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Revolt of 1857: A new historical approach

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Abstract

The Importance of 1857 in India history is unquestionable and very relevant at present scenario. The revolution of 1857 has become a milestone in India history. Few years ago, we had celebrated the 150th anniversary of the great revolution. In the context of modern history, efforts are being made to redefine and mark various aspects of the revolution, taking the basis of 1857. Every stream wants to see facts only to the extent of its arguments. But those streams are increasingly active by which history is suppressed or crushed. They bring new facts to the fore.

Keywords: Revolt, revolution, arguments, stream, colonial, anti colonial, British economic policy, all British policy etc.

Introduction

The importance of 1857 in Indian history is unquestionable and very relevant at present scenario. The revolution of 1857 has become a milestone in Indian history. Few years ago, we had celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Great Revolution. In the context of modern history, efforts are being made to redefine and mark various aspects of the revolution, taking the basis of 1857. The present paper is an attempt to touch upon the various dimensions of revolution in the context of 'nation' and 'nationality'. Generally, various streams try to establish the war of 1857 as the first anti-colonial freedom struggle, national rebellion, sepoy mutiny, anti-British struggle of kings and feudal lords etc ^[1]. However, all these concepts have facts and explanations for their respective establishments.

Every stream wants to see facts only to the extent of its arguments. But those streams are increasingly active by which history is suppressed or crushed. They bring new facts to the fore. Eminent historian Vipin Chandra says that the importance of the war of 1857 has neither diminished in modern India nor can it ever be. Its relevance continues even today. Is it no less a big deal that after this war there has been such a change in the circumstances and Indian public that today we are an independent nation ^[2]. Nation building is a later process in the context of nationality ^[3].

Facts of the Emerging of Nationality by the paper presented in the context of 1857 an attempt has been made to identify the aspects. In recent years a number of historians have cast serious doubts on the so-called 'agreement' that the rebel leaders were hopelessly conflicted about their future vision ^[4]. There was no concept of an Indian nation in the modern sense among the rebels of 1857. It cannot be said that completely ^[5]. Peasants actions were local events that were confined within clear territorial boundaries, yet unlike the earlier peasant revolts, there was now certainly greater coordination between regions and the rebels were being influenced by influences from outside their territory ^[6]. Indian Peasants The British geo-policy added fuel recession that lasted from 1810 to 1850, and the revolution of 1857 took to the fire of the global wider form.

The extent of the revolution was dominated by the rebels from different regions of north and central India. There was coordination and dialogue, (new research is also providing evidence of the reaction and trends in the regions of South India) and the flying rumors kept the rebels in an unseen bond. The British Raj and their lives because of it. They all had a common sense of hatred for the upheaval that took place in even though and possibly its different though cut off from each other by experiences, they stood against the same enemy at the same point in history. They took up arms to regain the area they believed to be the world of their ancestors. Remarkable religious unity was observed during the rebellion, as all agreed

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that India belonged to Hindus and Muslims in equal measure ^[10]. In his latest book, C.A. Bailey has seen 'a group of patriots rebellions in the Revolt of 1857. He writes that the demand of the rebels was the restoration of that Indo-Mughal protectorate within the greater sphere of Mughal legitimacy, driven by mutual respect and a healthy balance between the regions and the masses ^[11]. As the revolution progressed, then the so-called facilitators also accepted the British Raj with criticism. The Bengali educated society opposed the British authority in its contexts, albeit in stifled words, to which their economic interests were attached.

The struggle of 1857 may not be entirely national in the immediate context. The elements of nationalism are not clearly visible, although in later writings there was an attempt to carve out its national character. Here it will be necessary to discuss the immediate aspects of the struggle of 1857, if the rebellion of 1857 is seen in economic, social, political and religious terms, then the feudal system was directly related to all these levels in its context ^[13]. Contemporary economic policy (British government) was directly responsible for the revolution of 1857. In the United Provinces, mainly in the region of Awadh, De-industrialization led to commercial decline and limited resources of livelihood, increased pressure on land and agriculture through Zamindars, talukdars the British remained loyal to power, but when their interests were affected, they also rose against power. Understanding the character of the British ruling class in economic discourse as well as the economic effects of British rule on India between 1757-1857 and its relationship with the struggle of 1857 should be investigated more deeply. Ashok Kumar Pandey writes that even though the immediate cause of the revolt in 1857 may have been the greased cartridges, but at its root 100 years of English plundering, corruption and there was dissatisfaction arising out of the horrific destruction of agriculture, industry and trade due to barbaric oppression and anti-people economic policies. This is the reason why farmers played an important role in this struggle. In 1857, even though common soldiers and peasants were seen standing with the feudal lords but after him 25-30 years, they are also seen fighting with feudal lords and moneylenders. In many areas the peasants and artisans forced the talukdars to take part in revolts while in some instances when the talukdars reconciled with the British even when the people continued to revolt. The biggest thing is that the main initiative was taken by the soldiers i.e. the uniformed farmers, the caste and sub-caste relations of the revolt soldiers, who now took off their uniforms and joined the peasants, also used to connect them with the peasant communities. The question remained about the Symbols of revolution- Chapatis, they spread from village to village ^[15]. The public took different meanings from them and they remained a symbol rather than an indicator or cause of impending crisis. In this way, the evidence of the freedom mobilization of the common peasants and the common people in the revolution cannot be ignored.

Politically, the policy of the British government was hostile towards the princely state, Dalhousie's 'grab policy' and 'the doctrine of lapse' etc., all the princely states were connected with their interests. On the other hand, even at the religious level, people of all religions and castes of the Indian society lived together peacefully with their values and beliefs, although these values were bad practices in other contexts,

but the British government attacked the traditional values and beliefs of the Indians. Provided an opportunity to the Indian religious communities to unite and protest among themselves. Although this initial opposition arose from within the soldiers ^[16]. In this situation all the Indian masses united against the power and the struggle began. Although there has been a wide discussion on the struggle of 1857 regarding its nature, yet in its context this struggle is for the future. It certainly gives rise to the elements of nationalism.

Any change-oriented conflict does not suddenly erupt around the world, it is the most intense expression of a long background. After the British colonized India, there were many conflicts with some areas turning into colonies of India, sometimes by tribes and sometimes by farmers ^[17]. The struggle in different parts of 1857 was called the first national revolt in this form. Although it had a limit.

The British scholars and officials never considered it as anything more than a military rebellion, Hindu Muslim conspiracy and barbarism against civilization. Although, the British MP Benjamin Dezarely called it a 'national rebellion' for the first time in the British Parliament. After that, in the first decade of the 20th century, VD Savarkar called it India's first independence and written down his idea as a book. Although many post-independence historians questioned its national nature, Mazumdar does not consider it as India's first freedom struggle at any level ^[18]. Although historians like Ashish Bhushan Chaudhary and S.N. Sen with soldiers and common people consider participation but do not call it a national struggle. But all these analysis have their own perspective of seeing, understanding and analyzing history. But history cannot be seen in such a one-sided way under any particular kind of interpretation. It should be broken. Revolutions stand on many surfaces of conflicts, many forces for their own reasons converge in one center and agree immediately to strike in one place. It is of course that in the pages of the history of the struggle of 1857, princes and soldiers of the British army appear prominently, but it is also true that any revolution does not survive only by rebellion within power. The same struggle has survived in which the support of the common people is obtained. Although the struggle of 1857 could not progress towards success due to its inherent weaknesses. Most importantly, the leadership of the rebellion was in the hands of feudal princes who were past-oriented. The struggle of 1857 continued to inspire the youth, farmers and laborers who aspire to bring about a change in the current situation.

The important question here is that how to define the concept of Nation and nationality in the context of 1857. The famous western scholar Hobbes baum writes that nationality is formed before the nation and nationality is a dynamic concept. The revolution of 1857 should be seen in these mentioned elements as a process of building up the nationality of India. At present, considering 1857 as a milestone, every part of the Indian society-Dalit, Muslim is conscious of the discussion of their respective role in the struggle of 1857 and that nation in the same sense and context. Trying to find its place in construction attempts will have to be made to make the context of nationality in the context of 1857 in the future. The revolution of 1857 wanted to unite and inspire all the elements of the making of India and hand it over to the future, on which path a democratic and democratic nation like India was later built.

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