Major Trends of Historiography of Revolutionary Movement in India - Phase II

An Abstract submitted to Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak for the award of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HISTORY

Under the supervision of
Dr. B.D. Yadav
Deptt. of History
M.D. University, Rohtak

Submitted by
Jai Parkash
Regn. No. 95-JHR-29

Department of History
Maharshi Dayanand University
Rohtak-124001
(2011)
ABSTRACT

The revolutionary movement in India constituted an important landmark in India's freedom struggle. It began in the first decade of the 20th century when many revolutionary organisations were founded soon after the partition of Bengal. In the first phase of the movement, Anusilan Samiti, Jugantar, (Bengal) Abhinav Bharat Society (Bombay), Bharat Mata Society (Punjab) etc. were formed due to unresolved socio-economic and political conditions. The revolutionary trend was duly represented by the democratic oriented intelligentsia largely confined to Hindu community which never believed in religious, caste and regional sentiments. From the beginning to the rise of the communist movement, they represented the most significant radical anti-imperialist group in India's freedom struggle. They were the first who directly demanded the complete salvation from the British imperialism.

The Indian revolutionaries have been regarded as the terrorists in historical perspective but in today's context people see them with different perception as anti-national. They never acted against the nationalist aspects but against those forces which were behaving themselves as truly national. Many revolutionaries went to the western countries in order to achieve support from the anti-imperialist and exploitative forces of the world for India's freedom struggle. Though there were several streams in the struggle, the revolutionary stream was quite unique in character and viable in approach. The revolutionaries fully believed in democratic, socialist and anti-oppressive ideals, social justice and international brotherhood of the people.

The Indian Government did not like the revolutionaries for their anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist stand. The imperial masters often kept on curbing their movement by different administrative acts. All their organisations were declared illegal and banned the publication of their revolutionary literature in India and abroad. The nationalist trend started challenging both the imperialist and revolutionary strands in the freedom struggle. The Congressman did not like the application of their violent and socialist methods as far as the polity of the country was concerned. It is indeed true that revolutionaries were greatly influenced with socialism, awakening among labour class and the formation of
the socialist organisations world over. Their behaviour shows that they were acting as the future leaders of the communist movement in India.

The marxist scholars praised the Indian revolutionaries for their class analysis of socio-economic and political scene in India. They did not like the Congress ideology of compromising nature and its fear of mass-revolutionary actions. The petty interests of the Congress in getting some privileges, concessions and parliamentary powers within the framework of ‘dominion status’. The last trend is of the communal and regional scholars who believed in parochial thinking and branded the national heroes as caste heroes first. The scholars of this approach praised the leaders as regional and Caste heroes. This Trend is downing their heroic and national images by seeing them with coloured glasses.

The Indian revolutionaries, however, influenced the youth but failed to get their sympathy and cooperation in the freedom struggle. The socialistic idioms raised by them could not become popular among the peasants and workers who constitute the largest masses in the country. They organised themselves in small groups with personal rivalries and groupism as many of them were influenced with marxian philosophy while others wanted freedom first and other aspects latter. So there was no coordination among themselves as Bengali revolutionaries believed in violence looting and killing the Europeans etc.

The Indian revolutionaries had no sufficient means to support their movement. It is quite true that without financial support, their organisational activities could not go long. Their Bengali counterparts started dacoity, looting the banks, treasurers and trains for the solution of their financial problem. Such activities made them unpopular among the masses which did not like their such unwanted activities. The secret service and constant watch of the government agencies on their activities led to suppression of their activities.

The revolutionaries did not make any linkage with the other organisations and leaders but only a few Congressmen had some soft corner for them. In such a situation, they could not dare to come forward to support them. When Gandhi-Irvin Pact (1931) was signed, the issue of their execution was not included in the provision of the pact. Gandhi ji has been still criticised by the Indians for not saving Bhagat Singh and his comrades from execution.
Despite their failures, their activities became popular and influenced the youth and they became their heroes. Their demand of complete independence, the Congress had to ultimately accept it and even their socialistic thinking also. The scholars of all the streams accept the view that they had no caste, religious, racial, regional orientation but analysed all the aspects in scientific perspective in order to inspire the countrymen with their nationalistic fervour. Their zeal, heroism, self-sacrificing spirit etc. were praiseworthy. Subhash Bose, consequently, adopted their strategy of armed struggle in the east phase of the freedom movement. So they were fore-runner of many plannings and strategies adopted by the Indian nationalists in the freedom struggle. The Indian people still have a lot of praise for their self-sacrificing spirit and give due regard and pay tribute to them every year.