



The Role Of Hindutva In The Liberation Of Indian Freedom Struggle- Need To Change The Perspective-

Dr .Sumeet Thakur, Assistant prof. Political science, GC KULLU.H.P

This article has been written as a counter-narrative of the dominant historiography of Indian freedom struggle promoted by the Indian state after liberation. Present dominant narrative that Indian National Freedom struggle has been attained due to the umbrella Nationalistic Organization called Congress. It is projected that by and large Congress was predominantly based on the modernistic -secular credentials despite having few aberrations. This has led to the culmination of modern democratic and secular nations due the legacy of this historical movement. People like Dayananda Saraswati and Savarkar were among the misguided communalists which posed obstacles in the growth of the modern nation state. It was projected that communal Hindu forces were working as obstacles in the freedom struggle with the collaboration of the Colonial masters. Bipan Chandra a famous mainstream (Marxist) historian of Freedom struggle has given his thesis that emergence of communal politics in late 19th and early 20th century was due to the increasing sense of economic insecurity among the middle classes of Hindu and Muslim communities within India. This new middle class emerged during colonial rule and due to stagnation of the economy some of them chose the wrong path of communal politics which ultimately served the interests of the colonial rule rather than solving the real root cause of insecurity. ¹ The main problem with this Marxist interpretation of the rise of Hindu and Muslim community politics has some serious reservations because Bipan Chandra used the reductionist logic to describe the rise of communal politics, a common mistake of Marxist analysis because material existence is the starting point but it can never become the destination of individual and social existence. This can be checked from the ideological world views of the Muslim and Hindu community leaders. The Muslim ruling elites which led the revival of Muslim modern politics under the Ashraf like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan were having the reference point since the formation Muslim Caliphate and formation of Muslim rule during the medieval period in India and up to the arrival of the British. He tried to devise a new formula to regain the lost Muslim superiority with the adoption of modern education for the elite Muslim castes. Aligarh movement adopted modernity and science due to its sine-qua-non nature in tapping the modern prosperity. They did not promoted the education of backward class Muslim communities or indigenous Muslim rather treated them with disdain and therefore they were inherently against the use of modern democratic politics. This elite were numerically minority within larger Muslim community and also could not compete against numerically larger Hindu elites. Their aim was not just to secure good jobs only for the their elite class but it was to protect the larger perceived interest of Muslim community and their claim of equality vis- a vis

¹ "BIPAN CHANDRA: Communalism in modern India. New Delhi."

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/006996678401800211>. Accessed 8 Dec. 2021.

larger and more powerful Hindu community in deciding the future of India. They compared Islam with modern science and treated Islam as equivalent of Protestant version of Christianity which led to modernity in the West. Similarly Arya Samaji or Vivakanda had their point of reference since the advent of the Vedic civilization and continuity of this ancient civilization even under the barbaric Islamic medieval state till the arrival of the British as the new colonizer of the ancient land. They were fighting for their ancient values within modernity and taking what is rational or useful for the reformation of ancient civilization within a new context. The 'Ananda Math' great work by Bankim Chotpahya is based on the context of the Sanyasi rebellion against exploitative rule by local rulers and the British. This work gave birth to the term Vande-Matram, a war cry for holy mother land which demands sacrifice by its worshipers. These world -views of Muslim and Hindu community leaders and intellectuals cannot be reduced to the aim of securing a stable and secure livelihood to their members only rather these views are civilizations and comprehensive in their aspects.

Contribution of Arya Samaj-

Dayananda Sarwathi founded the Arya Samaj to start modern and Vedic education for both girls and boys only to provide better jobs for them, a very small estimation of the Arya Samaj movement. His reforms against caste and superstition were not only targeted for only making Hindu community financially rich. His systemic refutation of prophet and Islamic faith on the basis of rational criticism and initiation of Shuddhi for those who were by force or greed converted to Islam back into the mother or native civilization cannot be understood from the prism of Economic determinism. The clash of Christian - British modern civilization with Hindu reassertion could not be brushed aside as the last ditch effort of the primordial society to save itself from the inevitable victory of modernity laced Christianity. Swami Dayanada coined the term Swaraj as the aim of political, social and economic life in the rise of modern nationalism. This term Swaraj is often compared with Freedom or Liberty and even self -rule of the western type. Which is not true because Swaraj has inner dimensions too not only external dimensions while in the case of both these terms like Liberty and Self -Rule has only out-ward dimensions only. This can only be understood in the context of Dharma and purpose of life according to Hindu Philosophy. Lala Lajpath Rai of Punjab was Arya Samaji who not only contributed to the nationalist movement but helped Mahatma Hansraj (Arya Samaji) to run D.A.V Schools and D.A.V College Lahore. This helped in spreading nationalist and modern education among the younger generations like Ajeet Singh and Bhagat Singh.² Sardar Ajeet Singh founded the Bharat Mata Society along with Sufi Amba Prasad. Bhagat Singh's schooling took place in D.A.V school and was enrolled in the National College in Lahore established by Lala Lajpath Rai on the principle of non- cooperation with the British.³ Shyamji Krishna Verma, founder of Indian Home Rule Society and India House in London to shelter young India revolutionary students like Madan Lal Dhingra and Savarkar were also Arya Samaji. Bhai Parmand, one of the main founders of the Ghadar movement 1914 for the armed liberation of India was an Arya Samaj .Pandit Ram Prasad Bismil came into the contact of Lala Har Dayal through his guru Swami Somdev and he took his initial inspiration from the text Satyarth Prakesh.

Contribution of Ramakrishna and his disciple Vivekananda-

Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his disciple Vivekananda had reignited the spirit of Hindu or Satan Civilization when Western - Christianity led modernization was thought as the only possible solution for India. Vivekananda chose the stage of the Chicago world religious conference to expound the philosophy of his guru and delivered the philosophy of Vedanta. He subsequently visited in the other Western countries popularizing the philosophy of Indian spirituality. His success in establishing the spark of Indian

² "Eminent Freedom Fighters of Punjab - Book By Fauja Singh." <https://www.jsks.biz/eminant-freedom-fighters-of-punjab-fauja-singh>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2021.

³ "Singh, Bhagat [known as Bhagat Singh Sandhu] locked - Oxford" <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-73519>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2021.

spirituality at the world stage has ignited many youths to work for national liberation. His gift of Nivedita for the service of India has helped in the creation of Banaras Hindu College which she subsequently helped transform into the Banaras Hindu University. Vivekananda presented his prophecy that the East, especially India represents the spiritual legacy for humanity and the West represents the culmination of materialistic wealth. He was the precursor of Aurobindo to point out that spread of spirituality is the mission of Indian civilization and nation towards the world. This assertion had provided the spiritual and philosophical foundation for the assertion and existence of the Indian nation. Subhash Chander was inspired by the idea of the Bengali mystic Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his disciple Swami Vivekananda besides being acquainted with the novel Ananda-Math by Bankim Chandra.⁴ Aurobindo came back to India and started reading about India, he gradually realized the greatness and antiquity of Indian civilization. He started working for the liberation of India and became a member of the congress radical faction. He was critical of the mendicant policies of the Liberal leaders and wanted a more defiant stance in the functioning of the congress. He conceived **Bhwani Mandir** as a temple for self-sacrifice of the brave sons of the motherland for the liberation of the nation. This kind of conceptualization of national freedom struggle is based on the Shakti cult set forth by Bankim and Vivekananda, which requires ultimate sacrifice of the devoted and Aurobindo uses this spiritual process to the national freedom struggle. Anushilan Samiti a secret society was formed two Ghosh brothers Aurobindo and Barindra for mobilization of youth on that path of self-sacrifice through violence against the British. This culminated in the creation of revolutionaries like Rash Behari Bose and Jatindranath Mukherjee.⁵ He became the editor of the Vande Mataram Journal and the exponent of spiritual nationalism in India. He went on to propound that India due to her Spiritual heritage will lead the world towards spiritual realization of human unity.

Tilak and Gandhi - building their base on the theoretical understanding of Hindutva-

Tilak and Gandhi were the two most popular mass leaders in different types of Indian freedom struggle. They both popularized the concept of Swaraj and tried to explain its philosophy according to their respective understanding. Tilak gave the slogan, "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it". He became the first modern mass leader in India and used the symbol of Shivaji Hindu king who fought against the colonial power of Mughals. He used Ganesh Utsava to further increase the political consciousness among the Hindu youths. He expounded the spiritual dimension of political life in "Gita- Rahasya" and also demanded political democracy for India in the form of Dominion Status. He was successful in igniting the spark of nationalism among the middle classes of India along with Lala Lajpath Rai and Bipan Chander Pal. Gandhian conception of Swaraj is given in *Hind Swaraj*. Concept of Dharma has been the central basis of Gandhian politics upon which Gandhi used to base the ethical dimension of his politics. He used the term Ram Rajya as the ideal goal for India in the search for Swaraj.

⁴ "Brothers against the Raj: Amazon.co.uk: GORDON: 9788171673513" <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Brothers-against-Raj-GORDON/dp/8171673511>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2021.

⁵ "Terrorism in Bengal - Amiya K. Samanta - Amazon UK." <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Terrorism-Bengal-Amiya-K-Samanta/dp/B005Z4MQX0>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2021.

Savarkar- the conceptualization of Modern Hindutva -

Vinayak Damodar Sarvakar was the first scholar and brave historian who had the courage to publish a book in support of the 1857 uprising and narrate it as the **First War of Independence** while studying in Britain. He found it very difficult to publish this book and became successful in the third country. Finally he was arrested for involvement in a conspiracy of killing British officers in India and sentenced for two life-terms of imprisonment. While in Cellular Jail he realized that Muslim consciousness in Indian has given its allegiance to the cause of Caliphate and Ummah (Muslim of the world as single community against non-believers). This forced him to reformulate his nationalism in the light of rising Muslim extra-territorial allegiance and he has propounded the Concept of Hindutva. In which he lays the fundamental principle of nationalism which is common with modern European -nationalism (his ideal **Giuseppe Mazzini**) that a people residing on a territory must give its allegiance to the land where they have been living for generations.⁶ His definition of **Political Hindu** is equivalent to *the English or the French* as living nations based on cultural basis and offering its people within it equal legal status as long as they do not challenge the cultural basis of unification. After coming out of Cellular he devoted his life against caste based discrimination for further strengthening of the Hindu society. He believed that Hindu society once made more egalitarian and politically powerful it will naturally force Muslim leadership to search for accommodation but Gandhian method of appeasement will never be able to achieve respect of Muslim community for the Hindu nation. He exhorted Hindu youths to join arm - forces because he was worried that the over-representation of Muslims in the army might exhort them to use armed struggle to capture power in India after the British. His hypothesis was based on the historical analysis of centuries of colonial Truko-Mongol Islamic rule in India and Muslim being old Colonial force can use arms to attain their goal of separate home-land. Even today after more than 70 years and many wars India and Pakistan conflict is still based on the Savarkar thesis all those who regard this land as their ancestor - motherland and holy land are Hindu. Pakistan since its inception has aligned its history with the invaders which it believed had conquered India and presents itself as the frontline state of Muslim Ummah against the Pagan Hindu civilization. It has no answer to the fact that DNA of the majority of Pakistani matches with Indians rather than the land of their claimed ancestors.

Tarek Fatah a Canadian of Pakistani origin points out at the problem the Pan- Islamic revival of the Caliphate which has been the dream of scholars like Iqbal and other proponents of Pakistan. This dream of revival of Caliphate and doctrine of *Ghazwa -a- Hind* has been the theological and philosophical basis of the Pakistani state as a vanguard against the Non-Believers.⁷

Conclusion-

Time has come to revisit the entire history of Indian Freedom Struggle and the methods of Historiography adopted after independence under the State patronage. India is a living civilization existing for millions of years which has witnessed different invasions and incursions during this period. Indian freedom struggle historically should be seen from the establishment of cultural values and ethos of yearning for knowledge which has been propounded on this land and those who may have come from anywhere once they are synchronized with the ethos of the motherland they will become Indian. History of Indian Freedom Struggle cannot be limited to the growth of Modern secular state and glorification of Transfer of Powers in 1947 to their own accepted Indian leadership.

⁶ "Essentials of Hindutva - Savarkar, Vinayak Damodar - Amazon UK." <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Essentials-Hindutva-Vinayak-Damodar-Savarkar/dp/1677591943>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2021.

⁷ "Chasing a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State - Amazon UK." <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Chasing-Mirage-Tragic-Illusion-Islamic/dp/0470841168>. Accessed 13 Dec. 2021.