CONCLUSION
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Lajpat Rai emerged as a leader on the Indian political scene when India was in the throes of a convulsive agitation against the partition of Bengal. He became associated with extremists like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose. This study, however, shows that he did not approve of all that the extremists stood for. For example, he rejected dogmatic revivalism of Tilak and Aurobindo and was nearer to the moderates like Ranade in his advocacy of the reform of the Hindu society. In projecting the limited goal of Swaraj or Dominion Status for India his thinking was more in the line of the moderates rather than that of the extremists, whereas in his advocacy of swadeshi, boycott, national education and passive resistance for the realisation of Swaraj, he could be said to have had affinity with the extremists.

There were diverse strands in Lajpat Rai's political thinking and from their interaction and in some cases, even tension, Lajpat Rai evolved his brand of pragmatic militant nationalism in response to the demands of the political situation in the country. Whereas from western liberalism he imbibed his faith in freedom, democracy and representative institutions, his ideas on
nationalism wore derived from Mazzinni and the history of Italian 'Risorgimento.'

Lajpat Rai's understanding of the concept of 'Dharma' was influenced by his association with the Arya Samaj and his study of ancient Indian civilization. The concept of 'Dharma,' was not merely the wellbeing of the individual alone, but of the individual in relation to state and society. His originality is to be found in that he added an ethical and moral dimension to the liberal doctrine. His idea of liberty was an ethical and moral principle and not merely a political concept.

This study shows that for Lajpat Rai state was to be an instrument of evolving social, political and economic institutions, whereby freedom and the welfare of the individual could be harmonised with that of the society. State was to provide the people the free elementary education, shelter for the poor, old age pensions and wider diffusion of wealth. Notwithstanding his condemnation of western materialism, he at the same time, sought the benefits of the European Welfare State. He, in fact, tried to combine the principles of the Arya Samaj with western ideals of liberty, social welfare and social justice. He held that it was possible to benefit from western technological experience and yet
remain immune to its shortcomings. Thus he interpreted the western concept of a Welfare State in terms of 'Dharma' i.e. an ethical and moral principle.

The constitution for free India that Lajpat Rai envisaged was to be secular in outlook, federal in structure and pluralistic in character. He was not so much an idealist as a pragmatist, who sought to translate his ideas into political, economic and social institutions. The ideals of economic justice, equality of opportunity and democracy were to be the imperatives in the future constitution of India.

This study makes it clear that Lajpat Rai could not have a political philosophy in the accepted sense of the term. All his political ideas emerged from the crucible of experience. He did not claim to be either a messiah or a savant. He was a hardheaded realist and primarily a man of action. His political ideas display an homespun wisdom but they were not a body of precepts. He formulated specific theses on all vital matters concerning both Indian society and polity, to discuss which at some length, an attempt has been made in this study.

Lajpat Rai's distinctive contribution lay in that he considered politics as a dynamic and everchanging phenomenon. He did not believe in absolutes nor was he wedded to any rigid ideology or dogma. On questions of vital importance, Lajpat Rai seems to have had an open mind. He applied canons of strict reasoning
not only to political, social and economic problems but also to the matters of religion.

Lajpat Rai eschewed all dogma. In the controversy between the social reformers and revivalists he opposed the extreme rigid postures assumed by them. Long before Gandhi, he endeavoured for the reform of the Hindu society and worked for the elevation of the untouchables and emancipation and education of women. He was no blind worshipper of the past and was equally opposed to a complete and sudden break with it. He believed in the process of growth and wanted to preserve the national character by assimilating the finest in the ancient Indian culture with the best in modern civilization.

This work brings out that Lajpat Rai insisted on the close connection between social and political progress. He regarded the entire controversy over the question whether social reforms should precede political progress or follow it as futile and senseless. In the Indian context social questions were so much intertwined with religion that the problem of advancing social reform by legislation was a very delicate one. Lajpat Rai sought to enlist co-operation of all agencies of social reform, religion, the individual conscience and legislation.

Another significant facet of his political thinking this study highlights is that amongst his contemporaries he more than anyone else had realized the polyglot character of the Indian nation. He pointed out that the differences
among the communities, castes and creeds were fundamental and no sound basis of polity could afford to ignore this fact. This shows that he had a very deep insight of the nature of the communal problem in India.

Lajpat Rai pleaded for accommodating the interests of the different communities within the larger framework of a united India. He did not agree with Gandhi on the communal question and later in his life he was accused of appeasing the communal elements. But it was not correct. In fact his understanding of the psychology of communalism led him to make minor concessions to save the future Indian polity from disintegrating under the pressure of communal strain. The character of the Indian polity was to be composite at the level of regions as well as communities. He would in no case surrender to the sectarian trends which were being boosted by the British, the revivalists and other communal leaders. If his line of thinking had been accepted, perhaps, the partition of the country could have been averted.

This study reveals that Lajpat Rai was not a narrow nationalist. Loyalty to one's own nation did not signify hostility or antagonism to other nations. In fact Lajpat Rai's world order envisaged a broad framework within which the various nations realised their respective ideals of
perfection. He visualised the coming into being of a multi-racial commonwealth, the like of which was created after his death. That he favoured the idea of India continuing within the commonwealth on terms of equality and freedom with other Dominions was not compromising the ideal of complete Swaraj for India, but an act of political sagacity and realism.

Lajpat Rai did not approve of the totalitarian methods of Bolshevism. He, however, recognised its emergence in Soviet Russia as a potential force of worldwide significance. He welcomed it as a counterpoise to imperialism. His instinctive abhorrence of bloodshed, his love of liberty and liberal institutions and his intense nationalism stood in the way of his becoming a doctrinaire socialist.

Lajpat Rai did not subscribe to the monolithic nature of the communist ideology. He, however, valued diversity in every aspect of human endeavour and looked with suspicion any attempt at regimentation which according to him characterised the capitalistic as well as communist societies. He looked realistically beyond independence and advocated social and economic democracy. He fully realised that political action in India would broaden out
from mainly middle class activities into proletarian politics.

The contours of Lajpat Rai's international order emerged from the working of political, social and economic democracy at all levels and international co-operation for permanent peace and general well-being of mankind. Freedom of the country was a pre-requisite for India playing a constructive role in strengthening the forces of freedom, democracy, economic justice and world peace.