar (Tilak's trusted lieutenants) and Vithalbhai Patel believed that the proportion of representation allotted to Muslims in Bombay province was far too excessive and their support to the Pact was out of loyalty to Tilak (Datar 2012: 67-68). Nevertheless, Tilak refused to relent to growing opposition.

8.4 Battle for Self-Government: The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and Constitutional Rearrangements

Imperial interests in safe-guarding British Empire reached notorious urgency on the eve of the First World War. One of the principal architects of the Imperial approach towards its colonies was Lionel Curtis. Curtis was aware of the immense contribution of India in Britain's war-efforts. In his book *The Problem of the Commonwealth* [1916] Curtis had measured three-quarters of British Imperial population was made up of Indians[114]. Curtis, and the 'Round Table' group which he represented, carried considerable weight with the office of Secretary of State for India. Curtis had also spent some time in India in 1916 and was of the opinion that Indians were not mature to handle the great responsibilities which came with self-government[115]. He advocated for 'responsible government' instead of 'self-government' in May 1917 (Curtis 1920) partly emerging from a desire to foster loyalty amongst Indians towards the British Crown and expediency related to the War (Gorman 2006: 61-68).

The 'battle over self-government' (Danzig 1968: 23) had begun in the middle of 1916 when Lord Chelmsford's Imperial Council proposed a plan to reconstitute the British administrative set up in India and would endow India with a form of self-government without jeopardizing British supremacy. This plan was presented to the British Parliament by Edwin Montagu and Chamberlain in quite unambiguous terms. It clearly spelt the need to grant India more liberties and representative institutions eventually leading to 'self-government'. Imperialist

members of the British Parliament (Lord Balfour) as well as British officials (the Lieutenant-Governor of United Provinces, Sir James Meston) in India opposed granting 'self-government' which, according to them, India was not yet capable of. The War Cabinet consisting of British PM Lord Balfour and Imperialists such as Lord Curzon, held enormous power from June-August 1917. Much to the chagrin of Montagu[116], Curzon, too, was uncomfortable with the word 'self-government' and wanted to replace it with 'responsible government', a phrase which he seems to have borrowed from Lionel Curtis.

Thus, the August 20, 1917 announcement by Montagu stated-

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible […]" (Montagu quoted in Moore 1966: 115).

The Declaration was not the final report to be submitted to the British Parliament for consideration. Of vital importance was to convince Montagu of the need of granting 'self-government' to India during his India visit scheduled in late 1917[117].

In an important editorial for *Kesari* (9th October, 1917), Tilak cautioned against 3 major hindrances working against India's rightful demand for self-government-

a) British Bureaucracy- Especially under the vile influence of Lord Curzon and Lord Sydenham a strong pressure-group of ex-British bureaucrats had emerged in Westminster which constantly resisted granting Svarājya to India[118].
b) The Native Anglo-Indians- They feared losing their interests with the rise of Self-governing India.
c) Bureaucracy in India- The bureaucrats in India feared of losing their power (1976b: 121-127).

He also appealed to the non-Brahmin sections of the society to support the call for Svarājya and argued that with the overall increase in provincial representation in the Imperial

Legislative Council the 'backward classes', too, will find adequate representation in the law-making institutions. Tilak wrote-

"In a province like Bombay one will have to find out all those communities which have a total population of more than one lakh and are therefore eligible for separate representation. Along with this we would also have to see the proportion of literate and English-educated population and the amount of taxes which they give to the government. Education, occupation and socio-economic status of a community should determine the proportion of separate representation granted to it in the legislature. Then, how would it matter if the representatives of the 'backward classes' are elected from a mixed constituency?" (Tilak 1976b: 123, my translation).

Ideals such as democracy, liberty and equality had gained historic importance in Europe as a result of the War and its reflection could be seen in the British outlook towards India. With the conclusion of the Great War, British citizens ("fond of traditions") may like to return to the earlier status quo and India would lose a "golden opportunity" (Tilak 1976b: 126, my translation) of hitting the iron while it was hot. The issue of 'self-government' was not merely confined to India but was of "[…] vital significance for all the British colonies spread across the five continents. It should not be thought of as related to one race or one country. Perhaps, if India was granted self-government earlier the present War may not have occurred or if indeed it did its form would have been very different. Thus, the issue of human progress is deeply intertwined in the demand for 'self-rule' emanating from India" (Tilak 1976b: 126-27, my translation).

Surendranath Banerjee proposed a resolution for Home-Rule in the 32nd Congress-session held at Calcutta in December 1917. While seconding the resolution, Tilak criticized the British government for not granting 'self-government' to India. The term 'responsible government' aimed at bringing the legislature under the direct supervision and control of the Executive. Tilak, instead, proposed that "[…] the executive [be] entirely responsible to the Legislature, call it Parliament or by any other name, and that legislature should be wholly elected" (Tilak 1976e: 439). This would have meant that the Governors and the Lieutenant-Governors would be elected by the Indian legislatures. Tilak proposed that the stages for attaining 'Home Rule' or 'self-government' be decided by a separate clause inserted in the proposed Council of India Act of 1919 instead of keeping it as the sole prerogative of the Government of British India.

'Responsible Government', the official British policy stated, was to be granted in gradual stages- extended, first, to the Municipalities followed by the district boards, to Provincial Legislatures and, finally, to the Imperial Legislative Council. Tilak criticized this method of transfer of responsibilities-

"We in India are not children to be promoted from standard to standard until we pass our graduation either in Arts or in Law. We are full-gown people. We have experience of governing Empires and Kingdoms in the past. We fully know that art. Add to it that we have received Western education which lays down certain principles of Government and how to use those principles, having watched them so far in civilised countries" (Tilak 1976e: 442).

He demanded Indians be granted absolute control over the capital cities of Delhi and Shimla. "We want to treat the whole man, and we want such cure to be administered as will cure his brain first and power over the lower limbs will gradually be restored" (Tilak 1976e: 442). Or to put it in other words-

"We are entitled to the possession of the whole house and if we allow you [the British government] to share our power with you in that house, it is a concession made to you in the hope that you will soon clear out of it. You have managed the house so long; you have been living in the house; we will allow you to live in the house for a longer time, but eventually you must acknowledge that from today we are masters of the house; then alone there can be any compromise, otherwise, none" (Tilak 1976e: 443).

Following the Calcutta-Congress (1917) Mrs. Annie Besant collected 9 lakh signatures supporting the Congress-League Scheme and presented it to Montagu on his visit to Madras Province in early January 1918. Tilak's close associate Dadasaheb Khaparde met Montagu and Chelmsford on 1st January 1918 and tried to convince them to accept the Congress-League Scheme (Khaparde 1978: 421-426)[119]. Tilak visited Central Provinces and the Berar and delivered lectures on Home Rule (Khaparde 1978: 102). It was during one of these speeches (on 16th January, 1918) that Tilak made his famous declaration- "Swarajya is my birth-right and I shall have it at all costs" (Khaparde 1978: 223). The Tilak-led Home Rule League was rapidly expanding. A public declaration during a meeting of the HRL held in Bombay on 26th March, 1918 stated that there were 33,854 members of the HRL. It had organized 435 public lectures (Kelkar 2012c: 170). Tilak was also busy formulating a Deputation for England and

place the Congress-Muslim League Scheme before the British Parliament directly (B. S. Moonje to Tilak in Khaparde 1978: 100-101). However, after reaching Colombo, he was forced to return since his passport was declared invalid by the British government. In June, 1918 a special session of the INC was to be held in Delhi. However, the British government was reluctant to allow Tilak to attend the Congress session and invoked the Defence of India Act [1917] and barred him from entering Delhi and the Punjab provinces. On 26th April, 1918 Tilak along with Mohammed Shaukat Ali, Rabindranath Tagore and Mrs. Anne Besant submitted a Manifesto to the government restating popular resolve in fighting for self-government. They also appealed for amnesty to all political prisoners and internees (Khaparde 1978: 253-54).

The Congress-Moderates, on the other hand, opposed communal representation and proposed proportional representation on the principle of nomination. Their proposition was submitted to Montagu through active mediation by Lionel Curtis[120]. Montagu, considered the Congress-Moderates unconditionally loyal to the British Crown. He, too, favoured a scheme of proportional representation (Wood 1993: 89-90). He was also sure that the Extremists and especially Tilak would not rest till they gained self-government. The continued tension between the Moderates and the Extremists resulted into a second split during the Delhi Conference of the Congress [1918].

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, strangely characterised by a later historian as "[..] a masterpiece of literature, and, like other political documents produced by the British Statesmen, […] a dispassionate statement of India's case for Self-Government" (Sitaramayya 1946: 151), was published on 8th July 1918. Montagu and Chelmsford wished Tilak and Besant not attack the Report and help in gathering support from India before it was placed before the British parliament for its ratification (Wood 1993: 101-102). The Report provoked mixed reactions (India's Goals n.d.) Tilak was not pleased with the report and wrote two editorials blasting it. In the first editorial ('Janāb, dahelī to bahota dūr hai!', *Kesari*, 16th July, 1918) (Tilak 1976b: 149-56) he compared the Report to a "false diamond" (Tilak 1976b: 151-52, my translation) and added –

"I believe that these reforms are extremely shallow in terms of granting at least the first phase of self-government. They are partisan towards the bureaucracy and continues to be suspicious of Indians. The reforms are proposed in a cowardly manner, are very miserly in

their outlook and are a specimen of a pretentious statesmanship" (Tilak 1976b: 152, my translation).

Tilak expected greater democratization of the Imperial Legislative Council. Measures such as granting the natives control over municipalities and local boards through direct elections were nowhere near 'self-government'. Since Indian was made up of large illiterate masses Montagu thought that they would be incapable of electing correct representatives. Tilak chided- "But this is similar to saying that 'you should not enter the water if you cannot swim'. But I would not learn how to swim unless I step into the water. Electorates are formed only when they are allowed to vote". And if the electorates were indeed politically naïve in choosing the 'right representation' how could they be entrusted to vote at the Municipal and Local-District Board elections? (Tilak 1976b: 154, my translation). The Report offered to extend direct representation to two-third of the total membership of the Provincial Legislative Councils. However, Provincial Councils were to be directed by (a newly constituted) State Council and the Governor was to be responsible to the State Council. This was a shrewd political manoeuvre on the part of Montagu. Tilak argued that the propositions replicated the system of diarchy of Lionel Curtis and was meant to fool the natives into believing that genuine political-administrative reforms were on the anvil. In reality the goal was to maintain the status quo. Tilak sharply retorted- "It is good that we are not granted any rights. If we are denied rights today, tomorrow we shall fight for them; pray, do not fall prey to these lanky reforms and make a mockery of yourself before the world. The world will laugh at our weakness and stupidity" (Tilak 1976b: 156, my translation).

There was no reason for Montagu to dangle "[..] a carrot of reform before our eyes. A mere 'no' would have sufficed. But he cannot force us to accept these Reforms, against our will" (Tilak 1976b: 918, my translation). The Moderates thought that since Law emerged from the State and that rights were the prerogative of the State it was but natural that any reform coming from an enlightened State such as Great Britain would be serve the welfare of its citizens and colonised subjects. "No Government grants rights out of compassion for its citizens. It grants them only under difficult conditions" (Tilak 1976b: 919, my translation) ('Kabūla vā nākabūla', *Kesari*, 23rd July, 1918) (Tilak 1976b: 915-923). For Tilak, the United States stood for 'national determination' which called for granting autonomy to smaller nation-states. He was also hopeful that at the end of the war, European map would be

redrawn of this principle. In this context the Irish nationalist movement had also flared up and was threatening the British Union. “Ireland for the past two centuries and India for the past 30 years have been fighting with England. But nobody took cognizance of our demands up until now” (Tilak 1976b: 921, my translation). The Report was a farce to subdue any violent reactions from India. Tilak proposed to completely reject the impending Constitutional Reforms and instead appealed to the British Labour Party as well as the British Parliament to come up with a new set of reforms. If the INC was to accept the reforms it would lose its bargaining power and, “[…] the next opportunity may not arise in two centuries” (Tilak 1976b: 922, my translation).

After the Report was made public the INC called for a special session under the Presidency of Hasan Imam (held at Bombay on 29th August 1918). Veteran Moderate leaders such as D. E. Wacha, Bhupendra Nath Basu and Surendranath Banerjee did not attend the session. The Report was vigorously debated. Congress delegates were unhappy with the Report which had suggested that India was fit for Provincial autonomy but not for ‘self-government’. The Special Session unanimously declared the recommendations of the Report as “disappointing and unsatisfactory” (Sitaramayya 1946: 153-157). The Congress also elected Tilak the President for the upcoming annual Congress (scheduled to be held in Delhi in December, 1918). But since he was supposed to leave for England on an HRL-Deputation, Madan Mohan Malviya was instead selected as the President. The Moderates, having severed their ties with the Extremist-INC, formed a new party called ‘National Liberal Federation’. It held its first session in August 1918.

A Joint-Select Committee comprising of British MPs was formed on 3rd July, 1919. The Committee was supposed to hear the separate delegations of the INC (Moderates and Extremists had appeared as separate delegates), the various reports presented by the British Parliamentarians, the recommendations of the Government of India and draft a final Bill. On 6th August, 1919 Tilak submitted a Statement on behalf of the Home Rule League which read as under-

“By responsible government we understand a government in which the Executive is under the control of a fully elected Legislature in all financial and administrative matters; and in consequence holding office only while it enjoys the confidence of the popular Legislature. The

League holds that progressive realisation must be effected in India by as few stages as possible and within a reasonably short period, say, fifteen years" (Tilak 1976e: 275-76).

Under 'responsible government' the HRL demanded elective majority with elected Provincial legislatures containing no reserved seats for official/ non-official members. The League also demanded that 4/5th of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council are elected. It rejected the proposed bi-cameral legislature since there were to be "[…] no transferred subjects in the Government of India" and that "[…] the Governor-general in Council can secure his purpose by exercising his powers of veto, or issuing regulations and ordinances whenever necessary without the approval of the Legislative Assembly" (Tilak 1976e: 280). Thus, the Governor-general would act as the Second Chamber and the institution of a new Chamber would arise only after all the powers were completely devolved. However, the establishment of the Second Chamber, even then, "[…] will have to be settled according to the then prevailing public opinion" (Tilak 1976e: 280). Furthermore, any ordinances/regulations passed by the Governor-general would require the tacit support of at least 40% of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council. With the exception of control over navy, army, foreign relations and relations with the Princely States all other subjects must be transferred to the Imperial Legislative Council. The Home Rule League and Congress demanded that women possessing necessary qualifications be granted franchise. Franchise should also be extended to all men possessing property and that the minimum qualification for the possession of property be substantially lowered to accommodate working-class men; the election to the Indian legislative Assembly must be direct and the Council for the Secretary of State of India be abolished; and an Indian should be appointed as the Under-Secretary. The HRL and Congress also expected complete fiscal autonomy be granted to India (Tilak 1976e: 282).

Almost a month before submitting the Statement to the Joint Select Committee, Tilak had published an article in the *Daily Herald*, a pro-Labour British newspaper, where he informed his English readers that the Bill was "[…] critically examined by the two great popular representative assemblies in India", that is the Congress and the Muslim League, and both had found the Bill to be "unsatisfactory" ('Real Reform for India: An Appeal to Labour', *Daily Herald*, 5th June, 1919) (Tilak 1997: 674). He demanded that a specific time framework be

given for the implementation of the Reforms and he appealed to the Labour MPs to push for the inclusion of this provision in the final reading of the Bill.

8.5 The British Labour Party and Efforts for International Mediation:

As stated earlier the British Socialists, Radicals and Labour Unionists of the 19th century had been vocal about 'self-government' to the British colonies but maintained ambiguity regarding India's claim. However, leaders of the British Labour Part, Henry Mayers Hyndman and James Keir Hardie were instrumental in changing British perception of India's claim to self-government in the early 20th century. Keir Hardie had toured India, South Africa and Australia in 1907 and had made statements in support of the Swadeshi agitation (Stewart 1921: 251-52). During his sojourn in India, he had spent 2 days with Tilak in Pune (Kelkar 2012b: 300-301). His book *India: Impressions and Suggestions* [1909] was read avidly in England and India and knowing its political significance was republished for circulation in 1917 by the Indian HRL. Upon his return to England, Keir Hardie organized the annual Conference of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in Huddersfield in which Hardie moved the following resolution- "[T]hat the people of India should be given more effective control over their own affairs" and referred to the princely states of Travancore , Baroda and Mysore where he found that "[t]he whole of the administration, from the humblest office right up to the chief, was filled by natives and the administration of the affairs of those States was a model to the rest of India" (quoted in Stewart 1921: 262).

He also openly agitated against the ruthless administration of the British government and declared opposition to the imprisonment of Indian leaders and journalists on grounds of sedition.

In a letter sent to Tilak during his incarceration in Mandalay on 31st March 1911, Keir Hardie wrote-

"I never miss an opportunity of driving home the point that the only solution for the difficulties of the situation in India is such a measure of self-Government as will make the people of India masters in their won households" and assured him that many amongst the 42 elected members of the ILP in the recently concluded elections were taking "an intelligent interest in India and its problems" (Khaparde 1978: 143).

He also impressed upon Tilak the need to work stringently in England to arouse sympathy for the Indian cause amongst the British population and the working classes and perhaps even hold a session of the INC in London which would "[…] go far to break down [the] prejudice [here]". He believed that "[…] next to the education of the people of India concerning their political rights and duties, the next important thing is the education of the people of this country concerning India and her aims and aspirations" (Khaparde 1978: 143)[121]. Tilak was personally assured by Keir Hardie of the Labour Party's support to India (Tilak to Khaparde 1st and 29th May, 1909) (Tilak 1966: 41-47).

Tilak had started growing distrustful of the British Liberal Party around the time of the Swadeshi movement. None of the Liberal Party members or their representatives in the British House of Commons visited India. As opposed to this, the newly formed Labour Party, the Radicals and the Socialists seemed to shown genuine interest in India and its problems. The Labour Party MP James Keir Hardie, the Radical MP V. H. Rutherford and the journalist H. W. Nevinson visited India in 1907 followed by the Independent Labour Party MP James Ramsay MacDonald's visit in March 1910. Tilak had formed personal comradeship with all the four visitors which helped him during his England visit.

Labour Party's strength in the British House of Commons was gradually growing. After the 1906 elections Labour MPs occupied 29 seats in the British House of Commons. By 1910 the number had increased to 42 (the Liberal Party had 274 seats and the Conservatives' coalition held onto 272 seats). Around the time of the outbreak of the First World War the Labour Party claimed to have 1,612,147 affiliated members (of which 1,572,391 were trade unionists) and numerous supporters at local and national level. At the end of the Great War (1918), the strength of the Labour Party had grown exponentially in terms of its mass base. It now had 3,013, 129 affiliated members and (as against the December 1910 election where it had fielded 56 candidates) it could field 361 candidates. Despite winning only 57 seats in the 1918 elections, the Labour Party was the largest opposition to the Lloyd George-led coalition government. The party's policy was presented in *Labour and the New Social Order* [1918] written by Sydney Webb and adopted by the Labour Conference held in June, 1918 transforming it into a 'parliamentary socialist' party. In December 1918 elections, the Conservatives led coalition held a staggering 473 seats with the Liberal Party dwindling to a paltry 36 seats. The Labour Party was the largest opposition with 57 seats (Worley 2005).

Tilak was keen on expanding the role of the INC and the HRL in England. Tilak had also successfully convinced the Congress to pass a resolution during the Calcutta session [1917]. Joseph Baptista, as a representative of the Indian HRL, had been closely working with the Labour Party and addressing meetings of the Labour Council. These Labour Councils had a membership of more than two lakh and they were keen to lend support to India's demand for Home-Rule. He also reminded Tilak and the Congress leaders that about one lakh fifty thousand of the Labour Council members would be voting during the upcoming General Assembly elections in England (1918). He added-

"I cannot impress upon you too strongly the necessity of the roaring campaign among the workmen. This is not difficult as workmen are well organised and they have their trade councils. We can approach them through the Councils. Once aroused they will be a mighty power on our behalf. I find them exceedingly well disposed" (Baptista quoted in Shirsat 1974: 63).

Baptista further urged the INC and HRL to send more representatives to England to help him in approaching the English workers and evoking sympathy and support amongst them for India (*Mahratta*, January 6, 1918) (Shirsat 1974: 63). Tilak had obtained a 'bilateral contract' with the Labour Party (Tilak 1997: 229) and arranged for a donation of 2000 pounds for the election campaign of the Labour Party on behalf of HRL. Tilak was hopeful that the Labour Party would win the elections and while the principal Labour leaders such as Henderson and Lansbury failed to win the election, others such as Wedgwood and Spoor returned to the parliament and immediately set to work to form a Parliamentary Committee to oppose the Montford Reforms in accordance with the Congress resolution of 1918. Getting the Labour Party leaders and MPs to follow the Tilakite line of opposition to the Montford Reforms for crucial for maintaining dominance within the INC when Annie Besant had suddenly defected to the Moderate side and supported the Bill (Owen 1968: 171).

Tilak was also deeply interested in finding inroads and building ties with the Irish Home Rule League. In a lecture delivered in Madras (Tilak 1976e: 578-591) on 22nd April 1918, he gave two reasons behind the British Parliament's decision to grant Home Rule to Ireland. First, because it was deemed that the "Irish youths must be made to feel that they were fighting for their country [in the First World War], for a principle which is not denied to them at home"

(Tilak 1976e: 578). Secondly, it seemed to be also the desire of Woodrow Wilson that Ireland be granted the right to self-determination. Tilak interpreted this in the following manner-

"Possibly, it means that America is not going to take part in this War unless the Americans are sure that this War is for establishing liberty and freedom all over the world. The interest of America is not in the protest of peoples, whether it be Germans or Anglo-Saxons. The American Government are [sic] interested in the War and are [sic] prepared to help England and her friends, if ultimately the principles of liberty are to triumph and are to be established all over the World, irrespective of colour or continent. That seems to be the reason why America has given its help, but not certainly, to defend [the] Anglo-Saxon despotism" (Tilak 1976e: 578-79).

On the similarities between Irish and the Indian subjects of the Crown, he said in the same speech, "They [the Government] think that although it is true in the case of Ireland that the man there must be made to feel that he is fighting for liberty, which is not denied to him in his own home, that principle of liberty is not applicable to India. Are we not human beings like Irish men?" (Tilak 1976e: 583). He then pointed out that certain sections of the Indian political class [the Moderates] regarded any form of criticism of the Government as being disloyal and disobedient to which he responded-

"My idea of loyalty is different. We do not impose any condition upon Government, but we bring to the notice of Government the psychological law that you cannot compel a man to do a thing unless you please him at the same time. Before people determine to fight for the liberty of other Nations, they must be assured that they will enjoy that liberty in their own home. It is not a condition made by us. If anyone has made that condition it is human nature, and we are bringing to the notice of Government, the law of human nature which will make co-operation effective. I do not think that it is ever considered by any historian or any thinker that to remind the Government of the laws of human nature is disloyal" (Tilak 1976e: 583).

Tilak was deeply interested in sending an INC-HRL joint-Delegation to England, not "[…] to beg for self-government from the British Parliament" but rather "[…] to make the British people realize how Britain will benefit in granting self-government to India. It will tell the British people of the loss borne by their country by enslaving India for so long" (quoted in Kelkar 2012c: 144, my translation). Sir Valentine Chirol had published a book on the nationalist

movement in India which contained some derogatory remarks regarding Tilak[122]. Tilak decided to file a case of defamation against Chirol in the British court and use the opportunity to visit England. The World War was reaching its end and Tilak was well aware of the post-War negotiations which were scheduled to take place in France. He hoped that a representation from India in the Peace Conference would help in the latter's demand for Svarājya. Fresh elections were called in Britain at the end of the War. Tilak hoped to help the Labour Party in its election-campaigns. Tilak spent thirteen months in England (October 1918-November 1919).

Tilak and his associates reached London on 29th October 1918[123]. His arrival was announced in the *Daily Herald*. Introducing Tilak to its English readers the *Daily Herald* wrote-

"Mr. Tilak has served six years in prison; he does not complain because he is much too big a man to do so, but the British Labour movement should complain; for these bureaucrats in Whitehall Gardens act and speak in our name. We are all far too ignorant about India" (Reprinted in Tilak 1997: 181).

A month later the Labour Party released the election Manifesto, which was published in *The Times* on 28th November 1918, parts of which read – "freedom for Ireland and India it claims a democratic right, and it will extend to all subject peoples the right to self-determination within the British Commonwealth of Free Nations […]" (Tilak 1997: 197). In fact, prominent Labour candidates included the demand for Home Rule in their election manifestos. Thus, George Lansbury who stood from the 'Bow and Bromley' Division wrote in his election appeal- "I am a firm believer in the British Commonwealth, a commonwealth of free people… I think a start must be made with self-government for India […] The immediate duty our Government must face is the creation of a commonwealth of free Nations, all of whom become partners in the great League of Free Peoples we hope to see established at the Peace Conference…" (Tilak 1997: 193).

In speech delivered before a large audience at Caxton Hall in London on 3rd May, 1919 Tilak reminded those assembled of the remarkable sacrifices rendered by the Indian soldiers for the British war efforts and added-

"Great ideas of liberty and freedom have gripped men's mind in the East as in the West. Empires have fallen, oppressed nationalities are setting up free states after centuries of

serfdom and without any apprenticeship in Self-Government, without any gradual stages. The Finns and the Poles, the Czecho-Slovaks and Yugo-Slavs, and even in the wild Armenians and the Arabs of Hedjaz, have all of a sudden been pronounced fit for Self-Government" (Tilak 1976e: 606). But India continued to be denied the right to self-determination despite being "a contended partner in the Great British Commonwealth of Nations […]" (Tilak 1976e: 606).

Echoing similar sentiments at another lecture delivered in London, Tilak compared India with Japan and stated that the latter's economic development was a result of 'administrative freedom'. The role of the British government vis a vis India was supposed to be that of a friend and an advisor. He added, "Put us on a footing of equality and our progress will be more rapid and more popular" ('Mr. Tilak's Speech in London', *Mahratta*, 30th March, 1919) (Tilak 1995: 1298).

In order to arouse English public sentiment against the Bill Tilak wrote an article for *The Socialist Review*, a popular journal edited by the Labour Party leader J. Ramsay MacDonald ('The Present Situation in India', *The Socialist Review: A Quarterly Review of Modern Thought*, Vol. 16, (July-September), 1919) (Tilak1977: 701-707). He brought to the notice of the ordinary English citizens of the tremendous economic exploitation undertaken by the British for the 150 years of colonial rule and the unrest in Punjab in the aftermath of the Rowlatt Act was a reaction of pent-up emotions for decades, when the "[…] patience of the people who have been, for years, agitating to free themselves from crushing despotism" was defeated. The bureaucratic control over India, as stipulated by the Royal Proclamation of 1858 was purely "on a statutory basis" while India was to be "governed with justice and fairness" (Tilak 1997: 703). But laws such as the Rowlatt Act were nothing more than "[…] a new weapon of coercion" aimed to "mercilessly supress the present riots" (Tilak 1997: 706). A global conflict between Capital and Labour had ensued and if the British Empire wished to maintain its superiority in the world it would have to adjust with the changing international geo-politics. In the new era of 'nation's right to self-determination' Britain would have to govern its colonies "on the basis of federation of self-governing States" (Tilak 1997: 707).

Tilak was also keen on placing India's demand for 'self-government' before world leaders meeting at the Paris Peace Conference[124]. The British government had assured India's presence at the Peace Conference. Tilak wrote to Lloyd George on 15th January, 1919 reminding him that considering its contribution to the War efforts of the Allied Powers India

had a legitimate claim to attend the Conference. However, India could not be represented by the nominees of the Government but by the "Tribunes of the people" or the INC (Tilak 1995: 1296). Accordingly, the people of India via the Congress had elected two Hindus—Tilak and Gandhi- and one Muslim-Syed Hasan Imam- to appeal for 'self-determination to India' before the Conference (Tilak 1976e: 262-273). However, it denied the Congress-nominated delegation under the leadership of Tilak to attend the Conference and instead appointed its own delegation consisting of the Maharaja of Bikaner and Lord Satyendra Nath P Sinha. Tilak wrote to the French Premier and the Chairman of the Paris Peace Conference Georges Clemenceau on 11th March, 1919 complaining of the 'undemocratic means' adopted by the British government in appointing Indian representation.

Tilak tried to impress upon Clemenceau India's greatness as an ancient civilization and its indispensable role in establishing peace and prosperity in the modern world ravaged by war. India comprised of one-fifth of world population and was a lucrative market for European goods. However, since India was enslaved by the British for two centuries it retarded India's growth. "Indeed, there can be no real progress without liberty. All capacity for initiative is paralysed. Self- confidence is undermined. In countless invisible ways subjection demoralises nations and retards both their moral and material progress" (Tilak 1976e: 265). But the World War and Wilson's policy of 'nation's right to self-determination' was leading to a "New Order" where "[…] no civilised nation should be governed by any other nation without its consent, upon theories of trusteeship propounded ostensibly for the benefit of the ward" (Tilak 1976e: 265). Tilak also assured Clemenceau that communal disharmony in India was bogus, proven recently by the Lucknow Pact between the Indian Hindus and Muslims, and that the "[…] pressing problems of the poverty of India, physical degeneration, industrial regeneration, economic development, technical and primary education and delicate questions of caste and custom [could] never be solved by men exclusively wedded to Western civilization, but [could] be successfully surmounted by Indians alone" (Tilak 1976e: 266).

The letters to Wilson and Clemenceau were accompanied with a short pamphlet called *Self-determination for India* [1918], possibly written by Tilak. The pamphlet was widely circulated in England and the United States under the auspices of the HRL. The pamphlet pointed out that international relations were muddled by "dynamic forces" such as imperialism, autocracy, and trade rivalries (Self-determination 1918: 5). The 'fourteen points' of Woodrow

Wilson and accepted by the Lloyd George government was approved by Indians. The claim for self-government for India rested upon "the ideals of Self-Determination, Nationalism, Freedom of Nations, National dignity and self-respect" (Self-determination 1918: 6). The Declaration by Montagu ran contrary to the principles of self-determination and automatically turned null and void. The pamphlet later argued that India did not wish to cut ties with the British Empire but demanded "[…] autonomous development […]" as promised to peoples of Ottoman and Habsburg Empires by Wilson (Self-determination 1918: 6). Familiar arguments about India's great heritage and its 'unity in diversity' were articulated. The pamphlet concluded by recommending the enactment of a new Constitution for India by conceding absolute autonomy within the British Commonwealth and in accordance with the Congress-League Scheme. Indian provinces should be divided following the federal principle of linguistic nationality. Democratically elected legislative and executive bodies should be granted complete freedom to internally administer each province resulting into the formation of "United States of India" within the British Commonwealth (Self-determination 1918: 13).

Tilak nurtured great hopes from the United States. Before returning to India Tilak requested permission from Montagu to visit the United States to participate in the 2nd anniversary celebrations of the American Branch of the HRL. Tilak was also hopeful that the Conference as well as the incumbent League of Nations would sympathise with India's cause. Tilak viewed the League of Nations as an "Appellate Court of all nations in the world" which would possess the require power to arbitrate between the metropolis and its colonies (Tilak 1976e: 617). Tilak remained optimistic about success in Paris. He also hoped that the Lloyd George government would have to bow out of the Montford Reforms under pressure from the decisions made at the Peace Conference (Tilak to D. V. Gokhale, 23rd January, 1919) (Khaparde 1978: 2-4). However, he did not receive enthusiastic responses from Clemenceau or Wilson. Wilson had made up his mind that the Peace Conference would not interfere in the British or French colonial activities and restrict its scope only to the reorganization of Europe (Manela 2007: 166).

8.6 Cooperation, Responsive Cooperation and Non-Cooperation: Tilak's Ambiguity towards the Khilafat Agitation

Indian nationalist leadership had completely transformed the thirteen months of Tilak's absence. A new form of agitation called Satyagraha with a mandatory vow of non-violence, emerged on India's political horizon and its chief architect was Mahatma Gandhi. His most famous biographer, Ramchandra Guha puts the issue in clear terms- "The satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act made [Gandhi] an all-India figure, known in the major towns and cities of the subcontinent. Yet, this might never have been the case had the acknowledged leader of Congress's radical wing, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, been around when the movement started" (Guha 2019: 91). Gandhi, initially showed absolute support to the resolution passed in the Amritsar Congress (1919) of going ahead with the provincial elections under the conditions laid out in the Council of India Act (1919). During his speech at the Amritsar session of Congress, Tilak reiterated his views that the Council of India Act (1919) was indeed "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing" (INC Report 1922: 117). But the Congress could not afford to altogether reject it. Rather than waiting for 10 more years for another Committee to be set up by the British Parliament when the Act might be revised Tilak appealed to the Congress to work with what was granted. However, he wanted the mass agitation against the British government for, what he now called 'responsive cooperation', to continue. Tilak saw the present Reform Act as a "camouflage" which the changing international scenario had forced upon Britain. It was "[…] quite necessary to show to the world that the British were prepared to treat their subject nations with some liberty and generosity" (Tilak 1976e: 461). The Reform Bill was passed in the British Parliament in a "[…] half-hearted way now that the war ha[d] come to an end" (Tilak 1976e: 462).

Tilak defended the demand for a 'Responsible government', which was premised upon the principle of 'self-determination', thus- "Not only do we want full responsible Government but we want it in accordance with the principle of self-determination; that means the determination of the people of India as voiced by the resolutions of the Congress passed by a majority in this Congress" (INC Report 1922: 118). This principle was applied not only by the Delhi Congress (1918) in passing its 'self-government' resolution but was also unanimously accepted by the British citizens at the Albert Hall meeting in London on 26th October, 1919. Gandhi and Jinnah opposed that part of Tilak's resolution which called the Reform Act "disappointing" and argued that full cooperation from the Indians could be expected *only after* the Act was placed in action (INC Report 1922: 121-128). Mrs. Besant, on the other hand,

was in complete agreement with all the provisions of the Reform Act and proposed an amendment to the Resolution which welcomed the Act as "[…] the gateway of freedom to the Indian Nation" (INC Report 1922: 131). In the eyes of Tilak his former comrade had turned "[…] unreliable […]" ('Mrs. Besant on the War-Path', *Mahratta*, 11th June, 1920) (Tilak 1995: 1325-1329). Besant had squarely joined the Moderate-camp.

However, it was the Khilafat agitation which catapulted Gandhi as the greatest rival to Tilak within Congress (and eventually in popular perception). Jinnah had urged Gandhi in 1915 to act as a catalyst to bring the two communities closer (Guha 2019: 9). The Khilafat movement took birth in Bombay in March 1919[125] and grew under the auspices of the Central Khilafat Committee (CKC). The CKC transformed Khilafat movement into a pan-regional movement while invoking its trans-national credentials (Hasan and Pernau 2005). In November 1919 Gandhi vouchsafed the Khilafat agitators of his absolute support and also promised to seek support from the INC.

By April, 1920 Gandhi had clubbed the Khilafat agitation with the agitation against the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and called for a tripartite unity between the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs. The proposal for a nation-wide non-cooperation movement was first put forth by Gandhi and Shaukat Ali during a meeting held of the CKC in Bombay on 12th May, 1920 (Ali 2017: 207-08). In June 1920 at another meeting held at Allahabad much of the CKC leadership reached a consensus to spearhead the Non-cooperation movement under the leadership of Gandhi. 1st August, 1920 was fixed as the day when the movement would be launched. When senior Congress-leaders requested Gandhi to seek Congress approval Gandhi replied-

"When one has unshakable faith in a particular policy or action, it would be folly to wait for the Congress announcement… I dare not ask [my Muslim countrymen] to wait for any verdict but the verdict of their own conscience" (Gandhi quoted in Minault 1982: 107-08).

Gandhi strongly opposed participating in the provincial elections due to be held in the latter half of 1920. Thus, non-cooperation, as envisaged by Gandhi in June 1920, was to be completed in four stages- giving up of honorary titles and posts; resignations by government employees; resignation by the natives employed in army and the police department and suspension of payment of taxes. Most of the leaders of Congress were opposed to the Non-Cooperation program. The Benares session of the AICC took up the program for discussion

but deferred on voting on it during its Calcutta Special session due in September 1920. The Muslim League maintained stoic silence (Gordon 1973: 456-58). Tilak moved a resolution against the dissolution of the Caliphate in a meeting held at Caxton Hall in London on 12th May, 1919 (Tilak 1997: 652) but did not comment on the Khilafat agitation brewing in India.

Tilak's biographers have maintained stoic silence on Tilak's position on the Khilafat agitation, giving us an impression that the agitation was inconsequential to him. It is true that Tilak scarcely wrote on the Khilafat movement. However, his many discussions with some of his supporters and followers give us some clue of his outlook towards the movement. For instance, Chothiram Gidwani, a doctor from Sindh, recollects his discussion with Tilak during the latter's tour of the Punjab and Sindh provinces in early 1920. Tilak was in favour of supporting the Khilafat movement and "[…] advising Hindus to join the movement provided Mohamedans [sic.] were sincerely bent upon non-co-operating with the Government" (Gidwani in Bapat 1928b: 140). Swami Govindanand, a Vedantic-Communist from Karachi, however recollects, that Tilak "[…] resolutely opposed to mingling up the Khilafat question with the Swarajya movement" and that he wanted "[…] the National movement of India to keep entirely free from all contamination with any theological or foreign Political questions" (Swami Govindanand in Bapat 1928b: 150).

While Hindu-Muslim unity "[…] was a matter for rejoicing" (Tilak 1995: 1337) for Tilak, the Khilafat movement was ultimately internal to the Muslim religion- "My idea is that the Mohammedans themselves should take the initiative in the matter. After full discussion they must come to a definite decision in the matter and it is for Hindus to support them in whatever decision they might arrive at" (Tilak 1976e: 398). The primary objective of Congress was to agitate for 'Self-Government' and while personally Tilak was prepared to support the Khilafat movement he insisted that the Congress should maintain its distance.

8.7 Conclusion: The Congress Democratic Party

Tilak feared that the Gandhi led Non-Cooperation movement, coupled with the Khilafat agitation, would wreck all the hard work that had gone into demanding 'self-government'. He had grown optimistic about the Labour Party winning the British Parliamentary elections in 1923. Arthur Henderson, the Labour Party leader and the future Prime Ministerial candidate,

assured Tilak that his Party would "[…] give all when [it would] come to power" (Khaparde 1978: 475). The Labour Party had deliberated the Montford Bill in May 1919 and had recommended that the Congress accept it on 'conditional grounds'. The Labour Party wished to inject the interests of the Indian industrial labourers in the Bill. In the later readings of the Bill in the British parliament the Labour members demanded clauses about equality under the law, expansion of franchise to women, abolition of racial discrimination and 'self-government' at an all-India level to be inserted in the final Bill (Gupta 2002: 45-46).

In the final three years of his life Tilak became vocal opponent of the British bourgeoisie. During his speeches delivered to various meetings of Labour Party and Trade Unions in Britain he regularly attacked the British capitalists who were fanning the wildfire of Imperialism and misdirecting the British working classes about the Indian conditions. He began to develop keen interest in the Capital-Labour relations and was enamoured by the Social-democratic ideology developing in Europe in the early 20th century. Bombay's working class had supported Tilak since the Swadeshi days, but Tilak's association with the British Labour Party, the Bombay Trade Unions declared him the Indian representative to the 'International Labour Conference' to be held in Washington on 1st October, 1919 (Tilak 1995: 1389). Tilak adopted the Fabian slogan, 'Educate, Agitate, Organise', as one of the fundamental principles of underlying his new political party- 'The Congress Democratic Party' (Tilak 1976e: 297; Owen 2007: 119).

In a letter to Dadasaheb Khaparde (21st February, 1920), Tilak declared that the Congress Democratic Party would "[…] exclude all [those] opposed to the Congress" (Khaparde 1978: 93) as well as "[…] both Moderates and Mrs Besant's followers" (Tilak to Vitthalbhai Patel, 10th March, 1920) (Khaparde 1978: 94). The Manifesto of the Party was a jointly written by the Executive body of the HRL (Khaparde 1978: 93). It was submitted to the delegates attending the Bombay Provincial Conference held at Sholapur in April, 1920 for adoption. The Conference unanimously agreed to the tenets of the new Party. Tilak intended to put up candidates (but not in opposition to the Congress) for the upcoming elections of the Provincial Councils.

The Manifesto (Tilak 1976e: 296-299) declared its "[…] feelings of unwavering loyalty to the Congress and faith in Democracy" and argued that education and political franchise were the *modus operandi* for resolving the underdevelopment and general backwardness of India. The

Party "[…] advocate[d] the removal of all civic, secular or social disabilities based on caste or custom" and stood for "[…] religious toleration, the sacred of one's religion to oneself and the right and duty of the State to protect it against aggression" (Tilak 1976e: 296). The Party supported the on-going Khilafat agitation but urged upon its leaders to search for an amicable resolution. It demanded an "[…] integration or federation of India in the British Commonwealth" but reserved the right to "[…] autonomy for India and equal status as a sister-state with every other partner in the British Commonwealth including Great Britain" (Tilak 1976e: 296). It also demanded equal citizenship for all Indians within the Commonwealth and the right to "[…] effective retaliation whenever it is denied" (Tilak 1976e: 296). It also extended its support to the League of Nations and every (colonised) nation's right to self-determination.

The Manifesto borrowed from the resolutions passed in the previous three Congresses regarding the tenets and contours of 'autonomy' as well as administrative and fiscal responsibilities demanded for India. It continued to regard the Montford Reforms and the Council of India Act (1919) as "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing" (Tilak 1976e: 297). The Party demanded the immediate repeal of repressive laws such as the Rowlatt Act, the Press Acts and the Arms Act amongst others and that the Indians be treated equal to British metropolitan citizens. Some of the demands from the Manifesto of British Labour Party Manifesto were adopted by the Congress Democratic Party. Thus, the agricultural and industrial labourers were to be guaranteed fair wages, decent working hours and an overall equitable relation between Capital and Labour. It demanded nationalisation of large-scale industries (railways), proportionate taxation and expanding jobs in the armed forces for meritorious Indians. It also called for reorganization of the Indian provinces along linguistic lines. At the provincial level the Party demanded immediate 'full popular autonomy' and a permanent ryotwari system to be re-established. Education was to be delivered free and compulsory up to primary level and students be taught in the vernacular medium. Universal adult franchise was to be established coupled with decentralization of judicial and administrative powers to the Gram Panchayats. Finally, the Party also demanded the establishment of better irrigation facilities, cooperative enterprises, and providing industrial and technical education to the peasants in rural areas (Tilak 1976e: 298-99).

The Manifesto of the Congress Democratic Party clearly departed from Gandhi's Non-cooperation movement and was eager to build stronger ties with the British Labour Party and international labour movement. Its Social-Democratic character, however, was not appreciated by some Extremist leaders[126]. Nevertheless, since the Party was supposed to work in tandem with the INC Tilak had hoped that the final verdict on the Non-cooperation movement would be delivered during the Special Session planned in September, 1920. Tilak, in all probability, would have played a pivotal role in pushing Congress away from Non-Cooperation agitation and instead seek remedial through 'responsive cooperation' while continuing popular agitation. But one can only speculate.

Tilak suffered from a severe attack of pneumonia in late July, 1920 and breathed his last in the wee hours of 1st August 1920.