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THE INDIAN NATIONALIST (FREEDOM) MOVEMENT- INFLUENCE OF INDIAN PRESS AND NATIONALIST LITERATURE OF DIFFERENT ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT:

The Indian Nationalist Movement is considered as a great movement against colonial power in the world history. The imperialist policies of British led to the growth of Indian Nationalist Movement which was characterized by unity of diversified Indians irrespective of religion, caste, region etc.

The Nationalist Movement in India was the outcome of a large number of factors and the most important among them was British Imperialism. It was during the British rule that the whole of India was conquered and brought under one sovereign authority.

KEYWORDS : Indian Nationalist Movement , imperialist policies.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The domination by any country over the whole of India enabled the people of India to think and act as one nation. Before the coming of the British in India, the people of the South were usually separated from the rest of India except for short intervals. British Imperialism helped the unification of the country. In the name of good government they exploited its economy. It was as a result of economic exploitation that the seeds of nationalist awakening were sown. Moreover, the Nationalist Movement in India was a part of the worldwide

upsurge of the concepts of democracy and nationalism. The educated class in India came under the influence of these ideas. The contribution of Raja Ram Mohan Ray can be considered as noteworthy in this respect. The "Sepoy Mutiny" of 1857, though crushed ruthlessly, was the first assertion of the discontentment against British rule. The nationalist awakening took some concrete shape with the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885. However, it was mostly dominated by the moderate leaders like S. N. Banerjee, G.K. Gokhale, Dadabhai Naroji and Ferozshah Mehta who were not for the end of British Rule. It was during 1905- 20, under the influence of the extremist leaders like 'Lal-Bal-Pal' and Aurobindo Ghose, the Congress acquired the

status of mass organization and nationalist awakening rose to a considerable height. In the later period it was dominated by M.K. Gandhi who occupied a crucially important position. Hence, many English scholars stated, that it was Gandhi and his non-violence movement that brought the Independence to India. In one word without any doubt we can say that the growth and success of the Indian Nationalist Movement is nothing but the gift of great Indian leaders.

Rise of nationalism in India For India, the making of national identity was a long process whose roots can be drawn from the ancient era. India as a whole had been ruled by emperors like Ashoka and Samudragupta in ancient times and Akbar to Aurangzeb in Medieval times.

But, it was only in the 19th century that the concept of a national identity and national consciousness emerged. This growth was intimately connected to the anti-colonial movement. The social, economic and political factors had inspired the people to define and achieve their national identity. People began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle against colonialism. The sense of being oppressed under colonial rule provided a shared bond that tied different groups together. Each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently. Their experiences were varied, and their notions of freedom were not always the same. Several other causes also contributed towards the rise and growth of Nationalism. One set of laws of British Government across several regions led to political and administrative unity. This strengthened the concept of citizenship and one nation among Indians. As a result, the peasants and the tribes rebelled when their lands and their right to livelihood were taken away. Likewise, this economic exploitation by the British agitated other people to unite and react against British Government's control over their lives and resources. The social and religious reform movements of the 19th century also contributed to the feeling of Nationalism. In this regard Swami Vivekananda, Annie Besant, Henry Derozio and many others played a great role. They revived the glory of ancient India, created faith among the people in their religion and culture and thus gave the message of love for their motherland. The intellectual and spiritual side of nationalism was voiced by persons like Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Aurobindo Ghosh. Bankim Chandra's hymn to the Motherland, 'Vande Matram' became the rallying cry of patriotic nationalists. It inspired generations to supreme self-sacrifice. Simultaneously, it created a fear in the minds of the British. The impact was so strong that the British had to ban the song. Alike, Swami Vivekananda's message to the people, "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached", appealed to the Indians. It acted as a potent force in the course of Indian Nationalism. The rise of the Indian Nationalism chiefly attributed the expansion and advancement of the Indian Nationalist Movement. Besides this there are some other factors which are also responsible for the growth of Indian nationalist movement and eventually the Indian independence.

2. INFLUENCE OF INDIAN PRESS AND NATIONALIST LITERATURE:

The Indian press, both English and vernacular also aroused national consciousness. Great was the influence of the news papers like the Amrit Bazar Patrika, the Hindu, the Kesari, the Bengalee, the Hurkura and a lot more. These became a powerful instrument of political education for the middle class and stimulated the growth of national feeling by making public the grievances of the people and also by exposing the failings and deficiencies of the foreign rule. B.B. Majumdar has mightily remarked, "Western education and the Indian press were the two of the most important agencies destined to infuse into the people of India the spirit of national unity and to inspire them to achieve independence without bloodshed." Nationalist literature in the form of novels, essays and patriotic poetry played an important role in creating national consciousness. Bankim Chandra, Rabindranath Tagore, Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, Subramanyam Bharati and Altaf Hussain Hali were some of the writers who infused the spirit of patriotism in the minds of the common people. The growth of Indian Press was phenomenal and by 1875, there were no less than 478 newspapers in the country. The Indian press helped in mobilizing the public opinion, convening national and provincial conferences, organizing political movements, building up public institutions and fighting out public controversies. There was no issue of foreign policy or internal administration which escaped the notice of the news papers.

3. RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL REFORMS:

The religious and social reformers like Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Debendranath Tagore, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Ramkrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda and others inculcated a spirit of confidence, courage, selfrespect and pride in the ancient heritage of India. It is contended that political awakening in India began with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The socio-religious reform movements also known as the Indian Renaissance were the first expression of national awakening. They represented attempts to revise the old religion in the spirit of the new principles of nationalism and democracy. To quote or Zachaias; "The Indian national movement was a

part of the Indian Renaissance of India which manifested in the form of a general reform movement and produced striking religious and social reforms long before it issued in a movement for political emancipation. "The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Theosophical Society in their own respective ways, revived the glory of ancient India, generated faith in Indian culture and religion and tried to strengthen them by removing the evils. Similarly, revivalism among the Muslims was provided by the wahabi Movement on the one side and by the personality of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan on the other. These movements breathed a new life into the degenerated Hindu and Muslim communities. They created selfconfidence and inculcated a sense of self-respect which in its turn brought dissatisfaction against the British rule. They preached love for India and everything Indian. It promoted pa-Indian feelings and spirit of nationalism. If we go through the entire history of Indian Nationalist movement then we can divide it in some phases. Let's view these phases and understand the contribution of the Indian leaders in the Indian Nationalist Movement.

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