

## MARXIST HISTORIANS IN SEARCH OF A REVOLUTION IN INDIA

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Bengalis are well known for being the most talkative people on earth. Our English masters in the nineteenth century called us "bombastic baboos" for we talked too much and did little. Ours is, as one of our poets Samar Sen once said, "a country of high thinking and lumpen living" He could have easily said "too much talking and too little living". In the early medieval period of our history Bengal had a distinctive style in writing called *aksaradamavara* (too wordy). I shall try and go against my grain and give you a very short version of a proposal of a thesis.

Marxism is a revolutionary force. Like all other revolutionaries, marxists delve into the past to find precedents with which to create a genealogy of past revolutionaries. Modern English Communists look back to the Diggers and Levellers of the seventeenth century for inspiration. They looked to the 1640's for a precedent for a future revolution in the very heart of the largest of capitalist empire. There are others in France, in Italy, in Germany and in Russia who also find the ancestry of modern revolutionary activities in the past of their nations. In China too, the Communists look back to the Taipeng rebellion or the Boxer Uprising or the first Revolution of 1911 for inspiration. Atavism is present in all revolutionary movements, including marxism.<sup>1</sup>

In India, there is a problem. India had no revolution in her history, no precedent in antiquity or in the medieval period for revolutionary activities. Attempts to find a bourgeois hero in Rammohan Roy or to discover radicalism in the Young Bengal movement of the nineteenth century, are now generally ridiculed.<sup>2</sup> Gandhism and the non-violent-non-cooperation movement was no bourgeois revolution. Gandhi was no Lenin, not even a Sun-Yat-Sen.<sup>3</sup>

There are, however, two exceptions to this general rule that there were no revolutions in Indian history: the Mutiny and Revolt of 1857 and the Quit-India uprising of 1942. The importance of these revolts is recognised by historians of all schools but they are still for the most part ignored in marxist historiography. In this paper, I suggest some reasons for this lack of interest.

Archaeologists tell us about an agrarian revolution that took place between c. 800 and 300 B.C. "The victory of the plough"<sup>4</sup> changed the political, social and religious life of ancient north India. Magadha, originally a small state in south Bihar, became, by c. 300 B.C., the seat of one of the largest empires that India has seen in her history. New tribal groups who recently joined the ranks of the Ksatriya *varna* gained prominence in society, replacing the warring tribal chieftains of the Vedic past. Agriculture and agriculturists spread throughout the subcontinent. *Krsi* known to Panini (c.5th century B.C.) as 'ploughing' became in the time of Patanjali (c. 3rd century B.C.) a synonym for agriculture.<sup>5</sup> Trade flourished along the river Ganga and cities arose all over the doab. Many new religious sects, Jains and Ajivakas gained prominence during this period. Buddhism, which was originally a religious sect in the foot-hills of the Himalayas in north-east India, became the universal religion of the sub-continent and eventually went beyond the boundaries of India. These changes took place in the course of some five hundred years, and could thus hardly be considered a revolution. There were, however, sudden shifts in Indian politics in the ancient period, but they were results of dynastic changes through palace revolutions or through foreign invasions. They were not "revolutions" in the sense in which Christopher Hill or Eric Hobsbawm and others use the word.<sup>6</sup>

Since there was no '1789' in ancient India, marxist historians search for dissenting voices in the *sastras*, for materialist philosophy and for peasants' revolts. Ancient Indian mythology is also subjected to this kind of analysis. Vena was a legendary King who flouted the rules of *varnasamadharna*, and set himself up as a divine ruler. He failed to pay attention to the repeated warnings from his advisers. Eventually the divine sages slew him with blades of sacrificial grass (*kusa*) which turned to spears in their hands. Indeed in the last chapter (*santiparvarna*) of that great epic of ancient India the *Mahabharata*, the grand old man of the Kuru clan, Bhishma, warned Kings from his deathbed: the rulers were on their thrones to protect their subjects and not for their own pleasure; oppressive kings should be killed like mad dogs. Sharma has interpreted these passages as evidence for the existence of the theory of rebellion in ancient India.<sup>7</sup> D.P. Chattopdhayaya has written volumes bringing together passages from Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit texts to prove that materialist philosophy was deeply embedded in Indian tradition. Marxist materialism had a respectable ancestry in ancient India.<sup>8</sup>

Sharma has also written a very important work on the changing status of the Sudras in ancient India; he has drawn our attention to a number of instances where the Sudras (helots) of India rose against the oppressive rule of the Brahmanas and Ksatriyas. Sharma explains the fanatical anti-Sudra measures in the work of Manu, the law-giver of ancient India, as a reaction against the peasant revolts in the period between 200 B.C. - 200 A.D. Both Kosambi and Sharma draw our attention to the rebellions of the tribal peoples of India as they continue to threaten the Imperial order from the time of Asoka to that of Samudra Gupta (3rd century B.C. to 4th century A.D.)<sup>9</sup> and after. But most incidents of rebellions are gathered from negative evidence, in the Imperial charters or Brahmanic *sastras* and the heroes are rather shadowy characters, who can hardly compete with Rama or Arjuna of the great epics.

There is, however, one episode in the history of rebellions in the early medieval period which has some substance. Sometime around 1075 A.D. the peasantry of north Bengal rose against the Pala rule and raided other parts of the empire. For a time the Palas lost control of north Bengal to the leaders of the Kaibarta (peasantry) rebellion. They were, however, defeated by Rama Pala (c. 1071 - 1120 A.D.) sometime in the early twelfth Century. Bhima, the leader of the rebellion, fought a fierce battle against the combined forces of Rama Pala and his vassals. His followers were described as naked men, who rode buffaloes and used bows and arrows. Bhima is still remembered in the folklore of north Bengal. A Bengali Howard Fast could have written a novel on this folk hero, a Bengali Spartacus.<sup>10</sup>

For the Islamic period (c. 1200-1700 A.D.) historians such as M. Habib and K. M Ashraf have drawn our attention to an "urban revolution" in north India. Modern urban culture of India owes much to the Islamic period of her history. Indian "classical" music, art, architecture, dance, mannerism, is indeed a result of a process of synthesis between ancient Indian and Islamic civilisations. But this "urban revolution" happened in the course of five hundred years. Like the "agrarian revolution" in the ancient period, the Islamic "urban revolution" was a significant landmark in the history of India, but neither can be considered as revolution in the sense in which the word is used by modern historians.<sup>11</sup>

The marxist school of history in Aligarh has produced some of the finest works on Islamic history in India. Historians such as S. Nurul Hasan, I. Habib, Athar Ali, Satish Chandra, and their pupils have changed the very nature of Indo-Islamic history. We now know more about the complex structure of the Mughal state, the agrarian system, urban life, economic life, poverty, nobility, the social and economic roles of the zamindars, party politics in the Imperial court and the decline of the Mughal empire, than we did

before. Not only have they unearthed new material, these marxist historians have shifted the emphasis from political and military history to social and economic history. We are no longer preoccupied with the personalities and policies of the great Mughals, but we ask questions on the agrarian crises, the role of merchants in society and politics, the failure of capitalism in pre-British India and the like. There is, however, still one area which is neglected by the marxist school. We are told about the peasant uprisings against the Imperial order, particularly during the last years of the Mughal rule. But to date, we have no serious work on these revolts. It seems that Shivaji was no peasant hero, nor were the Sikh Gurus, or Rohila chieftains.<sup>12</sup>

If marxist historians have found no precedent for revolution in ancient and medieval India, they have also found no bourgeois uprising in modern India. Most nationalist and some marxist historians however, look back to the last century with pride; for them this was a century of social reform, educational progress, political associations, and profound changes in vernacular languages and literatures. These changes are most marked in Bengal and came to be known as "the Bengal Renaissance". Looking back from the last quarter of the twentieth century, with the hindsight of history, the pace of change in nineteenth-century Bengal may not appear very fast and the nature of change seems hardly to merit the term "revolution". To the contemporaries however, the changes were significant. Keshori Chand Mitra called the phenomenon "a moral revolution". Rajnarayan Bose, too, considered this period to be the turning point in the history of Bengal: the end of *sekal* (ancien regime) and the beginning of *ekal* (modern age). In fact all nineteenth-century Bengali intellectuals from Rammohan Roy ('father of modern India') to Aurobindo Ghose (a revolutionary and a spiritual leader) talked about "improvement", "the age of enquiry and investigation", "revolution" and "The Renaissance".<sup>13</sup> Most modern historians have agreed with the nineteenth-century intellectuals; Professor Dodwell the editor of *The Cambridge History of India*, and Professor R.C. Majumdar, the editor of *The History and Culture of the People of India* make very odd bedfellows on this issue.<sup>14</sup>

The late Professor Susobhan Sarkar, who had trained generations of historians of Bengal, was the most important exponent of the Bengal Renaissance. In 1946, he wrote a booklet, *Notes on the Bengal Renaissance*. This created a stir in the left-wing circle in Bengal. Although in 1970 Sarkar disclaimed that the book was a marxist analysis of Bengal's history, his students and colleagues took it to be the first marxist explanation of the history of Bengal in the nineteenth-century. The opening paragraph of the booklet was at once a marxist and nationalist exposition of history:

The impact of British rule, bourgeois economy and modern western culture was felt first in Bengal and produced an awakening known usually as the Bengal Renaissance. For about a century, Bengal's conscious awareness of the changing modern world was more developed than and ahead of that of the rest of India. The role played by Bengal in the modern awakening of India is thus comparable to the position occupied by Italy in the story of the "European Renaissance".<sup>15</sup>

For long Bengali historians of all schools including serious academic historians like A.F.S. Ahmed<sup>16</sup> and left-wing political activists like S.N. Tagore have taken a linear view of history<sup>17</sup>. They are all inspired by Sarkar. We are given to understand that there was a continuous struggle between the forces of progress and the forces of reaction. The heroes of this type of history are either "the enlightened" British administrators like Bentinck, who were bent upon reforms, who stamped out superstitious customs like the suttee (sati), introduced English education, and thus brought about a social change, or the

Indian reformers like Rammohan Roy who had to wage battles against orthodoxy for enlightened social reforms. There are various versions of this theme - liberal-imperialist, nationalist and marxist. Many historians of the younger generation have found faults in this theory of linear development from "Indian status to British contract" ( to borrow a phrase of Sir Henry Maine). Some among them have turned our attention to conservative-modernists like Radhakanta Deb. Some have found fault with Rammohan Roy and the Calcutta *bhadralok*. Far from being the torch-bearers of a social revolution the *bhadralok* appeared to be a small submissive colonial elite, who preached reform to please their British masters. There are others who have found Calcutta a large Bengali village - not a "Florence of the East".<sup>18</sup>

By 1961 Professor Sarkar himself, changed his views on "The Bengal Renaissance". Comparing "our renaissance" with the Italian renaissance, he found that there was no "tremendous sweep" or "vital energy" in Bengal. The British had "neither the intention nor the capacity to build up a new society". Moreover, unlike Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Bengal in the nineteenth-century was not a free country; "foreign conquest and domination was (*sic*) bound to be a hindrance rather than a help to a subject people's mental regeneration".<sup>19</sup> He thus concluded that "force of circumstances made the Bengal renaissance, as compared to its European counterpart, a thing of limited, partial, and somewhat artificial dimensions".<sup>20</sup> It seems then, that by 1961 the balloon of the Bengal renaissance had burst, but the debate continued and there is still a considerable literature on the subject. Although it cannot be compared to the Italian renaissance, and although there was no bourgeois movement in the nineteenth century that might have formed a prelude to a coming revolution, the nineteenth century in Bengali history is still considered an important century.<sup>21</sup>

Gandhi is an enigmatic figure in modern history; it is hard to fit him into one of the acceptable marxist categories. He was a nationalist leader who led his people to freedom. Yet Gandhi was no bourgeois revolutionary leading his oppressed people towards a new nation. He wanted India to go back to *Ram Rajya* (the mythical kingdom of the epic hero Rama), not to a heavenly city of the future. His economic programme based on cottage industry might have given temporary relief to the poverty-stricken villagers of India but it was impractical. The idea was attacked by both bourgeois and marxist economists. To the marxists Gandhi appeared a religious prankster with fads about sex and food. He did not behave like a bourgeois leader, he certainly did not look like one. He moved easily amongst his people and brought hundreds and thousands of them into his non-violent non-cooperation movement, into the streets, and into the prisons. His half-naked diminutive figure could command respect from men and women of all races and all ranks.<sup>22</sup> His importance in modern history could not be ignored.

Earlier marxists like M.N. Roy rejected Gandhi as an imperialist agent. In the forties however, when P.C. Joshi the leader of the Communist Party of India, debated with Gandhi about the 'anti-fascist people's war' and 'the Quit-India Movement', Joshi called Gandhi 'the father of the nation'. Even now most marxists and others write about him with respect and call him Gandhiji. The marxist historians and political activists are still debating about the real nature of this strange modern phenomenon, "Gandhi and his ism". What is, however, clear is the fact that no marxist would call Gandhi a revolutionary or a bourgeois nationalist. Dutt detects "bourgeois essence" behind idealistic statements;<sup>23</sup> Mukerjee despite his deep respect for "the father of the nation", finds Sun-Yat-Sen a more important figure in human history than Gandhi had been: "he has been more vitally influential on the course of China's progress and of world advance than Gandhi in India".<sup>24</sup> The Indian marxists thus found no 'renaissance' (the seed plot of a coming bourgeois revolution), no 1911 no Sun-Yat-Sen in modern India.

In the Anglo-Saxon world, popular knowledge of the history of modern India can be reduced to three episodes, "Clive and the Conquest of Bengal", "The Mutiny", and "Gandhi". These three episodes, as Stokes put it, epitomize three decisive historical phases of modern history in India, - "the colonial onset, the crisis of consolidation, and the colonial defeat and withdrawal".<sup>25</sup>

Of these three, "the mutiny" made the deepest imprint on the British psyche. The ferocity of the revolt and the mutiny, the popularity of the uprising among the masses (in areas between the rivers Ganga and Jamuna, "there was scarcely a man of either faith [Hinduism and Islam] who was not arrayed against us", as John Kaye, an administrator-historian, said), and the associated atrocities disturbed the British. While the journalists, administrators and missionaries searched for the causes of this unusual uprising and wrote volumes on "the mutiny", popular authors found a ready-made market for their racy popular histories and novels on "1857". More serious British historians of India in this century have turned their attention to other problems of modern history. The late Professor Eric Stokes was the exception to this general rule.<sup>26</sup>

While the British were pre-occupied with the cause of the widespread violence which threatened imperial power in India, Indians from the nationalist period started re-reading the evidence and in the mythology of nationalism, "1857" was enshrined as "the first war of independence". In 1909 Savarkar, an Indian revolutionary nationalist, published a book from London called *The Indian War of Independence of 1857*. Savarkar called "1857" a "tremendous revolution", for people rose from Peshawar to Calcutta to establish *Swadharma* (one's duty) and *Swaraj* (self-government).<sup>27</sup> The book was banned in India by the British authorities. Although the ban was not lifted till 1947, the book was smuggled into India and Savarkar's views were widely accepted by the nationalists. It is interesting to note that the middle classes in India made "1857" a part of their nationalist mythology late (fifty two years after the event) but not with great enthusiasm. Their ancestors, who lived through the "mutiny", were no supporters of the rebels. Benoy Ghose studied the middle class attitudes towards the "revolt and mutiny" of 1857. His conclusions are significant: "The new middle classes created under British rule saw no hope in the 1857 revolt. Their hope lay in the success of the English and European middle classes in the political, economic and social fields. They found the representatives of these "middle classes" in their own British rulers and thought it more prudent in their own class interest to follow these local British rulers rather than to back the wrong "feudal" horse. Out of this came their unequivocal condemnation of the rebels of 1857".<sup>28</sup>

There were one or two exceptions, but generally the middle classes were critical of the rebellion, if not active supporters of the British Raj. It is interesting to note that almost all histories of nationalism trace back the origins of political nationalism of the twentieth century to the new middle classes of the nineteenth century; their English education, social reforms, political associations, religious reforms and the like. In other words to "the renaissance". The peasants' revolts and "1857" sit uncomfortably in this 'new middle class' history of modern nationalism. Although all now agree with Savarkar about "the heroic, popular and anti-British" nature of the rebellion in 1857, they still think of it as backward-looking and feudal. Nehru summed up this view well: "Essentially it was a feudal outburst headed by feudal chiefs and their followers and aided by the widespread anti-foreign sentiment. ... It brought out all the inherent weaknesses of the old regime, which was making its last despairing effort to drive out foreign rule. ... They had already played their role in history and there was no place for them in the future. ... There was hardly any national and unifying sentiment among the leaders and mere anti-foreign feeling, coupled with a desire to maintain their feudal privileges was a poor substitute for this".<sup>29</sup>

Indian historians, academic or popular, marxist or nationalist, have all echoed Nehru in their works on 1857. In 1957 the government of India sponsored an official history - written by Professor S.N.Sen - to commemorate the events of 1857. Sen's work was praised for being "remarkably judicious" and "mild in tone". He found no evidence of prior conspiracy and nationalist uprising (except in Oudh, where there was a popular uprising and a strong sense of local patriotism).<sup>30</sup> Professor R.C. Majumdar, who refused to toe the official line, suggested that "the civil rebellion" was no holy war for national independence. The "rebellion" was a by-product of a political vacuum caused by military mutiny. To him, "the miseries and bloodshed of 1857-58 were not the birth-pang of a freedom movement in India but the dying groans of an obsolete autocracy".<sup>31</sup> A glance through the pages of Ainslie Emberey's selections on '1857' shows that most Indian historians, while admiring the heroism and the popularity of the revolt in 1857, condemned the "feudal" leadership or the "medieval" nature of the uprising.<sup>32</sup>

S.B. Chaudhuri was the only author who wrote enthusiastically about the rebellion of 1857. He had already written about *Civil Disturbances during the British Rule in India (1765-1851)*, when he started to work on '1857'. He put together all scraps of evidence that he could lay his hands on, to show that the rebellion was a popular uprising and that there was already a strong tradition of armed resistance against the British among the people and among the feudal chiefs. Unlike Nehru, Chaudhuri did not think that the uprising was backward-looking: "Thus old feudal instincts and anti-alien patriotism became mixed up in 1857 in a curious process. The latter was not yet of the pure advanced political type, as the leaven of feudal discontent was still strong. Yet the yearning for freedom which was latent in these instincts stood out as the outward emblem of a national outburst against foreign rule which was rendered intensive by reason of a socio-religious and economic discontent. Here, surely, we have objectively an anticipation of the future and not a mere recoil to the past".<sup>33</sup>

Chaudhuri, the only serious academic historian of 1857, was out on a limb. His nationalist *guru* Majumdar publicly condemned him and poured scorn on Chaudhuri's ideas of popular discontent.<sup>34</sup> His pupils, many of whom embraced marxism, grudgingly supported his thesis, but soon moved on to other areas of history.<sup>35</sup> So Chaudhuri was the only academic historian who supported the Savarkar thesis.

Marxist writers in the twenties and thirties almost ignored the events of 1857. Dutt in his most influential book *India Today* refers to 'the revolt' about seven times but only in relation to the British policy in India. The mutiny and the revolt was thus marginalised by the most influential marxist writer on India.<sup>36</sup> Sarkar in his 1946 edition of *Notes on the Bengal Renaissance* found "the mutiny was an upheaval of a mixed character. In the regions like Oudh it had some popular basis, but almost everywhere the leadership was of type which had no attraction for the new middle classes growing up under British rule". In 1957 he wrote a critical review of Sen's and Majumdar's books on 1857. He agreed with Chaudhuri, that the rebellion was popular and not reactionary. But Sarkar went half-way to meet Chaudhuri: for him, 1857 was still a feudal upheaval: "In the revolt of 1857 feudal ideas are clear enough in the instinctive turn to the restoration of the empire; in the loyalties to the local chiefs; in the characteristic disorganisation; in the hatred towards western reforms. But they are not sufficient to brand the great upsurge as reactionary".<sup>37</sup>

Hiren Mukerjee, author, marxist politician and historian wrote a book on *India's Struggle for Freedom* in 1945. His chapter on 1857 is a good example of the mixed feelings that both the nationalist and the marxist displayed towards the revolt. In his chapter on "The Revolt of Hindustan" Mukerjee says: "it should be agreed that though

nationalism, properly so-called, was yet to grip our people, the "mutiny" was as nearly a national revolt as was possible in the circumstances".<sup>38</sup>

The first serious Marxist attempt to study 1857 was P C Joshi's *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*. In it Joshi brought together scholars, journalists and political activists from all over the sub-continent and from Britain, France, Italy, China and the USSR. There were historical essays such as that by Talmiz Khaldun, as well as essays on literature, for example, P C Joshi's "Folk Songs on 1857"<sup>39</sup>. There were provocative and interesting articles on the radical presses in Britain, France, Russia, Italy and China during the 'mutiny'. This, many thought could be the beginnings of marxist scholarly writings on '1857'. Very few, however, whether young or old, followed P C Joshi.

The marxist thesis that was propounded by P C Joshi and his colleagues, relates the rebellion to the agrarian crisis and social changes that the British brought about in North India. All agreed that '1857' was a popular uprising, when peasants rose against a new oppressive system. But the rebellion failed because the propertied classes betrayed the cause; they had no real sympathy for the masses. Moreover, the revolt was backward looking:

This interpretation is supported by the fact that the revolt was caused not by a revolutionary and technological change in the means of production, necessitating a readjustment in established social relationships and demanding a new system of government, but merely by the dissolution of the old social order without the risk of a new order.<sup>40</sup>

It seems that marxists accepted Nehru's judgement on this issue.

In recent years a number of popular historical works have been written on the 'mutiny', mostly in vernacular languages. The central theme in these works is the popular uprising and the betrayal by the leaders. All the works praise the heroic peasantry and condemn the backward-looking leadership. The only serious work is that by Rudrangshu Mukherjee - a monograph on Oudh (Awadh). He has opened up a dialogue with the late Professor Stokes, and those who follow Stokes. His conclusions, however, are no different from those of other marxist writers: "In Awadh the opposition to the British in 1857 was truly universal, a "people's" resistance and represented not a revolutionary challenge but a popular rejection of an alien order".<sup>41</sup>

The so-called 'Subaltern School of South Asian History' is yet to present the peasants' side of the story. The platoon is too busy organising international seminars and talking to deconstructionists and post-modernists in Paris, London and Chicago to write a history of the peasants' revolts.

It seems to me that the marxist movement in India, unlike that in China and Vietnam, has been subsumed within the middle class led Nationalist movement; hence marxist historiography has yet to declare its independence.

The only time the Communists parted company with the Nationalists was in 1942. On 31 August 1942, a panic-stricken Viceroy of India telegraphed Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Britain, "I am engaged here in meeting by far the most serious rebellion since that of 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the world for reasons of military security". Linlithgow, the Viceroy, was right. In August, 1942, the British faced the most widespread, sometimes very violent, anti-colonial rebellion in India since the Great Rebellion and Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. It was very

alarming, since the uprising took place when the Japanese were pressing hard on the Eastern frontiers and government efforts were chiefly directed towards fighting the war. The revolt touched almost all sections of the population and engulfed the whole country. Many large areas were out of British control for days, and many villages for months, particularly in North Bihar and in South-west Bengal.

The 1942 Movement was the third of the great mass movements which were sponsored by the Congress Party under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It came at a time when the long drawn out negotiations for a Constitutional settlement between the British governments in London and Simla and the Congress leaders had ended in a complete deadlock. On August 8, 1942, the All India Congress Committee passed a resolution asking the British to quit India and urging every Indian to "go the fullest length under *Ahimsa* (non-violence) to bring about a complete deadlock in the country". The British replied with mass arrests of the Congress leaders and the country was plunged into utter chaos and anarchy not experienced by her people since 1857.

There were four distinct phases of the August Rebellion which lasted from 9 August 1942 till 5 May 1944, when Gandhi was released from prison. The first phase, which lasted for a few days, was no different from the traditional Congress Civil-disobedience movement. There were mass demonstrations and *hartals* (complete with suspension of all business) in all the big cities and in most of the towns and villages. Most workers left their factories for several days. The unions managed by the Communist Party, however, held aloof. The Communist Party had decided to support the Government in their war efforts. During the second phase, the Gandhian leadership had no control over the Movement and it took a violent turn. There were large-scale attacks on Government property. The chief targets of mob fury were railway stations, police stations, post offices, tramcars and buses. Attempts were made to dig up roads, damage the railway lines, telegraph and telephone systems. During the third phase of the Movement the revolutionaries started setting up their own governments in areas where the British had lost control. It took months and the ruthless use of the Air Force to regain control of these villages. By February, 1943, the Revolt was almost over, but students all over the country organised demonstrations on the 9th day of each month until Gandhi was released, in May, 1944.<sup>42</sup>

It is important to remember that the Communist Party and their unions actively discouraged people from joining the 1942 Movement, thereby isolating themselves from the mainstream of Indian Nationalism. It is thus not surprising that the marxists do not write about 1942, the biggest anti-British uprising in India since 1857.

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Hill - "Norman Yoke" in J. Saville (ed) *Democracy and the Labour Movement, Essays in Honour of Dona Torr*, London, 1954, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> S.N.Mukherjee, "Gauriya Samaj: A Literary Society of the *bhadralok*", in S.N.Mukherjee (ed.), *India, History and Thought: essays in Honour of A.L.Basham*.

<sup>3</sup> H. Mukerjee, *India's Struggle for Freedom* (3rd revised ed.) Calcutta, 1962, pp. 159-161.

<sup>4</sup> D.D. Kosambi, *Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, Bombay 1956, pp. 66-67 and 136-37.

<sup>5</sup> *Krsi-Parasara*, ed. and tr. G.P. Majumdar and S.C. Banerjee, Calcutta, 1960.

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Hill, *A Century of Revolution*, London, 1961 and Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, London, 1962.

<sup>7</sup> R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, Patna, 1968, pp. 64-77.

<sup>8</sup> D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Lokayata*, New Delhi (3rd ed.) 1973.

<sup>9</sup> R.S. Sharma, *Sudras in Ancient India*, Delhi, 1958, p. 282.

<sup>10</sup> *Ramacarita of Sandhyakaranandi* ed. R.C. Majumdar, R.G. Basak and N.G. Banerji, Rajshahi, 1939.



- 11 Muhammad Habib, 'Introduction', Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, (reprint), Aligarh, 1952, Vol. II. cf. K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, (3rd ed.), New Delhi, 1970, pp.4-7.
- 12 Irfan Habib *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, London, 1963.
- 13 David Kopf and Safiuddin Joarder (eds), *Reflections on the Bengal Renaissance*, Dacca, 1977, pp. 3-29.
- 14 S.N. Mukherjee, *op. cit.* p. 144.
- 15 S. Sarkar, "Notes on the Bengal Renaissance" in *Bengal Renaissance and other Essays*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 3.
- 16 A.F.S. Ahmed, *Social Idea and Social Change in Bengal, 1818-1835*, Leiden, 1965.
- 17 S.N. Tagore, *Bharater Silpa-viplav O Ramohan*, Calcutta, 1963.
- 18 Nirmal Kumar Bose, *Calcutta, a Social Survey*, Calcutta, 1968, pp. 79-85. *Idem* "Calcutta - a premature metropolis", *Scientific American*, September 1965.
- 19 S. Sarkar, "Rabindranath Tagore and Renaissance in Bengal", in Sarkar *op. cit.* p. 149-5.
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 For a short review of the literature on the Bengal Renaissance see the Introduction to D. Kopf and S. Joarder, *op. cit.*
- 22 Hiren Mukerjee, *Gandhiji: a study*, New Delhi, 1960, pp. 100-103.
- 23 R. Palme Dutt, *India To-day* (2nd ed.), Calcutta, 1970, pp. 380-81.
- 24 Mukerjee, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.
- 25 Eric Stokes, *The Peasant Armed, The Indian Revolt of 1857*, (ed. Chris Bayly), Oxford, 1986, p. 1.
- 26 P.C. Joshi (ed), *Rebellion: a symposium*, New Delhi, 1957, p. 2. cf. Stokes *op. cit.*, pp. 1-15.
- 27 V.D. Savarkar, as quoted in Ainslie Embree (ed), *1857 in India: Mutiny or War of Independence?* Boston, 1963, pp. 39-45.
- 28 Benoy Ghose, "Bengali Intelligentsia and the Revolt of 1857", P.C. Joshi (ed), *op. cit.*, p.117.
- 29 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, London, (4th ed), 1956, p. 324.
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