CHAPTER – III

THE NATIONALIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

No ideological development came into being to challenge the mighty British imperialism for a long time to come in India. With the spread of new education, press, means of communication, economic exploitation of India’s resources, political awakening began to usher in different regions of the country. Besides, a process of founding the political organizations started at the regional and local levels during the mid of 19th century. All these factors paved way for the emergence of a national organization which was deemed essential by the newly educated classes. This organization is popularly known as the Indian National Congress founded in 1885 by 72 members from different parts of India\(^1\). This organization launched in a small hesitant and mild way but in an organized manner became instrumental in leading a powerful campaign against the British imperialism.\(^2\)

In the beginning, the Indian National Congress firmly believed in the moderation and loyalty to the British Crown. When this congress founded, it indicated the beginning of a national political life destined to produce for reaching changes in the immediate future. Many newspapers in their editorials wrote newspaper of Calcutta, Indian Mirror whole : From today forward, we can speak of an Indian nation, of national opinion and national aspirations….. The first National Congress at Bombay forms an important chapter in the history of British rule in India….. It is the nucleus of a future Parliament of our country and will lead to good of inconceivable magnitude for our countrymen.”\(^3\)

Such voices were aired by the press in other parts of the country. The Hindu of Madras expected that the Congress would spread ‘the spirit of patriotism’ and lead 'to the gradual diffusion and consolidation of public opinion.’ But the British officials’ attitude was not favourable as John Strachey remarked
that there was no any Indian nation in existence but it was a conglomerate of various communities such as Bengali, Madrasi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Mahratta, Sindi, Marwari. No Indian thought of an Indian nation but thought for themselves in a parochial manner. He delivered several lectures at Cambridge University in 1884 about his Indian experiences and rejected any symptom of political consciousness and national opinion in India. But he was forgetting that the educated Indians would assemble soon for founding a national platform for the redressal of these grievances within few months after his Cambridge peroration.

The nationalist thinking became a voice of the educated Indians who started opposing the writings of British officials for disgracing the Indian culture and religion in the Western world. The Indian nationalists such as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Surendra Nath Banerjea, A.C. Mazumdar, Dadabhai Naroji, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipan Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and others through their writings initiated and furthered the nationalist historiography in the real sense. This approach was further developed by the scholars such as R.C. Majumdar, R.G. Pradhan, Girija Kumar Mukerji, Pattabhi B. Sitaramayya, B.R. Nanda, Bisheshwar Prasad, Amlesh Tripathi, Tara Chand, S.N. Sen, K.K. Khullar, Virendra Sindhu, S.R. Bakshi, Kamlesh Mohan etc.

Many Indian nationalists like Naoroji, Banerjea, R.C. Dutt, M.G. Ranade have tried to explain the western impact of British rule. However; they have not presented the plight of Indian economy in a Marxist frame work but in a nationalist perspective. The economic ruination was severally decried by the Indian youth known as revolutionaries in both the phases of British raj. This was the question which continued to trouble their minds frequently. The Indian revolutionaries of second phase such as Bhagat Singh, Chandra Sekhar Azad, Rajguru, Sukhdev, B.C. Vohra, J.N. Sanyal, Ajay Ghose, Shiv Verma, Manmath Nath Gupta etc. were greatly desperated when Gandhji withdrew Non-Cooperation movement. after Chauri Chaura incident.
The leaders like Lajpat Rai, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Bose also denounced Gandhiji for withdrawing the movement when it was on the climax. In order to pacify the feelings of the Indian nationalists, Gandhiji had to say that the movement had not been abandoned but suspended: we may have to adjust our sails to the varying winds, we may have to alter our course to avoid the shoals and the breakers ahead…. But there can be no question of changing our destination or our good ship which we have chartered for the voyage.”

Such conciliatory remarks failed to satisfy the sentiments of the revolutionaries, who were now convinced to get organized in their own manner and threaten the British officials for their anti-India attitude and policies.

It would be pertinent to mention here that the nationalist historiography of pre and post-independent India has more broader perspective. In pre-independent period, the views of Nehru, Pattabhi Sitarmayya, Patel, Subhash Bose, Maulana Azad etc. are significant as far as the revolutionary movement is concerned. Gandhiji did deliver a lot of speeches on the revolutionary movement, their leadership and programmes. He found them violent but praised their velour and patriotism.

Many scholars have explained that most of the revolutionaries who were members of several revolutionary organizations had become Congressmen and participated in the Gandhian Satyagraha. Many of them were active in the agitation against the Simon Commission in Punjab. Gandhiji did not approve the cult of violence as he told his audience in London in September 1931 that he did not doubt their sincerity. I have endeavored to win over the school of violence from what I hold is an error; but at the same time I know there is a common cause, even between them and ourselves. They are burning to attain the freedom which is India’s birthright.”
The revolutionaries affirmed that the Gandhian movement would not qualify as true courage and sacrifice which were epitomized in the exemplary shedding of one's blood and going fighting. Gandhiji fully agreed with Maulana Azad when he wrote: “The blood of a hundred and fifty martyrs has purified one Gurudwara. Should it be any wonder if all of us have to be martyrs to purify the Gurudwara that is India.” The struggle started by the Akalis in the Punjab would show the way towards liberating India through peaceful means. But Bhagat Singh saw the end of an era of Utopian non-violence of whose futility the rising generation has been convinced beyond the shadow of doubt.”

Dr. Fauja Singh, as eminent scholar of Punjab history, praised the emergence of socialist movement and the Punjab did not lag behind other parts of the country in having a party of this kind. Hindustan Socialist Republican Association and Kirti Kisan Party were such organizations which worked for the reduction of land revenue, abolition of nazranas etc. He emphasized that these organizations had growing influence over the rural population particularly of Lahore and Amritsar districts of the Punjab. He denounced the role of Unionist party for curbing the activities of these organizations. The students and the youth became the members of these organizations and also joined the procession under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai in Lahore when the 'Whites Simon Commission' came. The youth took the revenge of Lalaji’s death by killing Saunders, a police officer of the Punjab.

Dr. Singh observed that despite nationwide appeals to the Viceroy and to the Privy council to commute the death sentences of Bhagat Singh and his comrades into transportation for life but the British Government failed to move on this issue. The youth of the Punjab were greatly inspired by the supreme scarifies of Bhagat Singh and his comrades and one Hari Kishan, a youth of nineteen opened fire at Sir Geoffray, Lt. Governor of the Punjab in 1930. His last wish before hanging was to see Bhagat Singh and government had to accept his last
wish. It shows the deep impact of Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries working for attaining the freedom of India on the youth. Though their movement could go long due to ruthlessness of the officialdom but left an indelible impact on the youth of the country.\textsuperscript{32}

Gandhiji accepted that the organization of the Indian revolutionaries was, however, a small one but progressive also. They firmly believed in violence through which they intended to attain India’s freedom. He prayed them to stop their violent activities and secure their lives for the safety of the country. They should support the congress so that they could release the political prisoners and save them from execution. Khullar praised both the revolutionaries and Gandhiji as ‘the moon and sun' who showed light to the countrymen but come together for the common health of the country.\textsuperscript{33}

Balshastri Hardas wrote the history of revolutionary movement in two volumes. He started with the rebellion of 1851 and concluded his writing with the heroic exploits of Indian National Army, Subhas Chandra Bose, Naval's mutiny of 1946 which gave a great jolt to the British imperialism in India. The author firmly believes that the word socialism was chosen by the revolutionaries with utmost care and had nothing to do with the communist socialism. This word was induced by them in their Manifesto knowingly in order to improve the condition of the poor people i.e. workers and peasants of India.\textsuperscript{34}

V.S. Joshi wrote about half a dozen books on the revolutionary movement in India and abroad. The author praised Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev for their heroism. He collected authentic sources dealing with and vicious propaganda against the armed revolution for which they had to face executions and deportations. Their role in India’s freedom struggle was very significant and meaningful. The author has criticized Gandhi and Nehru for neglecting the contribution of the revolutionaries in the liberation of India. His writings show the
ultra nationalist views but sometimes display Hindutva sympathies. The writers of this stream show great antagonism to all the Congress leaders who did not like the activities of the Indian youth in India’s struggle for freedom.35

B.B. Maharaj, a Kolhapur scholar, penned the biography of Bhagat Singh and the armed struggle in a prolific manner. After collection of a lot of informations from different sources, he published this book in 1982. Besides, he interviewed many revolutionaries such as Yashpal, Prithvi Singh Azad, Durga Bhabhi and family members of Sardar Bhagat Singh. He tried to get first hand informations from the family members of other revolutionaries alive at that time also. He sketched a brief biographical note on Bhagat Singh from the nationalist point of view. Like other scholars, he did not blame Gandhiji for hanging of Bhagat Singh and his comrades but decried Congress leadership for taking exclusive credit for the freedom. Besides, he has also explained the other aspects such as H.S.R.A, Savarkar brothers, shooting incidents etc. in his work.36

S.R. Bakshi, a prolific writer, has written several books on the freedom struggle and eminent Indian personalities. In his book, *Shaheed Bhagat Singh and his Thought*, Bakshi citing a speech of the Indian leaders quotes that when Bhagat Singh and his comrades were executed, they became heroes. All Indians have been at loss due to their death as they wanted to make India a quite different India of their dreams. The Congress justified that the freedom should not be attained by giving sacrifices at large scale but by peaceful means. But its leaders failed to accommodate them in their organization. Efforts should have been made to spare them from the execution. The author clarified that both the violence and devotion were altogether separate matters in the given situation.37

Gandhiji, however, denied the allegation leveled against him for the execution of Bhagat Singh and others. In his paper, Navjeewan, he frankly wrote that Bhagat Singh did not want to live. He failed to apologise and appeal in the
court. He should have accepted it for the welfare of others. Bhagat Singh and his friends did not believe in non-violence nor did he accept violence. He was persuaded to shoot in a different situation. He wrote in his last letter that he was imprisoned by waging a war (against imperialism). … All these warriors had won over the death. Let us salute them for their heroism.”

Gandhiji in his writings clearly admitted that revolutionaries were patriots like them and tried to save their lives. But after their execution, he did not say that he ever made any effort in this direction. He frankly accepted that this matter never became a part of pact with the Viceroy. Why did he not include in his dialogue because of their firm belief in violence. His writings and speeches clearly shows that he did approve violence of any nature applied either in India or abroad. But it is fact that he praised their valour and patriotism in a big way.

Jawaharlal Nehru in his Autobiography clearly wrote that the people should take inspiration from their courage and patriotism. He further observed: "Terrorists have flourished in India, off and on, for nearly thirty years and at no time, except in the early days in Bengal, did any of them attain a fraction of that popularity which came to Bahgat Singh. This is a patent fact which cannot be denied, it has to be admitted. And another fact which is equally obvious, is that terrorism, inspite of occasional recrudescence, has no longer any real appeal for the youth of India. Fifteen years stress on non-violence has changed the whole background in India and made the masses much more indifferent to and even hostile to the idea of terrorism as a method of political action.’

Nehru admitted that the youth of lower middle classes and intelligentsia had been powerfully affected by the Congress propaganda against the methods of violence. He observed that revolution did not come through terrorism and it was an 'outworm and profitless method’ which came in the way of real revolutionary action. He ensured that after the execution of Bhagat Singh and others, terrorism
began to die in India not because of government coercion which could only suppress not eradicate but because of basic causes and world events. He further wrote: "India has, undoubtedly, passed that stage and no doubt even the occasional outbreaks will gradually die out. But this does not mean that all people in India have ceased to believe in methods of violence. They have, very largely, ceased to believe in individual violence and terrorism but many, no doubt, still think that a time may come when organized, violent methods may be necessary in other countries. That is today an academic issue which time alone will put to the test; it has nothing to do with terrorist methods." 42

Nehru believed that Bhagat Singh and his comrades did not become popular because of their act of terrorism but because they seemed to indicate the honour of Lala Lajpat Rai and through him of the nation. Bhagat Singh became a symbol but his act was forgotten within a few months in each town and village of the Punjab and also in the northern India. He became so popular that innumerable songs grew-up about him and the popularity that man achieved was something 'amazing' Many British labour leader showed sympathy with the revolutionary struggle in India but Nehru did not admire the official leadership of British Labour Party which was supporting effectively anti-imperialist struggle which would ultimately lead to socialism. 43

Nehru did not approve of the violent activities of Bhagat Singh and his comrades at the Karachi Congress session held in 1931. He delivered a speech disagreeing with such methods. The Congress did not believe in any political violence in whatever form it might be. However, he applauded the courage, and scarifies of the revolutionaries and sympathized with their families. He fully believed that the government would concede the feelings of the people but all that went against it. He was greatly aggrieved to hear the news of their execution. Their scarifies created great enthusiasm among the people and they became heroes within a short time because they faced the enemy in an open challenge. There was
a nationalistic spirit in him. It was like a small spark which became a symbol of revolution and spread in all the corners of country.\textsuperscript{44}

Dr. Tara Chand, a famous historian of nationalist school, wrote History of the Freedom Movement in India in four volumes. He has not acted as an historian but wrote the history of the freedom struggle as a Boyalist scholar to the Indian Government which engaged him in a big project to write the history of the freedom struggle when Dr. R.C. Majumdar left the project. On the persuasion of Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Tara Chand agreed to complete the project. He has highlighted the role of the Congress and other forces in a big way. He has described the revolutionary movement as a terrorist movement in which Madame Cama, Shyamji Krishna Verma, Madan Lal Dhinga, V.S. Savarkar, have been discussed in a very brief way. The revolutionary movement emerged in different provinces did not attract the attention of this nationalist scholar. It shows that he has ignored the discussion on this important aspect of modern Indian history knowingly in order to please the then Indian Government headed by the Congress leadership.\textsuperscript{45}

It is generally observed that When the matter of ideological discussion comes many nationalist scholars have ignored such issues in their writings but the stray references on Bhagat Singh, Chandra Sekhar Azad and their comrades may be found with some important events such as Saunders’ murder, Assembly Bomb incident, Lahore Conspiracy case, hunger strike in jail, execution, Karachi session of the Congress etc. It seems that Dr. Tara Chand might have got direction from higher-ups to restrain from the discussion of the revolutionary movement otherwise he could not have ignored such an important issue of modern Indian history. The stream of revolutionary movement did play an important role in India’s freedom struggle and is accepted by a large number of scholars.
The scholars should not act in a partial manner in any sort of writing. It is the duty of the scholar historian to present all the aspects in an appropriate and judicious manner to become a part of true history as famous German historian, Leovon Pold Ranke, has suggested while writing history.

It is significant to note that in the second half of 20th century, Hindustan Socialist Republican Association became an important long and popular organisation of the Indin revolutionaries who waged anti-imperialist struggle in India. Chandra Sekhar who was the close-associate of Bhagat Sigh did not figure anywhere in the works of Dr. Tara Chand. Increasing police coercion and unwanted events began to take place. Police forced the crowd to back and beat with lathis and whips. Such incidents took place in Lahore and Lucknow. In Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai and others became prey of police oppression. After sometimes, Lalaji died due to barbaric lathi charge with serious wounds. Many incidents of dacoity and Bombardment took place in the Punjab and Bengal. Dr. Tara Chand throw light only on the important events and incidents happened in different parts of the country. The other important activities of the revolutionaries have not been discussed in the multiset volume written by him. In between Saunders was killed by the revolutionaries. Other events such as throwing bomb in legislative Assembly and attention of derailing the train were an eye opener.

Dr. Tara Chand laid great stress on Gandhi-Irwin Pact whose approval was essential from the executive committee of the Congress. Lord Irvin wanted a settlement so that a peaceful solution could become possible. Gandhiji agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience movement and to participate in the next round table conference to be held in London. Government withdrew all the oppressive measures and released the political prisoners imprisoned during the movement. The viceroy made it clear that there would be no enquiry into the allegations of excesses by the police.
Dr. Tara Chand did not mention the issue of Bhagat Singh and his comrades during the dialogue between Gandhiji and Irwin. Many Congressmen and nationalist historians have ignored this issue knowingly as alleged by many scholars of the other streams. In order to get the approval of the Congress Committee on the agreement made between Gandhi and Irvin, All India Congress Committee convened its meeting in March 1931. This session was presided over by Vallabhbhai Patel. There was a great enthusiasm and pleasurable atmosphere among the Congressman. In between communal riots took place at Kanpur in which Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi was murdered. This incident created great resentment and lessend the enthusiasm. The murder of Saunders and imprisonment of Bhagat and his comrades subsided that happy atmosphere created earlier. The execution further created anti-British feelings among the Indians throughout the country.49

Pattabhi Sitaramayya, an official historian of the Congress, highlighted the execution of Bhagat Singh, Karachi Congress session and the Presidential address of Sardar Patel in which he stated the valour and patriotism of Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries who sacrificed their lives for the nation's cause but disagreed with their approach. Sitaramayya has raised the issue of Bhagat Singh and others in his work. He refutes all the allegations leveled against Gandhiji for not saving their lives. He affirmed that the issue of Bhagat Singh and his companions was raised during the discussion between Gandhiji and Viceroy. Gandhiji wanted not execution but life imprisonment for them. The issue was raised during the talk but the Viceroy did not agree with him.50

Pattabhi Sitaramayya came to rescue of Gandhiji as far as the issue of three revolutionaries was concerned. He did not agree with the views of those who held Gandhiji responsible for the execution of these three revolutionary youth. Despite his strenuous efforts, he failed to save their lives. He made it clear that the path chosen by them was not appropriate and Congress which believed in non-violence
did not approve the path chosen by them. The Congressman under the leadership of Gandhiji participated in all the movements which were based on the cult of non-violence. Whenever violence erupted during the movements, he immediately suspended or withdrew. The youth disagreed with the approach of Gandhiji and opposed him at the Karachi session. The provincial leadership of the Congress had to face the brunt of the youth during the conferences held in different provinces of India.\(^5\)

R.C. Majumdar, another famous historian of India, wrote History of the Freedom movement in India in three volumes published during 1962-64. Dr. Majumdar was allotted a bit project to write history of freedom struggle by the Indian Government in 1956. He was given free hand in financial and other matters for the completion of this project. He appointed more than two dozen of research associates for the collection of material from different research institutes and Archives. After a year or so, Dr. Majumdar disliked the behaviour of Education Ministry's top officials and left the project. Whatever material was collected by the research associates that remained with him and wrote *History of Freedom Movement in India* in three volumes (1962-63)\(^5\)

Dr. Majumdar has discussed the beginning of the revolutionary movement after the partition of Bengal. At that time, Eastern region of the Bengal was active in the revolutionary activities. The revolutionary organisations like *Yugantar, Anushilan Samiti* were formed. Dr. Majumdar has highlighted the contribution of the revolutionaries in a regional perspective. The aims of the revolutionary in a regional perspective. The aims of the revolutionary organisations were to create anti-British feelings among the educated sections of the society. To create feelings of national and political consciousness by displaying the heroic activities through act plays and folk songs were also its aims. To exhaust the military strength by holding processions and agitation was their another aim. These organisations provided military training and exercise along with religious programmes.\(^5\)
The revolutionaries intended to receive arms and ammunition and prepare bombs and other explosive material from the foreign countries. They kept on collecting money through dacoities in banks and treasuries as without this means, such activities were impossible to prolong in the given situation. The author has a lot of praise for Prafulla Chaki, Khudi Ram Bose, Varinder Ghose etc. They were the real founders of the revolutionary movement in Bengal which continued upto the third decade of the 20th century. The government despite such measures could not suppress these activities.

The official oppression and brutalities gave birth to the underground movement and many revolutionaries went abroad in order to avoid their arrests and harassment. In Bombay presidency, Abhinav Bharat Society and Mitra Melas were organised. When police oppression started, many revolutionaries left the province for the western countries. The revolutionary movement in Bengal became more violent than the other provinces. The revolutionaries in Bengal started killing the Europeans in hotels, clubs and cinema halls. The other programme was to damage the airport of Dum Dum. All the oil depots became targets of their attack. They disrupted the tram-service and destroyed the bridges, railway lines and other communication channels.

Dr. Majumdar has greatly aired the Bengali sentiments in India's revolutionary movement as he further writes: “Twenty incidents of violence occurred in which twenty seven persons were murdered; sixteen incidents of bombing took place. Twenty three government officials were murdered; thirty six wounded and thirty three revolutionaries were murdered and six wounded. After the execution of Surya Sen, Bhagat Singh etc. the revolutionary activities came down. Efforts were made to kill the Acting Governor of Bombay, Evest Hoston, who had visited Fergusson College, Poona. A student of the College intended to murder him but escaped narrowly. The movement continued with slow speed but again became violent during the Quit India movement. When armed struggle
under the command of Indian National Army was started, a new trend emerged in India's freedom struggle.\textsuperscript{56}

Dr. Majumdar has discussed all the movements with nationalist approach but became biased at many places when he started praising the Bengali revolutionaries beyond expectation. He was a great scholar of history and edited many works under the auspices of ‘Vidhya Bhawan Series’ but again he left the multi-volume project uncompleted. He has used the primary sources with a good way of presentation. He was a mature and intelligent scholar of 20\textsuperscript{th} century India. He completed a project of UNO also. He, however, had specialization in ancient Indian history but equally worked with masterly on modern also.

Prof. S.N. Sen gives credit to two books, namely, Pather Dabi (1926) written by Sarat Chandra Chatterjee and Bandi Jeewan by Sachindra Nath Sanyal which exercised tremendous influence on the youth of Bengal where revolutionary terrorism was revived by Surya Sen, Hem Chandra Qanungo, Bhuepndranath Dutta. Charles Target, an European, was shot dead in Bengal in January 1924. This was followed by the discovery of a bomb factory in Calcutta. All the terrorists were tried under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordiance in which there was no provision to right to appeal. The author further discussed the formation of revolutionary organizations in U.P., Bihar, Punjab, Delhi, Madras and various other places.\textsuperscript{57}

Sen highlighted the dacoities, derailment of a train near Kakori railway station and looting the government treasury at carried. Many revolutionaries like Ram Prasad Bismil, Rajendranath Lahiri, Roshan Singh and Ashfaqulla were arrested and sentenced to death and others were given life imprisonment. The author praised all the revolutionaries who wished to see 'the downfall of the British Empire’. When they were going to be hanged, they cited Bande Matram loudly to show their valour and patriotism. When Trade Dispute Bill and Public
Safety Bill were introduced, they threw bombs in the Assembly in order to terrorise the members without intention of killing any one. Now the government adopted the policy of crushing down revolutionary movement by the seditous act of terrorism.\textsuperscript{58}

The author praised the activities of the revolutionaries who had no intention of killing any one but to make the deaf hear. In order to curb their activities, police discovered bomb factories at Lahore and Saharanpur. All the active members of Hindustan Socialist Republic Association were arrested and the government instituted the Lahore Conspiracy Case against them in 1929. All the revolutionaries demanded that they should be treated like the war prisoners as they were charged with waging war against the King. They protested by fasting in the jail but after getting assurance from the government, they broke their fast except Jatindranath Das. He died after 64 days of fast on September 13, 1929. The author fully agreeing with Jawaharlal Nehru who wrote : “Seldom in the history of India’s national liberation movement, martyrdom of a revolutionary produce such sweep of national emotion throughout the length and breadth of the country and outside.” His death created a sensation all over the country. It brought the question of the treatment of political prisonees to the front and government had to appoint a Committee for the reform of jails.\textsuperscript{59}

Prof. Sen gives credit to the Lahore Conspiracy Case which gave a death-blow to revolutionary activities in the northern India. Despite this, Chandra Sekhar Azad made a futile effort to blow-up the Viceroy’s special train near Delhi in December 1929. Ultimately, he was killed in an encounter with the police at Allahabad on 27 February, 1931. After the death of Azad, there was a considerable decrease in the revolutionary activities in the United Provinces and Punjab. Besides, rare incidents continued in several parts of India during 1931-34. Like R.C. Majumdar, Sen has also thrown ample light on the activities going on in the Bengal province such as Chittagong Armoury Raid, assassination of Eurpoeans,
jail blast etc. It is significant to note that the bold women such as Pritilata Wadedar, Apurba Sen, Santi Ghosh, Suniti Chowdhury, Bina Das, etc. entered into the revolutionary movement and made all feasible efforts to kill British officials by all means.  

In the last, Sen has discussed the failure of the revolutionary struggle. Though the movement was started with the Bengal partition, it continued to lose its edge with the passage of time. After the murder of many British officials, government adopted stern measures to curb the movement. Due to limited members of the movement, their movement was bound to fail. They failed to achieve the support of the people and cut off from the main stream of the society. It amply shows the movement collapsed after the large-scale arrest of the revolutionaries. Due to weakness of the Central Organisation and limited mass base; it continued to die down briskly. The author has rightly said that reforms of 1935 took away the edge of both the violent and non-violent methods in Indian politics.

Dr. Kamlesh Mohan, K.K. Khullar, S.R. Bakshi, D.P.Das, Jagmohan Singh and Chaman Lal are the scholars and historians but not contemporaries of the revolutionaries. They neither criticize the revolutionaries nor exaggerated their roles in the movement. All these scholars have highlighted the drawbacks, development and impact of the movement in an appropriate manner. To save Bhagat Singh and his comrades from executions and the efforts of Gandhiji have been given due consideration. Some other contradictions and issues did figure in their writings abundantly.

Virendra Sindhu who is the niece of Bhagat Singh and closely associated with his family wrote a book in Hindi: *Yugdrasta Bhagat Singh aur Unke Mrityunjay Purkhe* (Delhi, 1968). In first part, the family background, statement in the Court, fast in jail, his sacrifices etc. The early life of Bhagat, his schooling,
association with Dairy profession, murder of Saunders, his statement in courts, fast in jail, his sacrifices etc are discussed in the first and second parts. She also consulted some of the memories of the elder members of the family alongwith the letters of Bhagat Singh which throw enough light on different issues related to him. She writes that "a man can develop his perception and nature before the birth. Abhimanyu and Jinnah are the best example in this regard. Many examples are found in folk-lores and experiences. So Bhagat Singh was a born revolutionary and leader. He was made revolutionary not by others but a born revolutionary who gave leadership to the revolutionary movement.... The grand son of Bhagat Singh, Sardar Arjun Singh was a nationalist radical associated with the Arya Samaj movement. All the members of his family were associated with Bharat Mata Society. The discussion about sacrifice used to take place in the family. there were discussion about revolutionary matters when he was in the embryo of his mother".

Sindhu writes a chapter on the dialogue between Bhagat Singh and Sant Randhir Singh who had claimed that Bhagat Singh became as atheist due to his influence and association. She further says that when Santji was about to leave jail after completion of imprisonment met Bhagat Singh. Both of them discussed many things in a cordial manner. Bhagat Singh came to know that soul was important and never died but changed the bodies only. All this made him happy and he prophesied that he would be reborn. He treated such things merely gossips only to show respect to an elderly man like Santji.

Sindhu affirms that Bhagat Singh and his comrades were greatly influenced with the Communist thinking which made his embolden. His tears began to trickle on his face not by the fear of death but the torture given to informer, Hemraj Vohra. He was a revolutionary in a literary language, visionary in English language and yug drasta in political language, a rishi from religious point of view and socialist in thinking, anti in this religion approach and showed interest in the
publication of revolutionary literature, armed struggle etc. role in the formation of Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, Legislative Assembly incident, slogan of *Inquilab Jindabad*, assassination of Saunders, his statement, separation of religion from revolutionary movement, writings in jail etc. have been discussed in a detailed way.\(^6\)

The most important drawback in this work is utmost praise of Bhagat Singh and the author has tried to prove that he was the greatest leader who had seven qualities in himself. Firstly, he knew the aspirations of the masses. Secondly, he wanted to fulfill all the aspirations. Thirdly, he encouraged the people to follow the right path. Fourthly, he intended to create unity among the people. Fifthly, he wanted to remove all the independent standing ahead. Sixthly, he grasped the problems before their presence. Seventhly he could turn the situation in his favour. All these qualities were abundantly found in him as the author claims".

Dr. Kamlesh Mohan, teacher now retired from Punjab University, Chandigarh, fully justifies the terrorist activities of the revolutionaries who never believed in any egoistic approach, but applied it in order to speedify the movement. The strategy of Bhagat Singh shows how he not only contacted the revolutionaries of western countries but prepared a mass revolutionary literature in jail also. His fast in jail, obstruction in the proceedings of court, appeal in the Privy Council show his revolutionary perception. Her research work now published, *Militant Nationalism in the Punjab* (Delhi, 1985) explicitly shows that it was the militant nationalism in the Punjab that made solid contribution to the awakening of the youth through successive hunger-strikes, letters, petitions, and messages in the course of the Lahore Conspiracy Case Trial, 1920-30. This was the time when the organizations of youth and students grew all over India in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Punjab, U.P. and other parts of the country.\(^7\)
Dr. Kamlesh in her research work fully justifies an immense organizational mobility extremely helpful in carrying out the plans, requiring its workers to move all over India. She says it was Sita Ram Bazar House, Jhandewala Road House and Naya Bazar House, Delhi figured prominently which were the prominent centres of the activities of the revolutionaries. They believed in guerrilla warfare by distributing bombs manufactured at Delhi and Kanpur but their arrests in Delhi and Lahore compelled them to close down these centres. However, bomb making and other activities of the party were resumed at Gwalior where the centre of the party was established. Later on, Agra, Saharanpur, Jhansi also were chosen as party headquarters in order to evade police surveillance. The judgement of Lahore Conspiracy Case, 1930 shows how the revolutionaries were in communication with one another in different provinces. Besides, Bhagat Singh moments covered Lahore, Ferozpur, Amritsar, Delhi, Agra, Kanpur, Jhansi, Allahabd, Bettias and Calcutta.\(^{68}\)

Dr. Kamlesh has, however, highlighted the militants in Punjab but the associations of Punjab revolutionaries with other parts of the country have also been discussed. She says that a link between anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle in India but especially in the Punjab was forged and manifested the growing desire for joint action among workers, peasants and the middle classes. It had initiated and intensified the process of socialist orientation in the Indian National Congress as well as in the freedom struggle of India. She further writes that the period from 1920 to 1930 had revealed that the formulation and advocacy of a common ideology was the first pre-condition of the success of mass movements. Though there were several streams in the freedom movement but the militant nationalism was the first bend of the road of nationhood which led to social and economic revolution.\(^{69}\)

After reading the nationalist literature and works, one can analyse and assess the role of the revolutionaries directly and indirectly. Their popularity and
revolutionary thinking are the direct bearing on their activities. Such situation in the nationalist struggle encouraged the emergence of socialist forces in the Congress which succeeded in adopting the social and economic programme. This was the influence of socialist thinking on the minds of the Congressman especially among the youth. Secondly, the Congressman have tried to justify the argument that Gandhiji made all efforts to save Bhagat Singh and his comrades from the execution but could not succeed in his mission. All the misconceptions created by others have been clarified by the Congressman and their supportive historians in this regard. Some of the scholars of this stream have tried to prove that the revolutionaries were active not in the whole of India but only in few pockets and regions of the country.

The several scholars of the nationalist stream have highlighted the drawbacks of the revolutionary movement but accept Gandhiji as the greatest leader of the freedom struggle but in reality both the nationalist stream and the revolutionary stream were altogether separate as far as their values, programmes, principles, goals and ideologies were concerned. The nationalist scholars say that the Congressmen wanted the freedom first and other programmes later on i.e after independence while the revolutionaries wanted both the freedom and transformation in the social structure. Many Indian leaders who have tried to highlight some aspects of the struggle through their writings, speeches, memories etc. have been ignored by them. Though many Congress leaders did praise the revolutionaries as far as their valour and sacrifices were concerned but decried their cult of violence which had 'no meaning'.

Both the streams functioned altogether separately while their one goal was common i.e freedom of the country. The nationalist historiography clearly indicates the massive role of the revolutionaries but the leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Subhash etc. did not lag behind in many ways with them. It is a matter of regret that many scholars of the nationalist stream have given due
consideration to the revolutionaries in the freedom struggle. Why did they do so? One reason may be that they did not like the application of violence in the struggle as it was bound to fail. Consistence constitutional and peaceful agitations / movements could go longer and achieve success in the last. The revolutionary movement came like a storm and ended within a short period. The constitutional agitation prolonged and ultimately could achieve success if heroes of non violence from all the communities worked together.\(^\text{71}\)

It is true to conclude that the historical contribution of the Indian revolutionaries lies in challenging the Gandhian style of leadership of the freedom struggle. They knew it well that the imperialism would not come to an end unless forced to quite India. Thus, it proved remarkably correct when British power left India in 1947 under compulsion due to several factors caused in India and world over. The Quit India movement being a mass upsurge, strikes in defence services, Second World War and the formation of the Labour Government in England changed the entire political scene of India. But side by side Congress leadership was in the comfort to a compromise so that its negotiations for the transfer of power were not affected.

The position of the Congress began to change when it strated taking keen interest in the trials of INA prisoners in 1946. It was the most significant decision taken by the Congress leadership to plead the cases of INA prisoners known as the Red Fort trials, New Delhi. The Congress achieved lions share when it got majority in forming government at the centre. It was the biggest reward ever received by the Congress when it was essential for it in indian politics. Though the INA leadership did believe in violent and armed struggle which was against the Gandhism, changed the minds of the Congress leadership in this regard. If both the streams could have fought together keeping the nationalist interests in view, Congress leadership could improve its image and many new changes could be brought about in socio-political and economic structures in the country also. The
Congress raised the slogans of socialism, in its election manifesto but could not turn to its achievements as the revolutionaries had dreamt. Evev S.A.Dange, a leftist leader, had to accept in 1921 that only Gandhian methods and forms of struggle would bring the socialist revolution.\textsuperscript{72}
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39. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., p. 176
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., p. 265
45. Dr. Tara Chand, however, wrote his volumes with the nationalist approach but his leanings and loyalty to Nehru was well known. He was very close to Nehru and both of them discussed many issues during the draft of these volumes. See Tara Chand, op. cit.
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61. Ibid. pp. 253-255.
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