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The Indian national movement provides the only actual historical example of a semi-democratic or democratic type of political structure being successfully replaced or transformed. It is the only movement where the broadly Gramscian theoretical perspective of a war of position was successfully practiced; where state power was not seized in a single historical moment of revolution, but through prolonged popular struggle on a moral, political and ideological level; where reserves of counter-hegemony where built up over the years through prolonged popular struggle on a moral, political and ideological level; where reserves of counter-hegemony were built up over the years through progressive stages; where the phases of struggle alternated with 'passive' phases.

The Indian national movement is also an example of how the constitutional space offered by the existing structure could be used without getting co-opted by it. It did not completely reject this space, as such rejection in democratic societies entails heavy costs in terms of hegemonic influence and often leads to isolation – but entered it and used it effectively in combination with non-constitutional struggle to over throw the structure, the efforts of I.N.A. being one of the example.

The movement popularised democratic ideas and institutions in India. The nationalists fought for the introduction of a representative government on the basis of popular elections and demanded that elections
be based on adult franchise. The Indian National Congress was organized on a democratic basis and in the form of a parliament. It not only permitted but encouraged free expression of opinion within the party and the movement. Some of the most important decisions in its history were taken after heated debates and on the basis of open voting.

The freedom struggle was also a struggle for economic development. It is an economic ideology developed which was to dominate the views of independent India. From the initial stages, the movement adopted a pro-poor orientation which was strengthened with the advent of Gandhi and the rise of the leftists who struggled to make the movement adopt a socialist outlook. The movement also increasingly moved towards a programme of radical agrarian reform. For various reasons, despite the existence of a powerful leftist trend within the nationalist mainstream, the dominant vision within the Congress did not transcend the parameters of a capitalist conception of society.

The national movement was, from its early days, fully committed to secularism. Its leadership fought hard to inculcate secular values among the people and opposed the growth of communalism. And, despite the partition of India and the accompanying communal holocaust, it did succeed in enshrining secularism in the Constitution of free India.

HISTORIOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES

Indian national movement has so far been viewed from a wide variety of historiographic perspectives ranging from the hard-core
imperialist to the Marxist Subaltern and Modernist. The imperialist approach which first emerged in the official pronouncements of the Viceroy, Lords Dufferin, Curzon and Minto, and the Secretary of State, George Hamilton. It was first cogently put forward by V. Chirol, the Rowlatt (Sedition) Committee Report, Verney Lovett, and the Montagu-Chelmsform Report. It was theorized, for the first time, by Bruce T. McCully, and American scholar, in 1940. Its liberal version was adopted by Reginald Coupland and, after 1947, by Percival Spear, while its conservative version was refurbished and developed at length by Anil Seal and J. A. Gallagher.

The conservative colonial administrators and the imperialist school of historians, popularly known as the Cambridge School, deny the existence of colonialism as an economic, political, social and cultural structure in India. Colonialism is seen by them primarily as foreign rule. They either do not see or vehemently deny that the economic, social, cultural and political development of India required the overthrow of colonialism. Thus, their analysis of the national movement is based on the denial of the basic contradiction between the interests of the Indian people and of British colonialism and causative role this contradiction played in the rise of the national movement. Consequently, they implicitly or explicitly deny that the Indian national movement represented the Indian side of this contradiction or that it was anti-imperialist, that is, it opposed British imperialism in India. They see the Indian struggle against imperialism as a mock battle (‘mimic warfare’), ‘a Dassehra duel between
two hollow statues, locked in motiveless and simulated combat.¹ The denial of the central contradiction vitiates the entire approach of these scholars though their meticulous research does help others to use it within a different framework.

The imperialist writers deny that India was in the process of becoming a nation and believe that what is called India in fact consisted of religions, castes, communities and interests. Thus, the grouping of Indian politics around the concept of an Indian nation or an Indian people or social classes is not recognized by them. There were instead, they said, pre-existing Hindu-Muslim, Brahmin, Non-Brahmin, Aryan Bhadralok (cultured people) and other similar identities. They say that these prescriptive groups based on caste and religion are the real basis of political organization and, as such, caste and religion-based politics are primary and nationalism a mere cover. As Seal puts it: ‘What from a distance appear as their political strivings were often, on close examination, their efforts to conserve or improve the position of their own prescriptive groups.’² (This also makes Indian nationalism, says Seal, different from the nationalism of China, Japan, the Muslim countries and Africa).³

The national movement, assert the writers of the imperialist school, was not a people’s movement, assert the writers of the needs and interests of the elite groups who used it to serve either their own narrow interests or the interests of their prescriptive groups. The national movement was merely an instrument used by the elite groups to mobilize the masses and to satisfy their own interests.
Gallagher, Seal and their students have added to this viewpoint. While Dufferin, Curzon, Chirol, Lovett, McCully, and B.B. Misra talked of the frustrated educated middle classes using nationalism to fight the 'benevolent raj', Seal develops a parallel view, as found in Chirol and the Rowlett Committee Report, that the national movement represented the struggle of one Indian elite group against another for British favours. As he puts it: 'It is misleading to view these native mobilizations as directed chiefly against foreign overlordship. Much attention has been paid to the apparent conflicts between imperialism and nationalism: it would be at least equally profitable to study their real partnership'.

A few historians have of late initiated a new trend, described by its proponents as subaltern, which dismisses all previous historical writing, including that based on a Marxist perspective, as elite historiography, and claims to replace this old, 'blinkered' historiography with what it claims is a new people's or subaltern approach.

For them, the basic contradiction in Indian society in the colonial epoch was between the elite, both Indian and foreign, on the one hand, and the subaltern groups, on the other, and not between colonialism and the Indian people. They believe that the Indian people were never united in a common anti-imperialist struggle, that there was no such entity as the Indian national movement. Instead, they assert that there were two distinct movements or streams, the real anti-imperialist stream of the subalterns and the bogus national movement of the elite. The elite stream, led by the 'official' leadership of the Indian National Congress, was little more than
a cloak for the struggle for power among the elite. The subaltern school’s characterization of the national movement bears a disturbing resemblance to the imperialist and neo-imperialist characterization of the national movement, the only difference being that, while neo-imperialist historiography does not split the movement but characterizes the entire national movement in this fashion, ‘subaltern’ historiography first divides the movement into two and then accepts the neo-imperialist characterization for the ‘elite’ stream. This approach is also characterized by a generally a historical glorification of all forms of popular militancy and consciousness and an equally a historical contempt for all forms of initiative and activity by the intelligentsia, organized party leaderships and other ‘elites’. Consequently, it too denies the legitimacy of the actual, historical and colonial struggle that the Indian people waged. The new school, which promised to write a history based on the people’s own consciousness, is yet to tap new sources that may be more reflective of popular perceptions; its ‘new’ writing continues to be based on the same old ‘elite’ sources.

The other major approach is nationalist historiography. In the colonial period, this school was represented by political activists such as Lajpat Rai, A.C. Mazumdar, R.G. Pradhan, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Surendranath Banerjee, C.F. Andrews, and Girija Mukeiji. More recently, B.R. Nanda, Bisheshwar Prasad and Amles Tripathi have made distinguished contributions within the framework of this approach. The nationalist historians, especially the more recent ones, show an awareness
of the exploitative character of colonialism, but on the whole they feel that the national movement was the result of the spread and realization of the idea or spirit of nationalism or liberty. They also take full cognisance of the process of Indian becoming a nation, and see the national movement as a movement of the people.

Their major weakness, however, is that they tend to ignore or, at least, underplay the inner contradictions of Indian society both in terms of class and caste. They tend to ignore the fact that while the national movement represented the interests of the people or nation as a whole (that is, of all classes vis-à-vis colonialism) it only did so from a particular class perspective, and that, consequently, there was a constant struggle between different social, ideological perspectives for hegemony over the movement. They also usually take up the position adopted by the right wing of the national movement and equate it with the movement as a whole. Their treatment of the strategic and ideological dimensions of the movement is also inadequate.

The Marxist school emerged on the scene later. Its foundations, so far as the study of the national movement is concerned, were laid by R. Palme Dutt and A.R. Desai; but several others have developed it over the years. Unlike the imperialist school, the Marxist historians clearly see the primary contradiction, as well as the process of the nation in the making and unlike the nationalists, they also take full note of the inner contradictions of Indian society.
However, many of them – and Palme Dutt in particular – are not able to fully integrate their treatment of the primary anti-imperialist contradiction and the secondary inner contradictions, and tend to counterpoise the anti-imperialist struggle to the class or social struggle. They also tend to see the movement as a structured bourgeois movement, if not the bourgeoisie’s movement, and miss its open-ended and all class character. They see the bourgeoisie as playing the dominant role in the movement – they tend to equate or conflate the national leadership with the bourgeoisie or capitalist class. They also interpret the class character of the movement in terms of its forms of struggle (i.e., in its non-violent character) and in the fact that it made strategic retreats and compromises. A few take an even narrower view. They suggest that access to financial resources determined the ability to influence the course and direction of nationalist politics. Many of the Marxist writers also do not do an actual detailed historical investigation of the strategy, programme, ideology, extent and forms of mass mobilization, and strategic and tactical manoeuvres of the national movement.

In my view, India’s freedom struggle was basically the result of a fundamental contradiction between the interests of the Indian people and that of British colonialism. From the beginning itself, India’s national leaders grasped this contradiction. They were able to see that India was regressing economically and undergoing a process of underdevelopment. In time they were able to evolve a scientific analysis of colonialism. This anti-
colonial ideology and critique of colonialism were disseminated during the mass phase of the movement.

National leaders from Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjea and Tilak to Gandhiji, Nehru and Subhas accepted that India was not yet a fully structured nation but a nation in the making and that one of the major objectives and functions of the movement was to promote the growing unity of the Indian people through a common struggle against colonialism. This process of the nation in the making was never counterpoised to the diverse regional, linguistic and ethnic identities in India.

**Strategies of the national movement**

The Indian national movement had a certain specific, through authorized, strategy of struggle, within which its various phases and forms of struggle were integrated, especially after 1918. This strategy was formed by the waging of hegemonic struggle for the minds and hearts of the Indian people. The purpose was to destroy the two basic constituents of colonial hegemony or the belief system through which the British secured the acquiescence of the Indian people in their rule: that British rule was benevolent or for the good of the Indians and that it was invincible or incapable of being overthrown.

The nationalist strategy alternated between phases of massive mass struggle which broke existing laws and phases of intense political-agitational work within the legal framework. The strategy accepted that mass movements by their very nature had ups and downs, troughs and
peaks, for it was not possible for the vast mass of people to engage continuously in a long-drawn-out extra legal struggle that involved considerable sacrifice.

Constructive work — organized around the promotion of *khadi*, national education, Hindi-Muslim unity, the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, the social upliftment of the Harijans (low caste ‘untouchables’) and tribal people and the struggle against untouchability — formed an important part of nationalist strategy especially during its constitutional phases. This strategy also involved participation in the colonial constitutional structure without falling prey to it or without getting co-opted by it.

The national movement did, in fact, undergo constant ideological transformation. In the late 1920s and 1930s, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Bose, the Communists, the Congress Socialists, and other Left-minded socialist groups and individuals made an intense effort to give the movement and the National Congress a socialist direction. This effort did achieve a certain success and socialist ideas spread widely and rapidly. Almost all young intellectuals of the 1930s and 1940s belonged to some shade of pink or red. *Kisan sabhas* and trade unions also tended to shift to the Left. Also important in this respect was the constant development of Gandhiji’s ideas in a radical direction.

There were, of course, many other streams flowing into the swelling river of India’s freedom struggle, the Revolutionary Terrorists, the Ghadar and Home Rule Movements, the Peasant and Working-Class Struggles the
rise of the Left inside the outside the Congress, the state people’s movements, the Indian National Army, Royal Indian Mutiny etc.

**The second Front in South-East Asia**

The national movement in early twentieth century developed a second front outside India, which also contributed to the freedom struggle. The Gadhar movement in U.S.A.; the activities of the revolutionaries in western Europe, U.S.A. and South-East Asia are some earlier examples. The outbreak of the second world war in Europe opened new avenues for these revolutionary nationalists organisations, the Indian nationalists abroad considered this as an excellent opportunity to achieve freedom with the help of axis powers. The Indian nationalists in south-east Asia situated in Shanghai, Canton, Hong Kong and Bangkok came in the open and started looking for allies to overthrow the British in India. There were three Indian organisations following different ideological line for the liberation of India under Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh, A.M. Sahai and Rash Behari Bose. Efforts of these organisations under the able guidance of Maj. Fujiwara culminated in the formation of I.N.A. under the leadership of Capt. Mohan Singh in continuation of the Japanese slogan of Asia for the Asians and thus bringing India into Japanese ‘Co-prosperity Sphere’.

There has been extensive research related to I.N.A. at the macro level, many participants of I.N.A. have written their biographers the important ones being that of Kiani, Dhillon, Shah Nawaz, Sehgal, Mohan Singh, S.A. Ayer etc. These biographies discusses the vision and struggle of the I.N.A. at the macro level. The Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta has
also carried out extensive research regarding Subhas Chander Bose and I.N.A. Our purpose of study is to develop and do research at micro level and thus find out the role of rank and file from Haryana in the campaigns of I.N.A. There is very little published material relating to participants from Haryana specially the south-eastern district of erstwhile Punjab. The districts of Rohtak, Gurgaon, Rewari, Faridabad, Bhiwani and Hisar were the fertile ground for recruitment to British Indian Army. These people were politically less developed in comparison to other provinces and were economically not well off due to scanty rainfall and very less sources of irrigation in this region. Due to their being less politically active they were also termed as martial races, and were recruited to army in large numbers. During the second world war many British divisions were placed in South-east Asia to counter the offensive onslaught of Japan. Many of these soldiers became P.O.W. after the fall of Singapore and latter on Malaya and Burma. These P.O.W. along with civilians constituted about 50,000 strong fauz of Azad Hind.

The Haryana state gazetteer shows that about 724 officers and soldiers from Rohtak district participated in I.N.A. campaigns. The Haryana state archives, Chandigarh shows that about 3777 persons participated in I.N.A. campaigns and similarly Prem Chowdhury in her book, ‘Punjab Politics – The Role of Sir Chottu Ram’ gives this number as 2248. Some of these participant officers and men are still alive and were interviewed by me, although being very old, they could fairly correlate the events, I found most of them very emotional, sentimental and many of
them literally started crying during the interviews. They occasionally eulogised their achievements and their leaders, but the information which has been collected is very helpful in development of this micro-level research study on the role of Haryana in I.N.A. campaigns. The soldiers of I.N.A. were earlier in British Indian Army and then P.O.W. in Japanese Camps, scientifically speaking they did not have their original independent vision but subscribed to the vision of the leadership, earlier to that of Mohan Singh and latter on they were spell bound by the Charismatic personality of Subhas Chander Bose. Hence the ideas, vision, objectives of the I.N.A. lies in the development and growth of the personality of its leaders, especially, Subhas Chander Bose. Hence to understand the vision of I.N.A. it is necessary to understand the development and growth of the personality of Subhas Chander Bose.

**Vision of Subhas Chander Bose – Formative Years**

Right from the age of fifteen i.e. in 1912, a letter to his mother by Subhas shows his love for his motherland and his faith in India destiny. He developed a spiritual liking in the manner and spirit of Vivekanand and Aurbindo Ghosh. Subhas apprenticeship with C.R. Das made him dedicated to India’s deliverance. His conception of democracy was unique and his views on secularism very practical. Subhas frequent arrests and his frequent exile to Europe developed in him a deep hatred for Britain. These exiles made him a keen student of international politics. Subhas was not satisfied with piecemeal relief given through constitutional devices, for him it was tool for dividing the people. Subhas became president in 1938,
and was elected again in 1939, but had to resign due to Gandhi’s opposition. Subhas was arrested for the last time on the issue of removal of Holwell Monument, and was later on released on the ground of ill health. To take advantage of the war situation and to constitute a second front outside India, he escaped to Germany and later on to east finally reaching Singapore. All the nationalistic events related to his life developed and moulded his personality. Most of these personality traits were incorporated in I.N.A. in the form of his vision to create an organisation based on democratic principles, secularism, religious tolerance, love for motherland, and faith in India’s destiny.

The formative years of Subhas Chander Bose needs a space here, because when we discuss I.N.A. the ideas and vision of Bose comes to mind hence the vision of I.N.A. and the vision of Subhas are highly correlated i.e. the formation of the ideas and visions of the participants were highly influenced by the personality of Netaji, for them he was their unquestionable leader, and many of them till this day do not believe that he died in an air crash.

"India, 'Subhas Chandra Bose wrote to his mothers in 1912, when he was only fifteen years old, “is God’s beloved land. He has been born in this great land in every age in the form of the Saviour for the enlightenment of the people, rid this earth of sin and to establish righteousness and truth in every Indian heart. He has come into being in many countries in human form but not so many times in any other country – that is why I say, India, our motherland, is God’s beloved land.” Near the end of
Subhas’s discovery of India’, unlike Jawaharlal Nehru’s, occurred very early in his life when he was barely in his teens. Born on 23 January 1897, he was deeply influenced by the cultural and intellectual milieu of Bengal at the turn of the century and grew up in harmony with the evolution of India’s anti-colonial movement. In the course of his school and college career he was in turn a pure humanitarian, a *paribrahaka* and social reformer in the manner and spirit of Vivekananda, and eventually a political activist. As the letters to his mother in 1912-13 reveal, his love for the country was at this stage tinged with a religious sensibility and expressed as devotion to the Mother. He asked his own mother, “Will the condition of our country continue to go from bad to worse – will not any son of Mother India in distress, in total disregard of his selfish interests, dedicate his whole life to the cause of the Mother.”7

Subhas’s acceptance of Deshbandhu Chittranjan Das as his political guru during the non-co-operation movement was a surrender to a man who was similarly dedicated to the cause of India’s deliverance. But the apprenticeship was short as the mentor passed away before his time in 1925 and Subhas, then a prisoner in Mandalay, felt ‘desolate with a sense of bereavement’.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s Subhas Chandra Bose emerged, along with Jawaharlal Nehru, as the leader of the left-leaning younger generation of anti-colonial nationalists. Between further spells in prison he toured the country, addressing innumerable students, youth and labour conferences. ‘Democracy’, he told the Maharashtra Provincial Conference
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While not being opposed to 'any patch-up work' needed for 'healing communal sores', he sought a 'deeper remedy' through 'cultural rapprochement'. He regretted that the different communities inhabiting India were 'too exclusive'. 'Fanaticism is the greatest thorn in the path of cultural intimacy,' he told his audience, 'and there is no better remedy for fanaticism than secular and scientific education.' This was probably the first occasion on which Bose used the term 'secular'. It should be noted that his secularism was not hostile to religiously informed cultural identities, but rather was adduced to foster 'cultural intimacy' among India's different communities. Calling for a total boycott of the Simon Commission, which was then visiting India, Bose outlined three cardinal principles for the framers of India's constitution: popular sovereignty, citizenship rights and a system of joint electorates.
Bose’s appearance at the Calcutta in December 1928 in resplendent military uniform was not so much a spectacle as a vision of the future. His sponsoring of the amendment demanding complete independence instead of dominion status at that session in opposition to Mahatma Gandhi was a sign that, as always, he was a step ahead of his contemporaries. He simply did not believe there was any ‘reasonable chance’ of the British granting ‘dominion status’ within twelve months, as was demanded in the main resolution. The resolution on ‘complete independence’ would help gain a ‘new mentality’, overcoming the ‘slave mentality’ that was at the root of India’s political degradation. While meaning no disrespect to the elders, Bose opted to give priority to ‘respect for principle.’ His amendment was narrowly defeated.

When the civil disobedience movement was launched in 1930, Subhas Chandra Bose was behind prison bars. He was elected Mayor of Calcutta while in jail. He briefly assumed this office on his release later in the year, but on 26 January 1931 he was brutally attacked by mounted police as he led an independence day procession and was thrown back into prison. There he received news of the Gandhi-Irwin truce of March 1931 with deep disappointment. The Karachi Congress of April 1931 met under the shadow of a great tragedy—the execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades.

In his presidential address to the All India Trade Union Congress in July 1931 he addressed the specific problems of unemployment, retrenchment and wages in the context of the Depression. He also tried to
carve out a middle ground between a reformist programme of the 'Right Wing' of the Congress and 'Communist friends' who were 'adherents and followers of Moscow'. He reiterated his belief in 'full-blooded socialism' but wanted India to 'evolve her own form of socialism as well as her own methods.'

Bose spent the entire year 1932 in various jails in Seoni, Jubbulpore, Madras, Bhowali and Lucknow. His health deteriorated rapidly during detention. Eventually in February 1933 he was released after being put on a ship setting sail from Bombay for Europe, where he sought medical treatment. A greater part of his years of enforced exile in Europe from March 1933 to March 1936 were spent as an unofficial ambassador of India's freedom.

Throughout his European sojourn Bose was a keen student of international politics. While he was somewhat impressed by the organizational prowess of fascist (and communist) parties, he developed what Kitty Kurti has described as deep contempt for the Nazis in Germany. He made repeated public protests against racism in Germany, especially anti-Indian racism, and supported a call for a boycott of trade with Germany after an especially provocative speech by Hitler. 'Against Germany,' he wrote to Amiya Chakravarti, 'we [Indians] have many complaints... Against Italy there are complaints from other standpoints-not from the standpoint of India's interest or prestige. But against Germany we have many accusations from India's standpoint.' On the eve of his departure from Europe in Marcy 1936 he denounced the 'new nationalism'
in Germany in a letter to Dr. Their Felder as not only narrow and selfish, but arrogant'. But he pointed out to Amiya Chakravarti there was 'no early possibility of the fall of Hitler’s Govt.; If war breaks out some day and the war weakens Germany,' he wrote, 'then such a fall is possible, otherwise not."

On his arrival in Bombay on 8 April 1936 Bose’s was immediately arrested and sent to prison. He spent a year in detention and was permitted to return to active political life only after the provincial elections of April 1937 under the 1935 Government of India Act, of which he was a strong critic.

The substance of Bose’s analysis of power relations in East Asia written in September 1937 was dispassionate, but towards the end of the essay he did not hesitate to declare his sympathy for China in the face of Japanese aggression.

While sounding a note of warning against accepting colonial constitutional devices designed to divide and deflect the anti-colonial movement, Bose could see that ‘the policy of divide and rule’ was by no means an unmixed blessing for the ruling power’. Bose saw the ‘principle of partition’ ingrained in the juxtaposition of autocratic princes and democratically elected representatives of British India,’ and called for uncompromising opposition to the federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935. If that scheme got rejected, he feared that the British would ‘seek some other constitutional device for partitioning India and thereby neutralizing the transference of power to the Indian people’. But equally
Bose could see Britain getting 'caught in the meshes of her own political dualism' resulting from divisive policies, whether in India, Palestine, Egypt, Iraq or Ireland. He, therefore, resolved to urgently address the minorities question in India, advocating a policy of 'live and let live in matters religious and un understanding in matters economic and political'. He did not, interestingly enough, use the term 'secularism' in his broad-minded approach to the problem of religious difference. He also wanted justice done to the so-called 'depressed classes'. While promoting cultural autonomy for the different linguistic areas', Bose urged the acceptance of Hindustani (a mixture of Hindi and Urdu) in the Roman script as lingua franca.

During 1938 Subhas Chandra Bose sought to act on most of the items on his Haripura agenda. Perhaps his most important step was to announce the formation of the National Planning Committee in October 1938. Among the leading persons who responded with enthusiasm to the idea of rational and scientific planning for India was Rabindranath Tagore, who, unlike Gandhi, was much more intellectually open to the positive achievements of modern science and technology. Tagore could only see two modernists among India's nationalist leadership – Jawahar Lal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose – and since the former had been made Chairman of the Planning Committee he wanted the latter to have a second term as Congress President.

Subhas Chandra Bose resigned as Congress President on 29 April 1939. Throughout the crisis Nehru had sought to play a mediating role,
keeping at least a slight distance from the joint actions of the Working Committee led by Vallabhbhai Patel. Bose, however, felt completely betrayed by Nehru’s latest attempt at ‘riding two horses’. He had regarded Nehru as his ‘elder brother’ who had abetted his political opponents in their ‘vendetta’. The unity that we strive for or maintain’, he wrote to Nehru, ‘must be the unity of action and not the unity of inaction.’

By the time the next Congress session met in March of the following year at Ramgarh, Bose was holding his own, parallel Anti-Compromise Conference close to the site of the official meeting. On 2 July 1940 Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested for the eleventh time for leading the movement for the removal of the Holwell Monument in Calcutta. In November he decided to go on a hunger strike in an attempt to force the government to release him. The letter he wrote to the Governor of Bengal on 26 November 1940 before commencing his fast is one of the most stirring documents of sacrificial patriotism. ‘. . .[N]obody can lose,’ he wrote, ‘through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earthy, he will gain much more in return by becoming the heir to a life immortal.’

The government released Bose on 5 December, having decided to play ‘a cat and mouse policy’ of re-arresting him as soon as he recovered his health. His home in Elgin Road was put under round-the-clock, surveillance. On the night of 16-17 January 1941 Subhas Chandra Bose made a carefully planned escape.
Bose went to Europe in 1941 primarily in order to gain access to Indian soldiers in the British Indian Army who were prisoners-of-war in the hands of Germany and Italy. He had long believed that the subversion of the loyalty of Indian soldiers to the Raj had to be a crucial part of the anti-imperialist movement. His own allegiance was to India and India alone and, as he emphasized in his broadcasts, his socio-economic views remained exactly the same as the ones he had articulated at home. With the help of Indian exiles, including students, he set up a Free India Centre, and from among Indian soldiers he raised an Indian Legion.

Netaji had initially planned an armed thrust from the traditional north-westerly direction into India in support of India’s unarmed freedom-fighters at home. Germany’s invasion of Soviet Union in June 1941 upset all his calculations. The invasion, he told the German Government in categorical terms, would win them no friends in Indian. Eventually on 8 February 1943 he was able to leave Europe and after a 90-day submarine journey arrived in South East Asia. The presence of nearly two million Indian civilians in the region gave his movement in Asia a much larger social base of support. On 5 July 1943 Netaji announced in Singapore that India’s Army of Liberation – the Azad Hind Fauj – had come into being. In the months that followed he electrified massive audiences of civilians and soldiers with his speeches in Hindustani and elicited an overwhelmingly positive response to his call for ‘total mobilization’. On 21 October 1943 he proclaimed the Provisional Government of Free India, which gave Indians a taste of independent statehood. He wrote the proclamation
himself the night before the ceremony drawing on Indian history and
elements of the Irish and American declarations of independence. ‘Having
goaded Indians to desperation by its hypocrisy’, he wrote, ‘and having
driven them to starvation and death by plunder and loot, British rule in
India has forfeited the goodwill of the Indian people altogether and is now
living a precarious existence. It needs but a flame to destroy the last vestige
of that unhappy rule. To light that flame is the task of India’s Army of
Liberation.’ In the final paragraph came the exhortation to the Indian
people.

In the name of God, in the name of bygone generations who have
welded the Indian people into one nation, and in the name of the dead
heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice
– we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and strike for
India’s freedom.14

With ‘Chalo Delhi’ on their lips the Azad Hind Fauj crossed the
Indo-Burma frontier on 18 March 1944 and carried the armed struggle
onto Indian soil. The most detailed justification of his course of action
during the Second World War II was given by Netaji in his radio address to
the Mahatma on 6 July 1944. Since Gandhi’s decision to launch the Quit
India Movement, the two leaders had drawn closer in their aims and
ideology. Netaji sought ‘the blessings and good wishes’ of the ‘Father and
Our Nation’ for the ‘holy war’ that was then raging in north-eastern India.15

At the end of the war in 1945, the independence movement in Delhi
was at a low ebb. At that crucial moment Netaji’s soldiers descended upon
the Red Fort of Delhi as a God-send. The trial of some of their leading officers reached the saga of the INA and its Netaji to every Indian home. The whole country has been roused’, Gandhi observed, ‘and even the regular forces have been stirred into a new political consciousness and have begun to think in terms of ‘independence’, Netaji has succeeded in his strategy to knock out the keystone of British imperialist domination over its Asian colonies by supplanting the loyalty of the Indian soldiers to their enslavers with a new loyalty to their country’s freedom. But his supreme self-sacrifice at the climatic moment of the war of independence also meant that his ideas found no place in the fashioning of post-colonial India.

**Japan’s Policy – Asia for Asians**

In the early decades of twentieth century white-man’s superiority was taking a beating. Italy was defeated by Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and in 1905 Japan defeated Russia, this convinced the Asiatic nations and made them think that invincibility of white race was a bogey. In this atmosphere millions of Indians living in South-east Asia develop a hope that they could also be helpful in contributing to the freedom struggle. Japan which was fast emerging as an Asiatic power gave the slogan – ‘Asia for Asians’ and after the first World War the Indian nationalists and revolutionaries came together and the movement culminated in the formation of I.N.A. (Indian National Army) or Azad Hind Fauz.

Japan’s cautious policy of becoming the champion of the East came to an end with the termination of the Ist war; the slogan “Asia for the Asians” was raised vigorously and the British reply was a commercial
blockade of Japanese goods. These mutually hostile acts created a lot of friction between the two powers. It was not firmly propagated by the Japanese intelligentsia that the fate of Japan was inseparably connected with the fate of Asia as a whole. Many started believing that the mission of the Japanese Empire consisted in carrying out the Asiatic Monroe Doctrine in the most complete manner. This, however, did not mean the expulsion of the whites out of Asia, at least in the initial stages, but Japan gave it out that it wanted the Asian people to become independent of the whites. As a matter of fact Pan-Asianism became the guiding principle to regulate the relation between Japan and the Asiatic Powers. But the support, which the Japanese had given to the Indian revolutionaries and its advocacy of the policy of Asia for the Asiatics, was listed as the reason for non-renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance by the Indian Government.

To be sure, the fact that the emerging political movement in India eschewed violence as an instrument of national freedom was a consolation to the British, but it could ill-afford to ignore the activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad, especially those of Rash Behari Bose and A.M. Sahay in Japan, who were gradually trying to gain more supporters in their liberation struggle. Bose kept his links with Bengali nationalists by serving as a representative and correspondent of *Forward*, a daily newspaper of Calcutta. Much to the embarrassment of the Government of India, the Indian revolutionary nationalists intensified their anti-British propaganda at the Pan-Asiatic Conferences held at Nagasaki and Shanghai under Japanese patronage. At these conferences, resolutions were passed for
Asiatic unity with a view to accomplishing the "resurgence of Asia". Bose, now a naturalized Japanese citizen, played a leading role in these conferences and advocated the formation of a union of Asiatic races at Nagasaki, saying: "The union of European races is based on self-interest, but ours will be based on neighbourly love. We must not think of differences between us. We must unite to teach Europe the lesson of brotherhood and love". The Nagasaki Conference resulted in the formation of a Pan-Asiatic union, with headquarters at Tokyo.17

Besides, the social and cultural activities of the various associations such as the Indo-Japanese Youth Associations, the Indo-Japanese Buddhist Association, and the Indo-Japanese Student’s Association also created awareness amongst the young generation about India’s struggle for freedom. Matsumoto further observes, that as a result of estrangement of Japan with Britain over China the interest of an average educated Japanese in the political problems of India increased significantly, and that this awareness was deepened by the increasing fame of Mahatma Gandhi, "the Holy Hero" of India. At the sometime the Japan branch of the Indian National Congress functioning under A.M. Sahay began to take more active interest and started promoting friendship between the two countries.

No doubt, during the thirties, the Japanese were becoming increasingly interested in the Indian national movement, owing to their own confrontation with Britain, but, at the same time, they were also feeling uneasy about the attitude of Indian political leaders to their policy in China. Obviously, the Indian leaders’ open sympathy for China came as
a great disappointment to the aggressive, militarist school in Tokyo. The Japanese leaders of this persuasion did show a marked liking for Gandhi’s movement, but in the light of the Congress’ support to China, they felt that there was a “necessity for making the Indian masses understand Japan’s real intentions”. The anti-Japanese attitude of the Indian leaders also affected the thinking of the large Indian population throughout south-East Asia, save the Indian revolutionary nationalists who were eager to bank upon the Japanese support in the event of war. They were also not sure about the intentions of Japan towards India, but they preferred as the British report puts it, to be tongue tired about Japan’s China policy. They did not want to antagonize Japan because under its patronage they were expanding their anti-British activities in Thailand, Malaya, Burma, Hong Kong and Shanghai. These links proved fruitful after the outbreak of the Second World War.
REFERENCES

1. V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest*, London, 1910..


7. *Ibid*. See no. 1 ‘Mother India’.


