

Modern Indian History Class 22

9th December, 2023 at 1:00 PM

WAS 1857 REVOLUTION A WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (01:07 PM)

CONCEPTS TO UNDERSTAND ABOVE-

1)Modern Nationalism-

- Nation is supreme
- Nation=People who feel one(fraternity), equal,(equality), supreme(liberty)
- Consequence of Modern Nationalism-
- i)Polity:
 - Democracy, republic
 - FRs, No taxation without representation
 - It simply means responsible govt.
 - Ministers have to be MP
- ii)Society:
 - No birth-based privilege or discrimination
 - Equality before law
- iii)Economy:
 - Democracy-power to people in economy
 - No oppression of poor
 - Freedom of work/enterprise (capitalism)

2)Modern Politics-

- Clarity of ideology
- Clarity if goal
- Clarity of methods
- Clarity of reason
- Clarity of plan
- Clarity of programme
- United central leadership
- Organization as a body for effective implementation of the above
- Unity among members of the organization
- Voice to ideology and goals, methods, plan, program, etc.

Arguments in favor of it not being a war of independence and not:

- 1)having modern nationalism (Modern nationalism elements - Nation not equal to land but the summation of people who are equal and feel one + Power to the nation that is people are supreme that is democracy and republic.
- Therefore, there can not be any monarch + Liberty, Equality, Fraternity).
- Whole of India did not participate- only central and north India participated and those sections that benefitted from colonial rule did not participate.
- Example - In ryotwari areas, the ryots benefitted as they became landowners (Sindh, Coorg, Assam, Madras, Bombay - Scam B) + in Punjab, middle-class peasants benefitted from Canal construction + in Bengal, Zamindars benefitted as they became landowners under the permanent settlement of 1793 + western educated middle class benefitted from jobs created by British rule and they also believed in the providence of British rule that is British rule is good for India and will modernize India + princes who did not lose power did not support + Taluqdars who did not lose land did not support.
- The whole Indian Army did not participate.
- There was no proper planning and the revolt was a spontaneous outburst.
- Modern political movements have elements of planning & coordination (*which represents Fraternity).
- There was no modern alternative in the form of democracy as the goal was to restore the old political order where there was the rule of Monarchs/feudal elements.

Arguments in favor that the revolt of 1857 was much more than a mutiny -

- (*Modern nationalism has important elements of liberty, equality fraternity/unity, and democracy)
- Yes, modern nationalism was absent, however –
- A common enemy was there.
- Common hatred was there against disruptions brought by British rule (*political annexations, high LR, loss of lands, oppression of money lenders and EIC officials, destruction of Indian industry).
- Sepoys declaration went beyond their selfish grievances (* listed reasons for mutiny) - High land revenue and increase in Chowkidari tax (for payment to Village Watchman).
- Increase in unemployment of artisans and learned men.
- Toll Tax for traveling on public roads.
- Decrease in the status of the Indian ruling class, therefore, sepoys were fighting for all Indians.
- Common fear of religion under threat.

- Hindu-Muslim unity was there as there was the belief that Hindustan is for Hindus and Muslims.
- Common goal of restoring moral order disturbed by the British i.e. restoring the pre-British way of life - political, economic, and social.
- All agreed among rebels that the capital should be Delhi with Bahadur Shah Zafar as emperor
- (@Democracy) Rebels did not desire 17th-century centralized rule/unitary structure but wanted an 18th-century decentralized setup with provincial autonomy, with the Mughal emperor as a weak center with real power at the province level, therefore, desired an element of federalism.
- They did not want the British out of their area but out of Hindustan (* out of the area would imply selfish interests, out of Hindustan imply fraternity and brotherhood).
- Hence, this time rebels were not restricted to their area and there was communication between regional leaders (*though not perfect).
- Most importantly, it was a movement of masses and not of elites -
- Elites were often forced to take up leadership by those who revolted. Example - Bahadur Shah Zafar + Nana Sahib in Kanpur + Jhansi ki Rani, therefore initiative was of the common man.
- In many cases, peasants and artisans continued to revolt despite surrender by Taluqdars.
- The main initiative was of the Sepoy who was a peasant in uniform and now removed his uniform to be a peasant again therefore, the main initiative was of peasants (who are masses in an agrarian society).
- - Test yourself:
 - Question: Why revolt of 1857 is an important watershed in Indian history?

IMPACTS OF THE 1857 REVOLT (02:28 PM)

Political Impact of the 1857 Revolt-

- **EIC was blamed for mismanagement of Indian affairs in Britain and public pressure increased in favour of ending absentee sovereignty (*real sovereign power was Br but it was absent as ruler in India and ruled India through an agent that is EIC). Therefore, GOI Act 1858/Act for Better**

Government of India 1858 ended EIC rule -

- **a) It declared Queen Victoria as sovereign ruler of India with direct rule over British India and a relationship of paramountcy between the Crown and Indian princes.**
- **Therefore, the Queen was now 'Kaiser-i-Hind' which is Empress of India.**
- **b) A Secretary of state for India, a cabinet member, replaced the President of the Board of Control and he was to be the top authority in Britain on India.**
- **c) The Queen proclaimed 1st of November 1858, which promised religious tolerance and that India would be governed as per its traditions and customs. therefore, socio-religious reforms took a backseat and also spread Christianity.**

Ideological Impact-

- **British became distrustful of Indians + racism increased + authoritarianism increased.**
- **Therefore, Indians were now considered racially inferior and beyond reforms and the British did not want Indians in senior positions in bureaucracy, police, and military and did not want to share power with Indians, became more autocratic. That is, now they wanted firm control over India.**
- **However, this frustrated educated middle-class Indians who wanted to share in power and this anger led to them starting the modern nationalism-based Indian National Movement (INM) in the second half of the 19th century.**

Administrative Impact-

- **Now, there was a focus on effective policing and collection of information and intelligence.**
- **1860 - The Police Commission led to the Indian Police Act, of 1861 which established the structure and functions of the police which continued till 1947.**

Police Act, 1861 -

- a) State police concept implemented properly throughout British India.
- b) Provincial police was to be under an Inspector General who reported to the Governor + district police under a Superintendent of Police who reported to the District Collector/District Magistrate + Thanas/ Police stations under a Sub-Inspector who reported to SP.
- Therefore, for the first time, the proper hierarchy of specialists with a proper chain of command was implemented.
- Therefore, from 1857, a Police Raj was created and Indians were excluded from all important positions.

Changes to Civil Services -

- The exam was introduced under the Charter Act of 1853 but it was not to be held simultaneously in India + The maximum age of eligibility was kept low that is between 19 to 23 that is to prevent Indians from clearing the exam as the British were highly insecure and also racists and therefore did not want Indians in senior positions.
- In 1870, the statutory civil services idea came but implemented in 1878 by Lytton 7680. Under this, Indians could now be nominated to some posts earlier held by CCS (Covenanted Civil Services) officers but only loyal elites were chosen.

Changes in Army-

- Peel Commission after the 1857 revolt led to many changes in the military -
- a) prevent homogeneity by having a heterogeneous mix of different castes and nationalities in a regiment.
- This was to prevent caste-based bonds of unity among sepoys like in the Bengal Army in the 1857 revolt.
- b) prevent inter-region interaction within the army to prevent pan-India unity among regiments, British benefitted from the lack of unity between its regional armies in the 1857 revolt.
- c) Now recruitment was done based on race - martial races idea started by the British that is Jats, Rajputs, Sikhs, Gurkhas, etc were termed as martial races which have characteristics of loyalty, courage, and were good fighters but for the British they were also incapable of leadership. Therefore, martial races and those regions that stayed loyal were preferred in recruitment.
- Now British focused on building a culture of loyalty to the salt and promoted the idea of sacrifice for employers for the honor of one's community.
- Now British maintained a very large standing army to counter any future revolts.
- British ensured at least a 1:2 ratio between Europeans and Indians in the Army (Not having this in the Bengal Army was a mistake).

- Minimum or no Indians in senior military positions.
- Financial control over the Army to civilian authority.
- There was high use of the British army against INM and peasant revolts. Also, the British wanted to ensure that sepoys lived in Barracks to minimize the political influence of INM on them.

PRE-INM ORGANISATIONS /MODERATES (3:10 PM)

- First contribution to INM by conservative educated landlords
- Set up regional associations to demand the rights of Indians in the context of the upcoming charter of 1853.
- British Indian Association, 1851, Calcutta:
- First major voluntary organization
- First all Indian organization
- Bombay Association, 1852
- Madras Native Association, 1852.
- All three of the above-represented landlord interests.
- Sent three petitions (* not a single petition), sent 3 petitions before charter 1853 to the British parliament
- Complained about-
- Poor health, education, and public works
- Salt and opium monopolies
- General (common to all)
- Oppose only un-British rule
- Result= no demands met as conservatives enjoyed the status due to British LR systems and no threat to the British, they depended on the British for the continuation of their status.

Rise of INM post-1857:

- **Question: INM was a product of colonial policies. Elaborate**
- **Approach:**
- **Western higher education-**
- **It's in college that political ideas developed,**
- **Grew after 1857**
- **Therefore, modern nationalism grew post 1857+ rise of a Western-educated middle class.**
- **Initially brown saheb but by 1860s Western-educated middle class began developing criticism of British rule-narratives**
- **However uneven growth of Western education led to uneven growth of INM.**
- **Early Western-educated middle class- upper caste Martahis, Bengalis, Tamilians of presidencies**
- **Late Western-educated middle class- due to a desire to preserve Persian and control Ulamas.**
- **Press=Main tool in early INM**
- **By 1875 400 newspapers with 1.5 lakh readership**
- **Lex Loci Act, 1850**
- **Black acts 1850**
- **Indian judges in Britishers cases in the presidency towns- allowed, strongly opposed by Anglo-Indians and put on hold**
- **1868-Income tax**
- **Despite famines, in 1860s-70s**
- **Western-educated middle class raised NTWR slogans**
- **Govt decreased expenditure on higher education in Bengal**
- **High military expenditure and high taxes continued**
- **British racism increases cultural nationalism(CN) + later extremists converted it to political nationalism**
- **CN=Swami Vivekananda, dayananda Saraswati etc**
- **1893 Ganapati festival**
- **1896 Shivaji festival**

NEXT CLASS: LYTTON