

2. Sheshro Chavan Ed. 'Mahatma Gandhi - The Sole Hope and Alternative', Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai.


3. Subjectivism - Indian Scenario

with special reference to Tamilnadu

In general historians have not recorded the contribution of Muslims to the freedom movement, socio-economic and cultural progress of the state. Therefore whenever there is an opportunity Muslims themselves have attempted to present their contribution to the freedom movement, Tamil literature and the progress of the Tamils.

'The Contribution of Muslims to Freedom Movement' published by the Post-graduate and research department of history, Islamiah College, Vaniambadi, Tamilnadu is one such serious attempt.¹

Referring to Tamilnadu State Connemara Public Library, Mohammadan Public Library in Madras, Proceedings of the Secretary of Indian Government, Secret Files of the Movements, CID Reports of the police abstracts of the Government of Madras, personal diaries and interviews of Muslim freedom fighters Dr. Mohammed Yousuff, reader in history C.Abdul Hakkem have written elaborately on the contribution of Muslims in the freedom movement in Tamilnadu. The Tamil Muslims' role in the Kilafath Movement, Non-cooperation movement, Civil Disobedience Movement and Quit India Movement have been specifically brought out in this article.
Though there are a few works on the role of INA, Tamil Muslims who were the harbingers of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose in causing INA were not figured out properly. It is a pity such a patriotic group of people has not been seriously considered by historians.

An article on ‘The Indian National Army and the Muslims’ by Dr. K.V. Jeyaraj and T. Jayapalan of School of historical studies M.K. University, Madurai is an objective study on the contribution of Tamil Muslims to the Indian Freedom Movement through INA. Though these scholars were not Muslims their article found in the above said book speaks volumes on their objective and universal approach.  

The Jain contribution to Tamil Scholarship is one of the factors historians have neglected. Therefore Jains as a community on the occasion of Bhagawan Mahaveera’s 2500 Nirwana Mahotsawa brought out the Jain directory which speaks extensively on the contribution of Jains to the Tamil History. Since some of these books are from the people of the same community they are full of subjective elements. Critical analysis is the first casualty of a mind interested.

From the history and propagation of Jainism to the comparative study of Sri Mahaveera and Thiruvalluvar this directory speaks of Jain contribution to Tamilnadu in different sections, Literature in Tamil and Jain Art and Architecture. In the last 300 years how this specific community has advanced the trade and commerce of Tamils is explained in detail.

Rev. Fr. Gnannapragasam S.J., Prof. Vazhan Arasu, Prof. Xavier Thaninayagam, Prof. Rambolo Mascaranas, Rev. Fr. Amuthan and Po. Ma. Rasamani are Christians who have codified the Christian contribution to
Tamil History, though their observations are not absolutely free from subjectivism.

Prof. Meenakshi Sundaram’s treatise on the contribution of missionaries to Tamil literature is free from subjective elements simply because he is a non-Christian appreciating Christian contribution.

One historian may be objective when he presents three or more facts of views. Such a historian instead of imposing a settled knowledge on the reader declares him to be a partaker in the study of history.

What Krishna Menon said on Kashmir in UN if it was quoted verbatim it is only a narration. But the enumeration of evidence, who made him say so what made him say so is an area meant for research. For example, Acharya Kripalani commenting upon Krishna Menon’s marathon race of words said ‘One minute is enough to say the truth. And when one tries to cover up his false arguments, six hours is not enough’. The historic event praised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is condemned by Acharya Kripalani. Therefore appreciation of the past always leads to subjectivism.

Great men employed mystical idioms, which will show the inner light they arrived at. For example Jesus Christ employed lot of mystic idioms. He stood for the liberation of Palestine and mainly challenged the oppression of the Roman emperor. Now when he said Romans, all the time he said ‘eagles’ because he was not prepared for a bloody revolution. It is where a revelation appeals only to the highly evolved, that he has no other means to convey. Moreover his Aramaic, a dialect of Hebrew is a language of figures.
Saint Thiruvalluvar, one such mystic was against revealing eternal truths to the unworthy. Philosopher J. Krishnamurthy of recent times said in a meeting “Do not measure”. Though the statement looks like one against tailors, he meant that one should not compare one with any one else, since comparison is one of the sources of sorrows. Therefore the mystical idioms of great men of the past is understood and misunderstood by the present generation of scholars. Here too the elements of subjectivism only make variables from individual to individual in the conceptualization of mystic idioms.

In R. Sathyanatha Aiyar’s “History of Nayaks” one can be appreciating the way of his reconstruction of history; but his view is not free from subjectivism quite surprisingly to substantiate his views.

Krishnasamy Iyengar one of the historians in his preface cites “In this prefatory note I wish to draw attention to a general remark on the Jesuit records on page 25 which seems to be somewhat an over statement.”

It was S. Krishnasamy Iyengar, Prof. of History, Archeologist, Madras University who edited the above book, and he could not see eye to eye with Aiyar’s research work. As the editor himself differs in his views though it is not strictly prejudice, a certain bias in both of their views cannot be simply ruled out.

‘Eyewitness to History’ edited by John Carey though a world acclaimed historical work, while allocated several pages to Waterloo, to purposely minimize the importance of the First war of Independence in India, stigmatizes the patriotic war, as a sepoy mutiny. While the editor attaches much importance to the scene of massacre of women and children on 21st July 1857, he does not say anywhere what was the cause of the First war of independence. This travesty of truth can be traced to either racial prejudice or prejudice of negligence.
Prejudice of negligence is explicit in most of the histories on India’s independence movement. Due to bias to the level of irrational approaches, freedom movement itself is portrayed as if it were a north Indian affair.

Government of India has got a publication mission. They have brought forth biographical sketches of British supporters who were adorned with ‘Sir’ and ‘Dewan Bahadur’ in exchange of their loyalties with aliens. While there are biographical sketches for these unpatriotic elements, most of the southern leaders, who lost their lives to the cause of motherland have been relegated to the oblivion. For example E.V.R who was the freedom fighter of the first order has not been shown, any mercy by the publication division of Government of India. In 1983, when poet Bharathi’s centenary celebrations were on, Government of India brought out a commemorative volume.

In the preface, Kamalapathy Tripathi, the chairman of the committee points out that Bharathi contributed only in Tamil. But after a few pages it is found that Bharathi was a regular contributor to ‘Arya’, ‘Common Wheel’ and ‘Madras Mail’ which were in English. One Jamuna Devi of Delhi university describes poet Bharathidasan as children’s poet. In a book entitled “Churches in India” the writer of the book ‘reveals’ that the mortal remains of St. Francis Assisi have been interred in Bow Jesus church, Goa; but in reality it is of St. Francis Xavier’s. Both of them belong to two different ages and two different countries. These are all examples for prejudices out of many reasons.

As Carlyle says ‘History is the story of Heroes’ is faithfully adhered to in the Indian context. Mahathma Gandhi might have been the leader of the freedom movement. It is true that he is a supreme freedom fighter. He was an apostle of non-violence. To say India’s freedom movement was non-violent, it is
a dangerous proposition, since it is dotted with the bloody occurrences. Leaders like Mahathma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, N.S.C.Bose were not the only leaders who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom. Countless people got themselves perished in the freedom fight. It is a pity that historians as a whole had underrated the contribution of the small ones.

There is a false notion that Indian National Congress was the forerunner in the struggle for freedom. Generally they do not mention J.P., Acharya Kriplani, Dr.Lohia, Periyar EVR, Comrades, E.M.S. Namboodripad and P.Ramamurthy as if they were not patriots. They might have deserted Indian National Congress for various reasons; but they should not have been left unmentioned. Here it is political prejudice that plays a vital role in disfiguring national heroes.

What is an event today evolves into history tomorrow. When USA was attacked certain terrorist groups were said to be behind the unpardonable crime. But there were other views too accusing some other terrorist groups. People in general are full of subjective elements and it was well revealed in this incident. Majority of the people of the two principalities were not ready to see the others’ point of view, let them not accept it. They were not prepared to listen to what the other man says. When any present event throughout the world is an object of subjectivism, truth in bound to suffer. It is needless to say people’s vision is blurred due to some frenzy. Even in normal occurrences people raise issues with motives behind.

Speaking on Muslims in India S.K.Ghosh in his ‘Muslim politics in India’, says “Pakistani nationals who came to India on a short visit became Indian nationals and stayed here for an indefinite period without being detected. If a Pakistani National wants to acquire the status of a permanent resident of
India, he first tries to extend his stay on one pretext or another. If he can stay for two or three years, he gets a ration card and also the status of a voter. Armed with the ration card and the voting rights, he claims full-fledged citizenship. Naturally, he cannot achieve all this without the help from government officials and influential local politicians.6

His observation on Indian Muslims runs counter to ground realities. This whole book is an example of how a prejudiced mind seeks for evidences to establish the conclusions already it arrived at. Though the author weeps his lungs out against the considerable increase in Muslim population his statement has no support of facts.

In the, ‘Evolution of Indo-Muslim thought from 1857 to the present’, L.S. May quotes Muhammad shibbi from Khutabat and observes:

“His general criticism is that infinite importance is given to the text, its meanings, its deductions, and its variations, but the largest aspects of the subject itself are not dealt with. In theological education, two things must be specially borne in mind: the acquisition of the particular science, with depth of thought, and power of independent study. He also finds that ‘arabiyah’, that is, real command of Arabic is not of the required standard, and that not much attention is paid to the Quran (Ijaz) that receives scant attention. And finally the science taken over by the Arabs from the Greeks are learned as it had been handed down from the Arabs during medieval times with no substantial advance.7

By way of concluding remark what L.S. May, the author reveals is travesty of truth. While it is not wrong to make enquiry into the commonly held belief of centuries, he should have substantiated his assertion, with positive evidence.
Rajmohan Gandhi in his ‘Eight lives - A study of the Hindu Muslim Encounter’, which, of course, is not a prejudiced work, the following passage when analyzed does reveal tracts of subjectivism.

“Two months after his Nagpur walkout, Jinnah referred, in a Bombay speech, to his “continuing respect and admiration” for Gandhi; but he also said that Gandhi was taking the people into the “wrong channel”, and expressed the fear that “violence would result from popular movements because the Indian people were human beings and not saints”. Also in the words of his biographer, Jinnah entertained “a deep, instinctive dislike for the Mahatma’s mind”. Bolitho does not say when Jinnah first felt this dislike; according to him, it was ‘finally revealed’ over the Home Rule League episode. Different in personality and lifestyle, differing over the path of self-government, competing for the loyalties of congress and of India at large, Gandhi and Jinnah were bound, despite their common desire for Indian freedom and Hindu-Muslim partnership, to separate. “In future years, to quote Bolitho again,” Jinnah was to share many talks with Gandhi, but the cleavage remained”.

Though Rajmohan Gandhi extensively uses the passage of Merriam, on Gandhi Vs. Jinnah and Bolitho’s Jinnah, he enhances the whole play propelled by the instinct that he is more of a grand son of Mahatma Gandhi than an impartial author. This is how Monica Felton’s ‘I meet Rajaji is strikingly different from that of ‘The story of Rajaji” by Rajmohan Gandhi wherein he has proved that he is the grand son of Rajaji than an objective writer.

“Referring to this demand, the scholar Merrion has observed that ‘Jinnah asked for an exclusive recognition which congress could not grant and which
was intact, unjustified by the political situation in India. The league did not represent all Muslims at the time”.

While Rajmohan Gandhi is quick in asserting that Muslim league did not represent all the Muslims at that time he is silent on whether Indian National congress represented all the Hindus of undivided India.

Before the independence Mahatma Gandhi was held in high esteem and he had not waned into political oblivion as Raj Mohan Gandhi is afraid of. Therefore my salutations would go to Dr. Sarvapalli S. Gopal for his penchant remarks on his father. In his biography he says that his father was tall, emaciated and hungry looking.

His stature made his other brothers and sisters look like dwarfs. Dr.Radhakrishnan out of a quest and remorse came to know that his mother had an affair with a temple officer. For this unpardonable crime of moral laxity Dr.Radhakrishnan could never speak to her till her death. This is in substance what Dr. Sarvapalli S. Gopal reveals.

On an occasion when Dr. Radhakrishnan had chance to address leading women on the ‘chastity of Indian women’ like Savithri, Damayanthy, Kannagi and so forth Dr. Sarvapalli Gopal’s compliant is that many of the front rankers were women who shared their beds with Dr. Radhakrishnan, his father, some time or the other.

In the name of witnessing truth this son has disfigured his father with insinuations. Though it is difficult to find out whether Dr. Radhakrishnan, the statesman stood head and shoulders above ordinary mortals despite his inbuilt weakness of character, this seemed to be his behavior throughout his carrier.
There are scholars who attribute motives to Dr. Sarvapalli Gopal’s writings. In a sense instead of evaluating the character of such a great man Dr. Gopal was quick in condemning him for his playful exploits.

It is quite surprising that Mahatma Gandhi did not mention Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his autobiography ‘Experiments with truth’. He had nowhere mentioned Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru though he was introduced to Mahatma at least 10 years earlier. N. Sivaraman, a doyen among journalists when interviewed had no satisfactory (07.01.2000) explanation for Mahatma’s omission of Nehru.

One Balasundaram of Madras presidency finds a place in Mahatma’s autobiography but not Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who had ten years rapport with Mahatma and Nehru flew from Soviet Russia to attend the congress at Madras. Pandit Nehru could never agree on many salient points which Mahatma expounded but the force of circumstances made them walk together.

In his ‘India wins freedom’ Moulana Abul Kalam Azad observes how Pakistan was created. He draws the difference between Sir Stafford Cripps and other stalwarts of the British government. This is one of the finest works with no subjective elements.9

In many of the history books, the freedom movement against the British has been represented as if it were a northern resistance. The volumes on freedom fighters published by Government of India bear ample testimony to the fact that south has been relegated to the oblivion. V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, one of our greatest freedom fighters on whom the merciless British government imposed two life imprisonments, should have been treated better in Central Government publications themselves. Therefore Tamils were forced to deal
upon their contribution to the Indian movement for independence. 'India Desiya Ranuvam' - a considerable work on the Indian National army of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose is one of the examples. M.P.Sivagnana Gramani's volumes on the participation of Tamils in the independent movement is yet another example; but his work is a remarkable example where subjectivism can rule the roost. The writer purposely belittles K. Kamaraj, a popular leader and speaks high of Rajaji in flowery turns of phrases. He does a disservice to the life and mission of Kamaraj who's rapport with the people surpasses Rajaji's encounters with a chosen few.

Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated his religious beliefs. Jinnah never spoke of them. Gandhi embraced, advocated and perverted 'Taritira Narayana'. Jinnah on the other hand wanted people to make wealth.

'Home rule league' was changed into 'swarajya sabha' by Mahatma Gandhi wherein his linguistic fanaticism came to the fore. On the other hand Jinnah came to oppose the same because of his Anti Sanskrit Hindi orientation.

Jinnah was in Home Rule from the very inception. Gandhi was a late comer who hijacked the concept of home rule league and caused the constitutional machinery of the association to the distress of Jinnah.

In Nagpur congress he addressed Mahatma Gandhi as Mr. Gandhi and Md. Ali as Md. Ali leaving the reverential suffix Moulana.

Bolitho, the biographer of Jinnah though does not say from which part of this period Jinnah developed hatred towards the mind set of Gandhi, it is sure that Jinnah was definitely not in favour of Gandhi's attitude and approach towards India's emancipation and reconstruction.
In 1925 Jinnah declared in the assembly that he was nationalist first and nothing else.

In 1937 congress' denial to share power with Muslim league was a blow to Hindu-Muslim unity. Pyarelal, Gandhi’s secretary calls it ‘a tactical error of the first magnitude’.

As Frank Moras, editor in chief of the Indian Express expressed that it not seen despite the graceeful handful of Muslim leaguers Congress pushed Pakistan into being.

Penderel Moon, a Britain who served in Indian civil service reveals that but for the folly of Congress Pakistan would not have became a reality.

In a letter written to Mahatma, Jinnah made it plain while Jinnah represented Muslims and league in India, Gandhi represented congress & Hindus. In 1957 Muslim league did not represent all the Muslims and it is not true that congress represented (P 149, Eight lives) all the Hindus.

Rajaji, went to the extent of accusing Muslim league as creating the impediment to freedom in realization of their sectarian objective.

In 1940 Gandhi addresses Jinnah as ‘Dear Gualid - I - Azam’ and described Jinnah as leader of non-congress forces such as followers of Ambedkar, depressed class people and followers of Ramasamy Naicker among Tamils.

(1) Jinnah took this stand that the Rulers would decide that which state to accede to which while All India congress committee took a decision in 1947 that the people of the state should have a dominating voice.
(2) The ruler of Junagadh acceded to Pakistan against the wishes of the people and Hyderabad stayed out encouraged by him.

(3) In 1947 Nehru was confident of winning the plebiscite. He wrote to Abdullah that National conference itself was against a referendum and it is not easy for him to back out of the stand taken before the world.

(4) In UN security council through Kirshna Menon Nehru said Kashmir should be allowed to continue as independent endorsed by India and Pakistan.

(5) A kind of partition by prior agreement or as a result of the vote Lord Mount Batten proposed that a vote for independence should be included in the plebiscite a different situation emerged. It later appeared that a plebiscite would result in favour of Pakistan. Patel wrote to him in 1950 that he is in full agreement with Nehru on the unreal situation. Sir Owen Dinan later chief Justice of Australia proposed a plebiscite when the wishes of the inhabitants were uncertain in Kashmir valley. The rest cared to be assigned to either state as the case may be. Nehru rejected the idea in Jan., 1951 in Common Wealth Prime Ministers conference in London. Nehru firmly stood by the ‘status quo’ and in the same year November he expressed himself in favour of plebiscite. In 1952 Chester Bowles US Ambassador was informed that India would have gladly discussed question of partition provided Pakistan had agreed.

In May 1954, Constitution referring to Kashmir was reread as “No Bill providing for increasing or diminishing the area of the Jammu & Kashmir or altering the name or boundaries without the consent of the legislature of the state shall be introduced in Parliament.” This is the provision to article 253 of the Constitution on the Union’s power to conclude treaties and it was included in 1954 by an order made by the President.
Nehru wrote to Sheik Abdullah that ‘strength does not came from defense forces but by Industrial & economic development. As we grow Pakistan will feel less inclined to threaten or harass. A time will come when through force of circumstances Pakistan will be in a mood to accept a settlement.’

This history of India – Pakistani relations found in India in the last 50 years is full of subjective elements. To some, Kashmir, the land is more important than its people; to others people are more important than the place.

Nobel laureate V.S. Naipaul “India: A Million mutinies now” is a seminal example of subjectivism. While he chooses to narrate the history of Dravidian Movement, only in page 239 and 234, he makes passing references to Anna and Karunandihi.  

Though it is left to an author to recreate the past occurrences and portray such instances the way he observes it does not mean that he can brush aside indispensable personalities but for whose contribution Dravidian Movement would not have been possible at all.

While he does not speak on Anna and Karunanidhi, a dynamic leader of social, political magnitude, he has devoted without sense of fairness and justice, number of pages on a political non weight.

The specific chapter on Dravidan Movement is a heinous howler to say the least.

P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, a historian of considerable repute has written, “Tamils thousand years ago”. In this historical research which has been lauded by no lesser a person than Anna, a leader only after Periyar, E.V. Ramasamy Naicker, who was the architect of Dravidan Movement, P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar
the historian while devoting a specific chapter on Vaishnavism, a chapter on Saivism is conspicuously absent. In the foot note to Vaishnavism, P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, makes reference to Aryans, as truthful people, thereby imposes on the reader an implied condition, Dravidans were liars.

The word, ‘Aryan’ in Thirumoolar’s Thirumandhiram means God. In 13th century for Veeramamunivar, (Beschi), ‘Aryan’ means a noble. In 20th century to Subramnia Bharathi ‘Aryan’ means refined inhabitant. In the same century to Sundaram Pillai it indicates Sanskrit; much later, it was for Anna, the originator of DMK, Aryans meant Brahmins.

Against this background if one has to analyze P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar’s observation of the word Aryan, one can best learn whether his view is prejudicious or not.

Writing of literary history, is neither comprehensive nor contemporary. Tamil Expatriates from Srilanka, in U.S., Canada and Germany have not been brought out for their contributions to literature.

1. Contribution of writers have stale habits of repetition.
2. In writing History every book is of adoration; constructive criticism is absent.
3. The other point of view is not insisted at all.
4. Most of the literary works have not been backed by evidence. (8000 Jain saints were hanged)
5. Rereading of History is absent.

For example, Dr. Caldwell’s ‘History of Tirunelveli’ on a second reading is not valid.

6. Local history is conspicuously absent.
C. B. Webster, the American Historian observes that 'Hindu social reformers were equally indifferent, concentrating their attention upon social evils affecting primarily on the urban elites.

It is a sweeping generalisation of a historian on the Hindu Social reformers of the deep south. St. Ramalinga Swamigal, to cite one example was a social reformer of the first order who was against the discrimination in the name of caste. His frontal attacks were on poverty, with specific reference to hunger. Therefore, the observation of the American historian that Hindu social reformers were not aware to the upliftment of Dalits is a shady one.\textsuperscript{11}

While in 'History and Society', edited by K.A. Manikumar in an article on the "Depressed class movements in south India" by S. Manikumar is found that he has devoted almost 3 pages to Ayothidasa Pandithar, which is not wrong; but Rettamalai Sreenivasan of equal importance has been only casually mentioned belittling the services he rendered to the Dalits.\textsuperscript{12}

G. Aloysius in 'Nationalism without a Nation in India' refers to Rettamalai Sreenivasan as one of the stalwarts of the anti-brahmin movement.\textsuperscript{13}

In the ultimate analysis, one has to think of

(1) a. any of the various epistemological theories that limit knowledge to conscious state and elements;

(b) any of the various theories, doctrines or view points that attach greater importance to the subjective elements in experience as (1) Kantianism (2) The doctrine that truth is relative to human nature ; Protagoreanism.
(2) Either of two doctrines in ethics: the supreme good or the end of ethical conduct is the realisation of some type of subjective experience or feeling (as pleasure) (b). Individual feeling or apprehension is the ultimate criterion of the good and the right.
References

3. Subjectivism – Indian Scenario

with special reference to Tamilnadu

1. ‘The Contribution of Muslims to Freedom Movement’ - Islamiah college, Vaniambadi, October 2000

2. Ibid. Dr.K.V.Jeyaraj and T. Jayapalan, ‘The Indian National Army and the Muslims’ p.37-42


4. Subjectivism in Personalities, Movements and Events with special reference to Tamil Nadu

Corn Wallis transgressed the spirit of the Parliamentary Act of 1874 in an offensive alliance against Tippu sultan. Thornton has observed "It is highly instructive to observe a statesman, justly extolled for moderate and pacific disposition thus indirectly violating a law enacted for the enforcement of these virtues, by entering into a very intelligent offensive alliance".¹

Speaking on the resistance to the British Tippu displayed, it has been observed that Urdu Literature under Tippu Sultan showed signs of the influence of French Revolution. The themes and songs were fashioned to kindle a new spirit of enthusiasm against the British. A 'Tree of Liberty' was planted at Srirangapatnam².

"One night the members, including Tippu ceremoniously burnt all symbols of royalty and thereafter addressed one another as citizen."³

"Tippu's life was one long struggle against British ascendancy. He died fighting in 1799, but his memory burns in India's subconscious mind. This anti-British spirit is very much in evidence in Vellore Mutiny of 1806 which was a rehearsal on a small scale for the great Raising of 1857. It struck the British territories in India with horror unparalleled until the later event swept into oblivion".⁴
“Like his father before him, Tippu had always flirted with the French, if only to upset the British, whom he hated. Now, he made the mistake of receiving standard French party. It was enough to allow Wellesley to put on his general's hat and mount a well-prepared expedition to destroy Tippu who died fighting bravely against overwhelming odds.”

“As will be seen in the course of his study, in the first phase of the struggle for freedom, both the Muslim and Hindu rulers of India opposed the British tooth and nail. This is clear from the actions of Emperor Aurangzeb, Nawab Siraj-ud-daula, Nawab Mir Kasim, the Nawab of Oudh, Hyder Ali and Tippu, the Nizam-ui-Mulk, the Maratha Consideracy and others.”

After several battles from May 1783, the Madras Governor came to a settlement with Tippu in March 1784 after the fall of Mangalore.

Tippu was crippled but not vanquished. While nursing the wounds of defeat, he tried to get foreign assistance against British expansion in India. He attempted to forge an anti-British alliance with France, the Amir of Afghanistan, and some of the smaller princes of South India. By the time Lord Wellesley took over as the governor-general in 1798, Tippu has succeeded in enlisting the support of France to his side and his emissaries were at Kabul, Constantinople, Arabia, and Mauritius. The ideological waves of the French Revolution had their ripples on the Indian soil as Tippu planted 'the tree of liberty' at Srirangapatnam... and was elected a member of the Jacobean Club. Some French troops even landed at Mangalore, as a gesture of military alliance with Tippu. The British, therefore, considered Tippu as their sworn enemy and they set about the task of isolating him.
‘Tippu: A Patriot by Default’ was a discordant insertion with a highly prejudiced statement, which runs amuck from faithful historical reconstruction. While it is true Ranbir Vohra has got the inalienable right to his opinion on Tippu, it is seen that he confined himself within the modest limits of Tippu’s predicament to portray him blacker than he was. Nizam of Hyderabad, Marathas, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and host of others availed the help of the French in their attempts to see the British off. Ranbir Vohra presents Tippu as if Tippu invited the French only for the sake of his political aggrandizement.

He displays his misconception against Muslim Ruler’s fascination towards Pan-Islamic cooperation, in his historical survey conveniently brushing aside where nationalism ends and the concept of ‘Umma’ begins.

Vohra’s observation of Tippu’s urging the French to see the English eliminated as ‘showing a certain sense of tainted politics’ is biased. Tippu’s exhorting Napoleon to wage a war against the British, was a patriotic act.

a. Was it not a patriotic act since India as a modern state steeped in nationalism as it is understood today was quite unknown in the times of Tippu Sultan;

b. Invitation to the French to oust the British was not ‘a certain sense of world politics’ in the last two decades of 18th century, if one takes into consideration other wars and strategies against common enemies of this period;

c. Tippu Sultan was progressive, imaginative, skillful and strategic compared to the other Indian Rulers of his times;

d. Why should Tippu’s letter to Zaman Zha to occupy Delhi to establish "Faith" selectively be constructed as Islamisation, instead of military strategy, wherein Zaman Zha whose earlier attempts to swallow certain portions of India having
failed only could have been more enthusiastic on an invitation, the motive of which might have strikingly and totally different?

e. Will it be only a blissful surmise to be dismissed, if one is choosy to say that when 'he succeeded in taking the French help, he could have proceeded against the French themselves at a convenient later period, in defence of his land'.

f. Tippu, is not a desperate despot who was "troublesome" to the English, to borrow the tinged phrase of (Proudest Day) if he is evaluated in the backdrop of his policies towards the welfare of his subjects;

g. If on a later day Nethaji Subhash Chandra Bose could be hailed for his invitation to Hitler in his relentless battle against the British, what was the sin of Tippu who attempted to bring into India an enemy's enemy, i.e. French in defence of his land;

h. Is it not reconstruction of the past at a latter day in the last phase of 20th century in changed circumstances with, incorrigible prejudice against a ruler in 18th Century?

No less a person than Mahatma Gandhi, in his 'Young India' has praised the patriotic sacrifice of Tippu Sultan in unmistakable terms. Tippu was such a hero among the Indian patriots English General Hazi is reported to have rejoiced on the demise of Tippu and declared that 'from this day India is ours'.

But for Maharaja Balarama Verma's treachery which was cardinally responsible for his final eclipse, through the hearthless military mission of Cornwallis and Wellesly dithering away of British beneficiaries like Nizam of
Hyderabad, Tippu could have brought the British beneficiaries like Nizam of Hyderabad, before him in bending knees.

Tippu didn’t fight for his kingdom to be intact so that he may continue to exploit his subjects as Vohra attempts to build up his case against Tippu.

Tippu was remarkably tolerant towards his Hindu brethren. His Prime Minister was one Puransiya, a Brahmin and Commander was Srikantaiya, a devout Hindu. He has rendered financial assistance to 156 Hindu Temples. When Pindaries ransacked in 1791 Sringeri Mutt, Shri Sharatha Temple and caused a loss of Rs.60 lakhs, the invaders killed many Brahmin priests too. In protest the head of the Mutt, Sri Sachithananda Swamigal indulged in a fast unto death on the banks of River Thungapathra. Tippu Sultan caused a letter to Swamigal and promised to pay all the damages caused by Maratha goons.\textsuperscript{11}

In his letter Tippu wrote that “I understood shri Saratha’s idol (mind Tippu as a Muslim is against idolatry) was removed. Sarathammal is eternal, passing through many phases of time” and exhorted the Swamigal to consecrate the idol. In this letter he curses the Maratha vandals and affirm his faith that they would reap the curse for their sacrilege to Goddess Saratha.\textsuperscript{12}

“It is wrong to say that Sultan Tippu was a savage, barbarous and cruel fanatic. He was an industrious ruler who himself attended to every branch of administration. He was not cruel by nature. He was cruel only towards his enemies and he hated the English from the very core of his heart.” The English hated him and dreaded him. According to Kirkpatrik, Sultan Tippu was “the cruel and relentless enemy.... the oppressive and unjust ruler and who not.” According to Wilks, Haidar was seldom wrong and Tippu seldom right. Unlimited persecution united in detestation of his rule every Hindu
subjugated in his dominion. He was barbarous where severity was vice and indulgent where it was virtue. If he had qualities fitted for empire they were strangely equivocal.

“There is not much to condemn the character of Sultan Tippu. His misfortune was that he was pitted against the British Government which had endless resources. He could not find anybody to help him in his hour of difficulty. While the English were able to win over the Marathas and the Nizam on the occasion of the Third Mysore War and the Nizam in the Fourth Mysore War, Tippu had to fight alone. The French on whom he depended failed him completely”.  

“History of India” by Herman Kulke and Dietnar Rothermund ¹⁴ is praised by Jean Filliozat, in Journal Asiatique as “the most comprehensive history of India today”. This particular book does not deserve any such encomium since it is only a bald repetition of the earlier histories on India. This book too admires imperialist designs of the British, that too consciously in many places.

Speaking on Tippu Sultan the author said “Cornwallis could have dismembered Tippu’s realm completely, had he not wanted to retain him as a counterweight against the Pesahwa and the Nizam. Because of the latter consideration, Tippu was treated rather leniently”. ¹⁵

Though there is no compulsion for a historian to pay tributes to an Indian Ruler, these western authors have nothing to say by way of tribute to a matchless warrior of Tippu Sultan’s stature.
The same authors grudgingly approve Tippu Sultan's acumen on land management in the following passage: "After Tippu had been vanquished in the South no permanent settlement was introduced by the British in that part of the country, nor did they create landlords, preferring instead the direct assessment of the peasants which Tippu had managed with great efficiency in order to finance his wars".  

In another passage, Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund have observed that in addition to the permanent settlement of Bengal, Lord Cornwallis introduced another major reform, which was of even greater importance for the future development of India. "He changed the terms of service for the East India Company's covenanted servants by raising their salaries substantially so as to place them beyond corruption. Whereas the servants of a trading company could be paid nominal salaries as they were making their real money on private deals, civil servants in charge of the administration of large territories could not be treated in that way. At the same time this reform meant that these new, well-paid posts would attract more talent which was badly needed for the enormous tasks which grew day by day as the policy of conquest greatly extended British territorial rule in India."  

Lord Cornwallis initiated some peculiar measures in the East India Company 'not for the development of India, but for the nefarious, ruthless exploitation of India'. These two authors, have nothing to offer new but only repeat stale events of the past with appreciation towards the British Empire. Even an objective Indian author could have said something in a condemnable vein against Cornwallis.
The two authors could not concede their boisterous laugh against an Indian ruler, however strategically heroic guffaw his was, when they state this.

"British Napoleon in India was greatly helped by the imagined threat of the real Napoleon who had after all entered Egypt. Wellesley did not take this threat seriously but readily used it as an argument when defending his own strategy."

One is alarmed to see that these western authors could not even concede the rightful title "Indian Napoleon" to Tippu Sultan. This text is neither definitive nor thorough with new research because of its western outlook. It is quite surprising a book of this sort claimed to have analyzed the social and cultural forces which have shaped the history of the Indian sub-continent, has neither mentioned Periyar E.V.Ramasamy nor on the Non-Brahmin movement. What Annie Vergati has observed in "Durham University Journal" on this book as a balanced introduction to Indian history fails to convince the experts as well as general readers.18

Partition

On Partition historians have provided vent to their sectarian passions. While there are Historians who blame the Muslims for the partition, there are others who blame the Hindus. In 1857 in the First war of Independence, Hindus and Muslims were one in spirit in fighting the common enemy, despite the English attempts to drive a wedge between them.

Pai Pramanand, President of Hindu Maha Sabha, in 1933 was one among those militants who triggered off the idea of partition. He himself said that this
idea occurred to him even in 1905. In 1937 Savarkar, who was the President of Hindu Maha Sabha declared that India could not be considered as one nation; it is of two nations packed into one. The fact is only in 1940 Lahore Muslim League Conference, the demand for a separate nation for Muslims was placed first.

One has to appreciate the fact that Muslim psyche has been wounded from the very dawn of Indian History. From the rejection of Poet Allama Iqbal’s ‘Chare Jahan se Acha’ as national anthem this psychic carnage is on for several decades now.

Anti-Brahmins In Madras Congress:

“March to Freedom in Madras Presidency 1916-1947” is a laborious work but with unadulterated bias against Periyar E.V.Ramasamy Naicker and Varadarajulu Naidu, prominent congressmen who fought for the cause of Non-Brahmins within and without Congress.

V.V.S. Iyer who was a literary genius was the founder head of a Gurukulam at Chermadevi in Tirunelveli District (1922). The idea was to make the Gurukulam into a modern Mathura, Takshasila, modern Nalanda and Navadvijea. Though these were high ideals, in practice this gurukulam neither followed the precepts of such seats of learnings and heavenly bliss nor adopted the cosmopolitan outlook of those proverbial places.19

In her anxiety to defend V.V.S.Iyer and his like the author blames that Varadarajulu Naidu and Periyar Ramasamy Naicker did convert the national movement in Tamilnadu into the bastion of caste ridden politics. She accuses as
if both of them introduced the element of caste in a movement which was surging ahead for freedom. Nothing is funnier than this observation. This is not history writing.

There was absolutely no need for Periyar and Naidu to convert the National Movement in Madras Presidency into principalities of caste, since caste was already there in the minds and hearts of the native oppressors. But for this ‘superior’ tendency Indians would not have been enslaved. The division of ‘Mind’ and ‘Matter’ resulting in two different efficacious forms is the bane of India. While the tricky native master pointed his finger to the foreign oppressor, he got himself entrenched on the shoulders of the twice cursed.

She laments that but for the two, the National Movement in Madras presidency would have surged ahead with no halt. The question is, for whose freedom you fight for? For the already socially freed or for the backwards who were in two fetters-social and then political.

If the two stalwarts might have kept mum on the atrocities on Non-Brahmins they might have been hailed as matchless freedom fighters. But history would have consigned them into the oblivion for obvious reasons.

(a) Freedom to them is not mere transfer of political power but social liberation of the oppressed.

(b) Would you hold who has treated you untouchable since the dawn of ‘civilization’ the worst native oppressor or one who exploited you much later for 200 years?

(c) A battle for freedom is not freeing country, which is not a lifeless entity shorn of living people.
(d) If major sections of the people are under social imperialism of the Godly masters, what benefits freedom would bring to them?

(e) Peace is not the silence of the grave where there are no ripples of social protest; on the other hand you hear occasionally the shoe-shots of the oppressor.

Saroja Soundararajan writes that only Two Brahmin boys were served with needs at the place of their choice. She purposely underplays the heinous atrocity of segregation by covering it up as if it was minor, negligible incident of no consequence when the main question was national independence.  

Periyar himself was a witness to two water-pots kept apart, one for Brahmins and the other for Non-Brahmins. Any sensible person would have been infuriated at this horrible sight though years back.

What is wrong in fighting for one’s caste, after all a deprived section of the people? Fighting for Equality is an inseparable part of a freedom movement. Is our freedom only by change of Masters while the servitude continues in a new ordained nomenclature? What freedom is it? This attitude was the basis of Periyar’s social protest in a lop-sided political movement.

One can find the seeds of social emancipation in the pre-Gandhian Era itself. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, the matchless freedom fighter from erstwhile Tirunelveli region wrote to Bal Ganghdhar Tilak whether social liberation should precede to political freedom. Tilak quite naturally stood for political freedom since he was socially free. Suppose Pillai had addressed the query to Dr.Ambedkar he would have replied that social emancipation should precede to political freedom. The last conference such a patriot of the first order attended was State Backward classes conference at Madras.
The final breakaway of Periyar from Congress was not out of momentary irritation. Year after year his resolutions in favour of Non-Brahmin representation were defeated by the interested. In the Cheranmadevi incident Gandhiji himself stood for status quo. While the main donors to the Gurukul were Chettiar of Nattukottai (a non-Brahmin caste), Non-Brahmins were ill-treated. Nationalist leaders of a particular caste stigmatized Periyar and Naidu as instigators of caste fudes. It was no caste; a single caste but a conglomeration of castes, a class of Non-Brahmins asserting themselves socially for the first time. Congress leaders committed a historical blunder in disfiguring and belittling Periyar and Naidu, instead of rendering justice to the Non-Brahmins.

The author says “Nobody could dispute the substantial contribution of Naicker to the national awakening on the defects on the caste system. Nor could it be denied that critics of Hinduism like Naicker had been in existence right from the Vedic age. But what made his philosophy despicable was the rough and crude manners in which he propagated it”.

Here the author tries to woefully minimize the role of Periyar in the National Movement and confines him to the social orbit above. It is true Periyar’s methods were a bit rough; but by what descriptive adjective she would prefer to bring out the inhuman subjugation of Untouchables and Non-Brahmins for Centuries. Does she not think a chronic affliction warrants a heavy and strong dose of medication?

There are other historians who have faithfully recorded Periyar’s activities in the Nationalist Movement. His participation in the Prohibition Campaign wherein he is said to have chopped off hundreds of coconut trees, source of taddy (a native, heady drink) and boycott of foreign goods have been recorded
faithfully by Thiru. Viduthalai Veeramani, Kuthoosi Gurusami and others. Perhaps Periyar was the harbinger in the historical bonfire to Bengali patriots.

**Origins of the Non-Brahmin Movement**

Saroja Sundararajan was not right when she attempts to say that “anti-Brahmin feeling was a totally new phenomenon, the like of which had not been witnessed in the earlier epochs in the presidency”.

Until this movement was ushered in, all the castes of the society as per her version lived in amity. It cannot therefore be called the “spontaneous explosion” of centuries of pent-up grievances against the Brahman caste. An impartial analysis of the whole episode will show that the underlying cause of the movement to her was nothing but a tale of frustrated ambitions of power-seeking individuals.

Saroja Sundararajan tries to prove that there was no resistance to Brahmin domination before 1916. Nothing can be far from reality. In 1908 itself Ayothia Dass Pandithar observed in the issue of Tamizhan that “The Brahmins...threw over board those Vedas, Puranas, Smritis and Baashyams, they had evolved over the years to enable them make a living. Now they took to the learning of both Vedic hymns that would earn them posts in the high court; they mastered those Smritis that brought them appointments in the Department of Revenue, the Upanishads which would help them find a place in the Akbari department and Bashyams that would lead them to jobs in the municipal office”.

69
Indian Freedom Movement:

The Indian Freedom Movement was the biggest anti-imperialist movement in the world history. Prakash Chandra enumerates a list of 33 Architects of India's freedom from Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Manaabendra Nath Roy. It is regrettable that he does not mention any one of the leaders who sacrificed in the freedom movement from the South except C. Rajagopalachari. While he mentions Swamy Dayanand Saraswati and Swamy Vivekananda who were responsible for the reformation of Hinduism, many patriots of the South who languished in English prisons, here in India and abroad were not even thought of.

Periyan Ramasamy, Varadarajulu Naidu and V.Kalyana Sundra Mudaliyar, trio of the Indian Independence movement from the South were not even mentioned. This book is an example of how certain writers with propelled bias against the South have completely relegated the participation of the South in the Indian National Movement into oblivion.

Though V.N.Hari Rao, South Indian Historian who should have more information on the contribution of the South to the freedom movement speaks of V.O.C. Chidambaram Pillai’s Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in one or two lines and keeps mum on the sacrifices of other Southern leaders to the national cause.

If Prakash Chandra's book is an example of Regional prejudice, Hari Rao's bias is from non-assimilation of facts.
Spengler, though basically a sociologist who depersonalized history, he is one among them who stressed on deep, impersonal, unconscious process that governs social changes.23

He stood upon culture, which is another name for man-made environment, as an organism governed by the biological laws of life and death. In his craze to depersonalize history, seized upon the outer manifestations of culture for building up his hypothesis, but ignores the inner, dominating human force working behind it.

Hegel said that the individual should completely submerge himself in society and precisely for the good of the whole does not strike Hegell as morally outrageous.24

Black Hole Tragedy:

One element in the story of Plassey that Indian historians have played down, and the contemporary revisionist Cambridge historians have a tendency to overlook, is the incident that became known as the Black Hole of Calcutta. In their wisdom both C.A.Bably in his ‘Indian Society and Making of the British Empire’; (Cambridge-Cambridge University Press, 1988); and Marshall, in his work “Bengal: The British Bridge-ahead” in their now Cambridge History of India, have not even mentioned this incident.

Siraj-Ud-Daula, irritated by the behaviour of East India Company attacked Fort William EIC Headquarters in Calcutta and imprisoned 146 prisoners in the Fort X Jail, which happened to be a small chamber. The company is said to have designed to imprison its adversaries and enemies. As providence would have it.
Siraj-Ud-Daula imprisoned them all in that small chamber about 18’x15’ which later came to be known as a Black Hole of Calcutta. Though it was reported 126 of the captives died overnight owing to suffocation recent research has proved that those who died were only a few. Anyhow, this incident was blown out of proportions by the company as 'The center piece of one of the first great atrocity campaign of modern times'.

This incident served the purpose of inflaming public opinion in England and justified a surge-ahead policy in India.

It is a pity historians who find fault with Cambridge history of India for not making a mention of Black Hole Tragedy themselves, most of them are silent on the heroic battle of Siraj-Ud-Daula against Robert Clive and his men despite incessant rain.

Siraj attacked on Sunday, June 20, 1756; by midday. Holwell raised his white flag. That night, according to his account, which would ignite generations of British school boys with passionate indignation and outrage against the "uncivilized natives" of India, 146 English prisoners, including one woman and a dozen wounded officers, were thrown into Fort William's lock-up, called the 'Black Hole' an airless dungeon measuring fourteen by eighteen feet. When the door was opened at 6.a.m. the next morning, Holwell reported, only twenty-three of the prisoners emerged alive, the rest died of suffocation or shock.

Background to the Foundation of British Power in India) Ranbir Vohra, Stanley Wolpart and host of others agree that Siraj-Ud-Dauliah has nothing to do with this tragedy, however, devastating it was.
“Against this background, (the Battle of Plassey in 1757) may be read the couplet of Raja Narain ‘Mauzeum’, the Governor of Azimabad in 1757. Raja Ram Narain composed” O Gazelles! You know the story. Tell me in confidence about the death of Majnu. The love- torn has died; how he faces the wilderness now?

Mir Hasan in Tazkirah-I-Shura-I-Urdu has said “When the news of the martyrdom of Siraj-Ud-Daulah reached the city, he composed the following verse extempore, wept in lamentation and inquired about him from those who knew the details.”

There has been a lot of controversy as to whether the Black-Hole tragedy was a reality or a myth. It is maintained by some historians that the so-called Black-Hole tragedy never took place. It is pointed out that it is physically impossible to shut up 146 persons in a room which is only 22ft. long and 14ft. wide.

Moreover, the contemporary Muslim accounts such as Seir Mutaqhrin and Riyas-Us-Salatin do not mention this incident at all. It is pointed out that the story of the Black-Hole tragedy was invented merely for the purpose of arousing the indignation of the Englishmen in India and that purpose was amply served. Holwell is the only person who makes a mention of this tragedy and he is hardly reliable. Probably, he did so for the purpose of getting promotion.
The Nawabs of Carnatic region:

Since most of the historians assume the appearance of Rajaram Mohan Roy on the Indian soil to be the beginning of modern Indian History, I have to follow their beaten track as a student of history.

Since the Modern Indian history starts from 1700 A.D I have no other choice but to analyse major events in the Tamil country after 1700 A.D, in short this is a period after the demise of Aurangzeb.

It was in the year 1740 on the invitation of one Hindu ruler Sahu, a Maratta army came upon the carnatic region.

Marattas were instigated to invade Trichy. Murari Rao become the Maratta emissary at Trichy.

The Telugu palayakkars of East, the Tamil palayakkars of West of the pathons of Madurai challenged the authority of the Nawab.26

Pulithevan of Nerkattum sevval defeated the assorted forces of the Nawab and that of the English with assistance from the French, while Maphuz khan joined the Telugu palayakkars the English deputed their general Khan Sahib to challenge Pulithevan in his war against the nawab’s governor.

Khan Sahib:

Khan Sahib was known as Marudhanayagam pillai before his conversion to Islam. Khan Sahib came to be appointed as the governor of the nawab of Arcot at Madurai. Khan Sahib was good at governance. It was he who defeated
pulithevan in 1761. He drove back the Travancore forces from Thirunelveli. Raja of Tanjore, the Danish and the Dutch favoured him. This favouritism made the nawab suspicious of him. He was directed to pay rent to the nawab instead of the company. Khan Sahib revolted against both the authorities but finally he surrendered to them on 16th October 1764. Khan Sahib was executed by the nawab.

While a historian like V.T Chellam makes a reference to Khan Sahib who deserves a much more elevated position N. Subrahmanian in his ‘Social and cultural history of tamilnadu’ which runs into 359 pages does make a mention of Khan Sahib but only marginally. Though I do not attribute any motives to him, Khan Sahib’s history shrouded in mystery is a well known tale of heroic valour in the Tamil country. This Khan Sahib is so popular among the Tamil mases. Kamalhassan an artiste of national repute is shooting a film on Khan Sahib. It is a pity that so popular a historical figure like Khan Sahib has been forced to oblivion.27 Tamils are indebted to N.Subramaniam since he speaks of Khan Sahib’s endowment to Meenakshi temple.

Dr. Moti Lal Bhargave in ‘History of Modern India’ which runs into 564 pages does not make a mention of Khan Sahib.28

Again Thomas R Metcalf in his ‘Modern India - An Interpretive Anthology’ which runs into 429 pages has not cared to figure out Khan Sahib.29

Ranbir vohra a remarkable writer too commits the same blunder of not mentioning Khan Sahib in his ‘The Making of India - A Historical Survey’ which runs into 331 pages.30
Again Daniel Thorner in his book ‘The Shaping of Modern India’ which runs into 404 pages does not care to mention Khan Sahib, an indispensable historic figure.31

V.N. Harirao though a Historian form the south in his ‘A History of Modern India’ which runs into 432 pages has not catalogued the name of Khan Sahib, leave alone his strategic logistics and patriotism.32

It is not my charge that in a prestigious work every historian is bound to write on all men and matters. But it leads me to consternation that such a popular figure riding in the crest of glory in the memory of Tamils after the passage of 3 centuries is left out by ‘serious’ historians and that too research scholars. This is nothing short of prejudice of negligence. Academic assumptions and popular adoration need not run necessarily counter to each other.

The Sethupathis of Ramnadu:

V.T. Chellam in his ‘A History of Tamilnadu’ speaks of ‘The Kallar’ dominated Ramnadu. The fact is there are three major divisions in this specific backward class, kallars, maravars and thevars. The present day Tanjore region is full of Kallars. Ramnadu is full of maravars, Madurai and Tirunelveli region is dotted with Thevars. Apart from Thevars, Agamudayar and other sub-castes constitute mukkulathor. If three hundred years back kallars occupied Ramnadu he should have produced evidence. If it were only a generic name he should have mentioned it, otherwise, his statement misleads a student of History.33
This region which was known as Marava country is found mentioned in Jesuit letters.

In Sethupati’s reign one Rev. John De Britto of Society of Jesus was executed at oriyur in Ramnad. Such a ghastly incident of regional importance with religious fervour has been mentioned only by a handful of authors like V.T.Chellam.

V. T. Chellam too in the index has catalogued pages 211, 242 but in 211 nothing on John De Britto is found. But in page 242 he mentions ‘He (Kilavan Sethupathi) was inimical to missionary work.’ John De Britto had a very bad time in Ramnadu. Britto was torched to death and his mutilated body was thrown to vultures.34

Rev. Fr. C.K. Swamy, a great Tamil scholar has completed a research work on John De Britto’s martyrdom wherein his extensive studies show that like a St. John the Baptist who advised king Herod against abducting his brother’s wife Rev. John De Britto too advised, Kilavan Sethupathi against his licentious behaviour in marrying 47 wives. While this was the reason which infuriated Kilavan Sethupathi, to say that he was inimical to his missionary work and ascribing his execution to missionary work are over simplifications.

Rev. Chozian S.J. a Frenchman in his popular text has referred to this incident. Rev. Nevetti S. J, as research scholar has described in minute detail how Rev. John De Britto was executed. Rev. Fr. C.K. Swamy in his ‘Punithar oruvar’ (A saint) has written extensively on this execution.

Most of the missionaries who came with the basic idea of converting people to Christianity were lost in the magic whirlpool of Tamil language and
literature. Robert de Nobili, veeramamunivar (Father Beski), Dr.G.U. Pope, Dr. Caldwell, Rev. seagan Balgu and a host of other missionaries are only a few examples.

Their contribution to Tamil grammar and literature and through translations have placed them in the minds of Tamils everywhere.

Though V.T. Chellam in his ‘A History of Tamil Nadu’ on Kattabomman he simply says that such a hero of the glorious past was captured in the confines of Puddhukottai. The fact is Thondaiman’s treachery was cardinally responsible in the unexpected captivity of Kattaboman. While this fact has been endorsed by many historians, I do not however see why V.T. Chellam holds a brief to Thondaiman of Pudukotai. A history writer should have presented facts as they are and would not have concealed the treachery of Pudukottai.

‘In a Comprehensive History of India’ Volume-9, it is found the Tondaimans of Pudukottai came into prominence on account of their services, to the nayaks about the close of the seventeenth century. Their origin is traced to the kellar tribes, settled in the country to the north-East of Trichinopoly, south of Tanjore and north of Ramnadu which was originally known as arasu. South of Tanjore by no stretch of imagination can be expanded to the whole of Ramnadu region.

Kattabomman’s devotion to Lord subramnya of Thiruchendur which is in the making of his office has not been mentioned by V.T. Chellam any where in his book.
Pulithevan of Nerkatum seval was the leader of many pallyakars who resisted the unfair demands of nawabs. Katabomman though was the hero it was pulithevar's voice which was the first challenge for the earlier rulers and his role as the protest hero of his times has been slighted by most of the authors.

Palayakkar's Evolution:

When the nation's history has been written with lot of omissions, it is a tragedy that the history of Palayakkars have been thoroughly relegated to the nothingless.

Among the many Palayakkars 'Thali' (Erode District, Udumalpet Tk.) was governed by Ethlappa Naicker.

After the fall of Katabomman, Oomaithurai came to seek the help of palayakkars. As he approached Ethlappa Naicker for his support he readily agreed. Naickers were devotees of Devi Jakkamma. Despite his vow and firm resolve to help him to oppose the white Ethlappa Naicker and his warriors could not succeed.

The reason was as a chieftain of Thali Palayam, on a complaint Ethlappa Naicker and his servants came to verify the conduct of Veerannan, the watch and ward. Then he could see that Veerannan caught 2 fishes and furnished his wife who was pregnant. Since the watch himself behaved in such a way, the infuriated chieftain be headed Veerannan without any enquiry whatsoever.
As Vengala Madaival was a witness to the gruesome assassination of her man she cursed the chieftain that his progeny would never prosper. Therefore their cries to Devi Jakkamma were of no use.

Though this is a story that gained currency, this was only a real happening to say the least. Ethlappa Naicker and many of his chief warriors are still remembered by monuments.

It is a pity such an epic saga of heroism has been given a go by in the history of Tamil Nadu.

Though the historians have not cared to evaluate the impact of Palayakkars' governance of the various segments of Tamils, people remember their past with pride.

The history of Ethlappa Naicker is an objective study since it is codified by R. Sundarasamy Gounder, who is a non-Naicker himself.\(^{37}\)

**South Indian Rebellions (1800-1801 A.D):**

It is definitely an outburst of the East India Company's apprehension. On 29.04.1880 all the chieftains but for the company of the East India came under the leadership of Khaniga khan on 03.07.1800. They attacked coimbatore. Before the appointed hour secret information reached the company. Finally they were all captured.
Revolt in Thirunelvelli:

The indomitable Kattabomman along with 13 others escaped from Palayamkottai prison. Kattabomman succeeded in rebuilding the fort of Panchalankurichi.

Though Kattabomman was from Telugu origin his heroic defence of Tamil people is epoch-making. But it is sorrowful that Pulithevar of Tamil origin whose voice of revolt against the English was the first one has been relegated to the secondary position.

Though St. Francis Xavier’s missionary work precedes to 1700 A.D from the period for our research, by way abundant caution it may be mentioned that most of the historians except V.T. Chellam has reduced this social reformer into a catholic preist of insignificance. But for him the Bharathvas of the Tamil coastal region would not have been converted to christianity. When there was bloody clash between vadugas of Telugu origin and Bharathavas on the sale of pearls hundred of Bharatha women were abducted by vadugas. When they were released from the clutches of vadugas Bharatha males were not prepared to accept them. It was Francis Xavier who convinced Bharatha males and made them accept their ‘spoiled’ wifes.38

St. Francis Xavier was cardinally responsible for the evolution of the 300 years in the social history of coastal Tamils. But it is a pity such a spiritual giant has been minimized by the prejudiced historians with religious indifference.

Sarfoji was another nominal ruler historians have not made attempt to portray.
The South Indian Rebellion in many of Tamil region was the outcome of pent-up hatred against English. Among the causes V.T. Chellan enumerates.

(1) The Local rulers impelled the aliens with imperialist designs into their administrative affairs.

(2) The Palayakkars and the other princes were ill treated by the men of East India Company.

(3) Claiming to be democratic the company officials made inroads into the affairs of Tanjore, Arcot, Ramnadu and Sivaganga palayams.

(4) The Company came to establish dual form of government by the way of aid and alliance.

(5) Palayams, underwent painful process when the white came to tax them.

(6) The English administrators, basically traders followed a mercantile policy of gain.

(7) Whenever, famine stalked the land artificial scarcity was created and the price of grains was made to soar high to the disadvantage of peasantry.

(8) The company's concern was exclusively for the welfare of England and its servants here. It was insensitive to the exodus of people due to famine.

(9) The company made a mockery of human rights.

(10) Till then the anger of the people was divided by various factors.
V.T. Chellam has an in-built weakness in portraying the negative factors worked towards the rebellion but he has not mentioned positive ones such as the heroic surge of Maruthu Pandiyar.

Maruthu Pandiyar became the leader of the peninsular confideracy. It was he who organised most of the chieftains against the English. His Srirangam proclamation (16-6-1801) was a patriotic call to all the oppressed to raise in rebellion against the English traders.

Rudely shocked by the turn of events Clive the company’s governor at Madras invited loyal soldiers from England. He brought reinforcements from other provinces including ceylon.

Tondaiman of Pudukottai and the Maratta Raja of Tanjavore stood by the company. In Ramnad, the companies attacked on kalayarkoil and failed miserably. The soldiers of Ettayapuram too were as tracherous as Tondaimans. Therefore, the second attempt of the company on kalayar koil succeeded.

Oomaidurai, was captured at Vathalakundu. Maraudupandian executed his final patriotic act against the English, but he too was captured.

But for the unpatriotic act of Tondiaman, palayakars of Ettayapuram and the Raja of Tanjavore the great patriotic challenge against the English should have succeeded. Since, objectivism is the first casualty of native historians many accounts on the territory of the three palayakkars have not reached the readers in full. A historian, who recreates a past event in his mind can be compared to a copper wire. As electricity passes through energy does not absorb the basic elements of copper wire. As such the historian’s attitudes and approaches in narrating a past event should be free from his personal attitudes and approaches.
‘Labour out; do not expect results’, one of the best adages of Bhagavat Gita should be the aim of an objective historian. The moment reward or punishment is attributed to his labour, his work is punctured with pride and prejudice.

Historians of Modern India have been highly biased. Nationalism and communalism were the products of a new resurgence throughout the world. Dr. Romila Thapar and Harbans Mukhia have shown in their writings that however the two forces attempt to establish contacts with pre-18th century ideologies, it was not possible for them.

According to Bipin Chandra 39 ‘communalism was generated by the lack of deeper penetration of nationalist outlook and ideology’.

There was a time when Hindu Communalism was reigning high in Maharastra, Madras and south of Punjab. But later Anti-Brahmin movements in those respective areas shattered the communal divide to some extent possible. There are checks and balances in Indian society. Wherever the Hindu communal card is used to bring all the Hindus under one umbrella, castism divides them fatally. L.K. Advani and Mulayam Singh Yadav devotees of Lord Krishna could not agree with each other since their castes keep them away. Moreover the scheduled castes and tribes who constitute at least 30% of the Hindu population are not recognised as Hindus. Even newspapers in a reckless vein mentions “when there was a clash between caste Hindus and Harijans....” if Harijans are not Hindus who else are they?

Historians commit the blunder of keeping Hindus and Muslims as diametrically opposed segments. Instead of exploring the common ground wherein the two ideologies could meet, they found immense satisfaction in their drifting apart due to their respective subjective outlook.
The very first myth of Indian history is the belief that Indian society and culture had reached a high water-mark in the ancient Indica. The second myth is that India in the ancient period had achieved the highest form of human civilization. While historians speak of the ‘Golden Age’ whose age they speak of? At every turn of the century the impoverished majority of the people suffered while the kings, queens and aristocrats had the benefits of the ‘Golden Age’.

The third myth is that Indian culture was essentially ‘Aryan’. Wherever northern writers speak of Dravidians they were accused of falling wilfully into the beaten tracks of white historians. But the fact is in vedic period itself there was stalking poverty in India’s rural areas.

Communalism had its ride when nationalism failed in its attempt to bring all Indians under one roof. Communal approach in history-writing is thus an aspect of ‘vicarious’ nationalism as well as reflection of contemporary communalism...

‘Hindu Nationalists in India’ is an eye-opener to find out how the communal card has been used quite often for political power. In an interview with Girilal Jain (March 17, 1992) he expressed ‘After Nehru’s death India particularly turned wild Hindu Rashtra, and there is no basic difference in the nationalist ideology espoused by congress (I) and the B.J.P. The two political parites represent the power struggle between the two groups of Hindu elites, one westernized and anglicized upper class Hindus looking more towards the west for cultural inspiration and the other vernacular speaking Hindus with lower middle class origins rooted in the culture of the country’.
K.M. Panikar, a noted historian himself was of the view “In essence the history of Indian effort towards building up of maintenance of a specially Indian civilization has to be the history of the Hindu mind and its achievements”.

‘India’s saffron surge: Renaissance or Fascism’ bears ample testimony as to how Indian people are divided because of communal hatred towards each other. Communalism has created a divide between the state machinery and the mass of people.

The second divide is the division among the state officials of all ranks on communal lines. In the recent train tragedy, the Gujarat Government has sanctioned Rs. 2 lakhs to Hindu victims and only Rs 1 lakh to Muslim, Christian and Sikh victims relying upon a useless state manual for compensation. For the second part of the carnage the state police was responsible. The worsening situation is the constabulary is under the mistaken nation that they are Hindus. They are being lulled into a false sense of security.

The third divide is the division between congress party and masses. The fourth divide is the chasm between Muslim fundamentalists and Muslim masses. The fifth divide is within the ranks of the educated middle class itself. Sixth divide is between a two sharply divergent class outlooks to fight facism. The deliberate identification of Government machinery with a particular religion is the most dangerous signals threatening the very basics of Indian democracy.

1. In general the Hindu historians whenever they portray Muslims they stigmatise them as anti-national without proper appreciation of their membership in ‘Umma’.
2. Hindu historians instead of evaluation of Muslim rulers with fairness blow out of proportions their misdeeds by suppressing the secular character of some of those rules.

3. Hindu historians minimize the contribution of Muslims to socio-politico progress of the nation.

4. Hindu historians club terrorism only with Muslims exonerating Hindu terrorists.

5. Muslim historians to their part exhibit communal hatred against the upper castes in Hindu society.

6. Among historians in general universal appeal is conspicuously absent and sectarian beliefs gain currency.

Stalin Gunasekaran in his treatises ‘Tamilnadu and Independence Movement’ rightly observes that northern scholars have portrayed the freedom movement as if it were only a north Indian occurrence choosing places, personalities and events that took place in the north.

R. Venkatraman, when he was the President of India released a stamp to commemorate the first war of independence (1857). Therefore Tamil historians were of the view that the first war of independence was the harbinger of Indian resistance to the aliens and till then Tamilnadu was in deep slumber. Facts are contrary to this sweeping generalization.

From 1749 to 1753 the first war of independence was fought in and around Trichy against the colonization of the British. This is not referred to by the historians of the north. In 1800 there was a conspiracy against the British in
Palani. Later a decision was arrived at to eliminate the fifth regiment of the British horse division on third June 1800 attacking the fort at Coimbatore. The historians of the north have not recorded such heroic acts.

Stalin Gunasekaran has extensively researched on the first Indian rebellion against the British, which took place only in Tamilnadu.

**Vellore Rebellion:**

The historic event because of subjectivism is not found in a prominent place in the Indian historical writing. Indian soldiers camping at Vellore fort rebelled against the British domination on 10\(^{th}\) July, 1800. This was the result of earlier resistance to the British in different parts of Tamilnadu. Revolutionaries in the garb of Muslim fukeers visited Bangalore, Nandhi Thurgam, Bellary, Palayamkottai, Trichy, Vellore, Valajapad, Hyderabad, Sangagiri Thurgam and infuriated masses against the British. Then in the Madras presidency there were 15000 English officers and 30000 Indian soldiers.

The utter foolishness of the white officers to have introduced caps to soldiers tinged in cow fat and pig fat was the principal reason for rebellion. It is after 50 years only the first war of Independence broke in the north. But Tamil historians themselves have slighted this great incident.

**Rani Velu Naachi:**

Among the personalities of this era who were relegated behind the curtain Rani Velu Natchi was one. After having lost her husband Muthu Vadukanatha
Thevar in the Kalaiyar Kovil war she thrived for 25 years to extricate her kingdom from the British and to stabilize her Sivaganga kingdom. Dr. S.M.Kamal has written a separate treatise on the Sivaganga kingdom wherein he has brought forth the heroic exercises of Rani Velu Nachi. But the northern records have completely eclipsed Rani Velu Nachi’s positive contribution to the freedom movement.

Vanna Charabam Thandapani Swamigal:

In the 19th century great spiritual seers have appeared on the national scene that kept the freedom fire alive. In the north Rama Krishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda and in the south Vallalar and Thandapani Swamigal were principally responsible for national resurgence. Thandapani Swamigal was responsible for keeping the resistance to British intact through his poems. In a desperate mood he petitioned to the Lord in his poems to eliminate the English from this land. In most of his poems one can find his hatred against the British domination and his appeal to the common people to keep the enemy under check.

Poet Subramania Barathi:

Poet Subramania Barathi, a national bard who can only be compared with Rabindranath Tagore does not find a mention in the northern histories of freedom movement. A great visionary, an egalitarian in outlook who explored the possibility of different religions shaking hands and a social reformer par
excellence. Poet Subramania Barathi was fearless in his poems and journalistic outbursts against the British.

Once he was critical of Mahatma Gandhi of too much of his non-violence and Swami Vivekananda for his views on widow remarriage. He took asylum in Pondicherry which was part of French India and continued his criticism of the British designs. He was the one who placed love for his language in the forefront even at a time when the movement for political freedom was on anvil. His idea was we couldn’t have the idea of nation except through a concept of language. He was one with V.O. Chidambaram in believing social emancipation had to precede political independence. Though Seenl Viswanathan had codified what all he has written in a chronological order his contribution to the Indian Freedom Movement has not been appreciated properly by the north Indian authors.

Among the Indian nationals abroad Senbagaraman and Thillaiyadi Valliyammai are note worthy. Thillaiyadi Valliyammai could inspire Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa.

Sarkari Chettiyar:

In the history of Tamil Labour Movement Sarkari Chettiyar is a legend. A gentleman from the backward classes by birth he was a christian of the first order. When there were resistance movement against English domination at various parts of Tamilnadu Sarkari Chettiyar consolidated the working class and struggled for their rights. It was he who organized Madras Labour Union, in the Bakingham and Karnatic mill governed by the British in 1918.
Vibin Chandra has casually mentioned on Sarkari Chettiyar for his struggle for India's independence. While Thiru Vi. Ka was a nationalist of the first order his contribution towards Tamil labour was legendary. Namakkal poet Ramalingam Pillai and poet Barathidasan have not been considered properly for their contribution to the nationalist movement. Poet Barathidasan is wrongly believed that he was responsible for Tamil renaissance only and he had not contributed to the nationalist movement. But his songs in Kathar propagation, prohibition and the independence movement precede to his plea for social reform. It was he who sold Kathar from street to street and he only composed a poem in praise of national congress.

Singaravelar:

When Singaravelar died in 1946, Rajaji in his letter to the communist party had mentioned “Singaravelar was nothing but a personification of freedom and straight forwardness”. Periyar E.V. Ramasamy had known Singaravelar. He followed Lokamaniya Tilak. When Prince of Wales visited Madras he was the brain behind the boycott plan. A fisherman by birth he was an atheist. He left his legal profession to participate in the freedom movement. Like Sarkarai Chettiyar, Singaravelar too was responsible for consolidation of Tamil labour.

George Joseph:

In history writing subjectivism is writ large on the face of Christian contribution to freedom movement. Though some of the oxford papers do mention that a few of the Christians were petitioning to Her majesty the queen of
England to protect them in midst of pagans, there were nationalists too. It is a pity that Tamil historians have been silent on the Christian contribution to the nationalist movement and Christians have the strange habit of not perpetuating the memory of their forefathers. J.B. Rodrigus, Masillamani Pillai, Roch Victoria and A.D.C Fernando of Srilankan Congress do not find mention anywhere. One George Joseph a Barrister was a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1921 he assumed office of the editor of Motilal Nehru’s ‘Independece’ at Allahabad. In 1925 he was the organizer of Periyar’s Vaikom Satyagraha.

When Muthuramalinga Thevar attempted to remove the nonsensical epithet on Kellar caste John Joseph was in the forefront. ‘Whose who of Freedom fighters’ Vol. 1 does make a mention of John Joseph but his contribution has been slighted. In the city of Madurai there is a small statue of John Joseph to commemorate his memory. But no Christian understands the significance of the statue and no congressman salutes this gentleman.

Dindigul Satar Sahib and Madurai Moulana Sahib were freedom fighters who have not been accorded their due places.

**Comrade Jeevanantham:**

Comrade Jeevanantham has been saved by his movement. Poet Jeevabarathi’s one book on Comrade Jeevanandham is enough and more to portray his contribution towards nationalist movement and labour consolidation. Such a spotless gentlemen in his disposition Jeevanadham’s likes were rare in
politics. A literary giant his whole life was an example to emulate and inspiration to generations to come.

Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar:

Rajaji once mentioned of the independence movement of the south 'If I were Arjuna Muthuramalinga Thevar was Lord Krishna himself'. He was known as the Thilak of the South. He was influenced by S. Srinivasa Iyengar. Though he was a staunch congressman under the influence of Nateji Subash Chandra Bose he parted company with Indian National Congress and became a leading light in Forward block. When Madurai Vaidyanatha Iyer and N.M.R. Subbharaman led Harijans into the Meenkshi Temple it was Thevar who saved them from any possible harm from the high caste adversaries.

Satyamoorthy Aiyar was all praise for Thevar. 'After 1936 in local body elections that the victory of congress was a victory of Thevar'. Though K.Kamaraj was a popular leader whose significant contribution to the freedom movement can be minimized only at the cost fo historical subjectivism, it was Pasumpon Thevar who was principally responsible in initiating him to political prominence. He was such a fierce speaker that the government ordered him not to address meetings anywhere. When in 1946 Andhrakesari Prakasm became the premier of the Madras presidency Pasumpon Thevar refused to become a minister. He had the rare distinction of winning a parliamentary seat and a seat in legislative assembly without visiting any part of the constituency. Though Dr. J.E. Mohan a non Thevar has written an eloquent manual on Pasupon Thevar, Sakthi Mohan, S.S. Marisamy and Nakeerar Mullai Pandian were the others who have written on him.
Though he was a patriot with international outlook who could question the loyalty of Winston Churchill who earlier desecrated the British in the Boyer war, he is portrayed as a castiest by his adversaries. It is regrettable that no objective study of Pasumpon Thevar’s life and mission was found in Tamil history. Either they are Thevar’s litanic vesperses or outright condemnation.

Amarasimman Chinnamalai, G. Subramania Aiyar, Salem Sri Vijaragavachariyar, Mookan Asari, Veera Vanchi, Yogi Suthanantha Barathi, S. Satyamoorthy Aiyar, Kadaloor Anjalai Ammal, L. krishnasamy Barathi were some of the few whose contribution to Tamil nationalist movement have not been appreciated properly.

Kovai Ayya Muthu, A. Vaithyanatha Aiyar, Vellore V.M. Ubayathulla, T.S. Avinasalingam, Kambam Beer Muhamadu, Kalki, S.S.Viswanathadoss, T.K.S. Brothers, Comrade P.Ramamurthy, J.C. Kumarappa, M. Baktavasalam, Captain Laxmi, Thirupoor Kumaran, P.Kakkan, K.P. Sundarambal and a host of others are legends whose seminal contribution to the freedom movement is alive in the memory of freedom fighters, though a national level appreciation is conspicuously absent.

Stalin Gunasekaran has extensively studied the participation of Peasantry, Tamil journals, Tamil literary Forums, Plays, Films, Underground Movements and Schemy plots in the freedom movement. Since there is no evaluation of the Tamil participation in the national freedom movement such independent research works have become the compelling need of the hour.