

VERNACULAR PRESS AND THE RISE OF POPULAR POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN COLONIAL SOUTH ASIA: CONTESTING 'RAJ' THROUGH LITERARY TRADITION OF INDIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

The present article seeks to examine the changes noticed under the colonial South Asia which has been argued by Karl Marx as 'destructive' and 'regenerative' phase of British rule. These two terminologies of Marx became an example for the writers of the 20th century to look into it in their literary tradition of India. While dealing with these two phases of history under the Raj, this article analyses the role of vernacular press, published from various parts of the country, in shaping Indian minds and bringing about political consciousness in

the country. The term 'popular' has been applied here to address class consciousness leading to political conflict and Indian response to colonial rule has also been deliberated. It also examines how literary tradition of the country and its impact on Indian society confront with the 'Raj' has also been discussed. For about two hundred years of the British rule, Indian experienced various kinds of challenges and changes in their socio- religious matters that affected them enormously., We have also chosen some vernacular (proscribed) literature published from various parts of the country to construct the history of the resistance movement that manifested in armed revolts, social protests, cultural assertions and intellectual dissent in colonial India. Most of the literatures dealing with British rule published in the first half of the twentieth century in colonial India were declared proscribed and its circulation was banned by the British. The purpose behind writing such pamphlets and circulating it among the masses, was obvious, that was to create national consciousness among the masses as to how the British introduced new system of administration to exploit Indian resources and at the same time how did they undermine the Indian social system in the garb of modernization and 'civilizing missions'. It also argues that those writing truth of the British rule were punished and their publications were banned under Section 124-A and 153-A of the Indian Penal Code and 99-A of Cr.P.C.

KEYWORDS

Vernacular Press, Resistance, Pamphlets and Leaflet, Dharna, Satyagraha, Khan Bahadur, Literary Tradition.

INTRODUCTION

We have made an attempt, in this article, to enquire on three major issues relating to Press in the colonial South Asia- the first one is related to the rise and growth of vernacular press; secondly the nature of politics under the Raj and its manifestation in the nationalist discourse and finally how did the Press prepared people of South Asia to resist against the colonial rule. In this endeavour, we have taken note from some selected proscribed (banned) literature from various parts of the country to analyze the nature of press politics and its role in the rise of political consciousness. For writing anti-British articles in the press was a signal of resistance movement through literary traditions, for which editors were put behind the bar and on many occasions they were fined. The proscribed literature found during the course of study can be categorized as - the political, cultural and religious literatures. However, in this study, we have taken note of political literature to find out how did Press help in the growth of popular consciousness leading to protest movements against the Raj and how did the Press brought a change in South Asian politics. The outcome of the press politics was the passing of 'sedition Act' and banning the circulation of such literatures under sections 124-A and 153-A of Indian penal Code (IPC) and 99-A of Criminal Procedure Code and action was initiated against its authors and publishers that involved in inciting the people to rise against the Raj.

Since the beginning of human existence on this planet, the people had developed the idea of sharing information from one person to another, from one society to the other, from king to common man and from one nation to another and today the electronic media has connected the whole globe together which is termed as 'Global Village'. However, the history of Indian press, especially the vernacular Press, in modern context, can be traced back to the coming of Europeans in India. Though, the press in the early phase of British rule did not occupy important place but very soon it occupied key position in society and it was used for propagating ideas and information on the one hand and for commercial enterprises by Business houses on the other hand to promote their commercial activities. It was William Bolts, who made an initiative in this direction to start a newspaper in 1767, but his attempt was miscarried and the author was deported for this venture. Then, James Hickey founded the *Bengal Gazette* in 1780 which became popular as '*a weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties but influenced by none*'. But very soon it was declared a publication of low order, because of its scrupulous attacks on individual, officials and even Governor-General and his wife. Many more complaints were lodged against this paper but the only restriction imposed was the withdrawal of right to circulate it by post. In 1782, a defamation case was lodged against Hickey by a missionary and thereafter by the Governor-General that put a ban on the publication of the *Bengal Gazette*. Though, five more papers were started from Calcutta between 1780 and 1785, one of which was the *Calcutta Gazette* that secured official patronage. The other one was *the Bengal Journal* came under the editorship of William Duane, that indulged into controversy by publishing a rumour against Lord Cornwallis that he was dead and it was attributed it to 'a certain distinguished Frenchman'. For this offence, Lord Cornwallis decided to deport William Duane but the Supreme Court withheld his deportation. A few month later, Sir John Shore, succeeded Lord Cornwallis, deported Duane. This incident of deportation of an editor shows that the press had been functioning in India at the mercy of the British authorities. Leicester Stanhope stated about censorship in 1823 that argues 'previous to the establishment of a censor of the press by Lord Wellesley, the people of India had the same liberty so as to breathe and live. No law forbade it'. It is true, theoretically, but there were many cases of deportation of editors, a most effective, and, indeed, a drastic means of controlling press in British India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy had protested and submitted a memorandum to the Supreme Court against the regulation restricting the freedom of press which was, though, rejected.

A BRIEF SURVEY OF INDIAN PRESS AND CENSORSHIP

It's true that the emergence of Indian publication industry complicated the political life of the British

in colonial south Asia. The appearance of press raised a number of questions on the functioning of the British 'Raj' and therefore the question of surveillance and control over mass media was anchored. From the late nineteenth century till India got independence, there was anxiety among the British officials as to how to supervise the circulation of ideas within Indian society. The tradition favoured a free press but the criticism against the government's inauspicious policies brought the press and literature under strict supervision to the extent of banning the circulation of literature and deportation of the Editors in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Meanwhile, a more rigid censorship came in operation because of an article appeared in the Asiatic Mirror that compared the strength of European in India with that of the native population. This article was written at a time when Lord Wellesley was in the midst of his campaign against Tipu Sultan. Lord Wellesley took it very seriously as he had deficiency in manpower as compared to Tipu Sultan. This information of press expressed the weakness of Lord Wellesley which could have been disastrous for him in the battle field. He, therefore, ordered his commander-in chief of his intension of 'transmitting rules to the whole tribe of editors' and directed him to transport them if requires. In less than a month Lord Wellesley ordered for imposing censorship to all papers of Calcutta and further directed 'to prevent the publication of all observation on the state of public credit or the revenues or the finances of the country', and, 'all observations with respect to the conduct of the Government or any of its officers, civil or military, marine, commercial and judicial'. Similar regulation had already been introduced in Bombay and Madras. These regulations were rigorously enforced in the country. As a part of censorship, the Baptist missionaries of Serampore were denied permission to establish their press. Fed up with criticism in private press reporting, Lord Wellesley decided to start Government newspaper, as an alternative to drive out private press out of existence. His intention was to save officials from rudiment of criticism and to involve a few European adventurers who were found 'unfit to engage in any credible method of subsistence'. These harsh measures continued for twenty years, until Lord Hastings, a liberal minded Governor General, abolished the regulation requiring pre-censorship in 1818, despite of the opposition of the Court of Directors. The editors were advised to abstain from writing on proceedings of the Court of Directors. The initiatives taken by Lord Hastings was not only continued by Charles Metcalfe, an officiating Governor-General, but he repealed the licensing regulation on August 3,1835, with the unanimous support of the council, which was the most liberal press act in the history of press in India. Metcalf's action was disliked by the Home authorities but they did not annul it. Since then, the freedom of press became an accepted fact.

By the middle of the 19th century, the British India witnessed gradual development of Indian Press. For example, the *Bombay Times* was founded in 1838 and later it became *Times of India*, set an altogether a new tone in the field of journalism. Other papers, such as, the *Statesman*, the *Pioneer* and the *Civil and Military Gazette* had a sound and restraining effect on both European and Indian thoughts. These Newspapers played a great role in political education of the Indian middle classes. The establishment of Indian-owned newspapers such as the *Hindu* of Madras, and the *Leader* of Allahabad, contained a firm tradition of journalistic integrity. Meanwhile, strong Indian-owned press, both in English and Vernaculars had grown up in India under the Baptist Missionaries of Serampore. They began to publish religious pamphlets in several vernacular languages and distributed them among Indians, though they were non-political, which embarrassed the authorities for their blunt and narrow comments on Hinduism and Muslim beliefs and practices. In 1818, the missionaries had started publishing a Bengali monthly magazine and then a Bengali weekly, the *Samachar Darpan*, with the permission of Lord Hastings, which was subsequently used for the purpose of publishing translated version of official orders also. In 1821, many controversial statements on religious topics appeared in this journal induced Raja Ram Mohan Roy to establish the *Sambad Kaumudi*, devoted largely to contradict the statement of the missionaries.

INDIAN PRESS AND CENSORSHIP AFTER 1857

The Indian press, especially after the revolt of 1857, grew rapidly owing to the increase of political consciousness and the establishment of direct communication between India and Britain by 1860. The majority of papers published, then, were in the vernacular languages, though there were a few English papers as well. In 1876 there were 62 such papers in Bombay presidency, 60 in the North-West Provinces (Awadh and Central Provinces), 28 in Bengal and 19 in Madras. Gradually these papers displayed applauding work in bringing national consciousness. Among these, some were highly sensitive such as- the *Indian Mirror* of Keshab Chandra Sen, the *Bengalee* under Surendranath Banerjee. However, some Bengali weekly papers- *Sulabh Samachar*, *Bangabasi*, *Sanjibani* and *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* (initially a Bengali then bilingual(English-Bengali) and finally an English weekly), exercised great influence in molding public opinion against Government policies on political, social and educational matters. English newspapers in India exuded hatred and clamoured for revenge, while Indian journals, according to Lord Canning, 'sedulously, cleverly, artfully' poured forth seditious literature. The vernacular press developed harsh criticism against Government policy which evoked British authorities for the renewal of pre-censorship and jails for recalcitrant editors, which continued until 1878, when a new 'Gagging Act' sought to limit the freedom of vernacular newspapers. Criticism against British officials compelled them to intervene in Indian publication industries through legal methods that left a legacy of laws to control the press. Act XXV of 1867, initiated 'for the regulation of printing presses and newspapers, for the preservation of copies of books printed in British India, and the registration of such books' became the legal basis of surveillance system. After 1867, Books, Journals and newspapers were required to maintain the names of the authors, printers and publishers and India Office was to be informed accordingly regarding the materials printed in India. Registration of press and confidential reports thereon especially about the tone and tenor of the paper was also prepared by the officials at the lower level and the government was well informed to initiate warnings and prosecution if it was found that the material published in the paper was objectionable and that might create hatred against the British. The local government had the primary function of investigating and collecting data on Indian literary trends, while the Government of India served as the nerve centre; it was monitoring reports and taking initiative of circulating memoranda to subordinate and the India Office. Keeping in view the nature of publication, several amendments to the Indian Penal Code extended the officials jurisdiction over the press. Regarding seditious publications, two categories of literatures had been identified; the first one was printed in India and the other one was imported from abroad. In India, there were many centers of revolutionary publication, among them the most important were, Bengal, Poona and Lahore. While the seditious literatures were generally imported from England and America in the shape of *Indian Sociologists* of London and *Gaelic American* of New York; to these Paris was added later with the appearance of *Bande Mataram*. Later, San Francisco became the most important centre of publication and distribution of revolutionary print materials. The seditious literature published abroad, of course, were treated in a different way, the usual practice to prohibit their entry in India, was under Sea Custom Act.

The restriction imposed on Press by Lord Lytton under the Vernacular Press Act, 1878, was strongly criticized by the Liberal party in the British Parliament, then in opposition, but it had no effect. It continued till Lord Ripon's Government repealed it in 1882. After the partition of Bengal, a new trend in press politics began in the country; it started publishing a large number of revolutionary literatures that was inciting people for revolution and murder of European. The existing sedition law was put into operation, but it had little effect and the Muzaffarpur bomb case happened. There were a number of unhealthy events occurred in the country due to press campaign. The government considered the press reporting and misrepresentation of facts had exhorted people for violence against Government. To put a check on offensive press, an Act was passed in June 1908 for the prevention of incitements to murder and other offences in newspapers. It provided the power for the forfeiture of presses in which newspapers were

printed containing seditious matters relating to incitement and murder of the Europeans or any offence under Explosive Substances Act or to any act of violence. But this Act of 1908 did not prevent the press from publishing seditious literature and therefore Press Act of 1910 was passed. Under this Act, the keeper of the printing presses and the publisher of the newspapers were required to deposit security and the local government was empowered to forfeit the security in certain cases. To make the Press laws more stringent the British Government induced a passage in section 124-A, in the Indian Penal Code a 'sedition' clause aimed generally at actions which caused 'disaffection.' This was further amended by Act IV of 1898 that widened the scope for prosecution. Section 124-A can be read as follows:

Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards Her Majesty, or the Government established by law in British India shall be punished...."

Though, the revolutionary literatures were published at various places but Bengal was very rich and its publications were highly sensitive, it was preparing people for sacrifice. The newspapers engaged in shaping Indian minds for revolution were- the *Yugantar* (New Era) started in 1906 by Barindra Kumar Ghosh, the *Sandhya* (Twilight) edited by Brahmoo Bandhup Upadhyaya, the *Bande Mataram* of Calcutta was started in November 1906 by Arabindo Ghosh, the *Karamayogin* (The Devotee of Action) started in June 1909 by Arabindo Ghosh, The *Suprabhat* Magazine edited by Miss Kumudini Mitter, The *Kesari* and *Mahratta* of B.G Tilak, The *Kal* edited by Shivram Mahadev Pranjpe, a Maratha Brahmin. Beside these, there were *Ananda Math* (the Abbey of Bliss) by Bankim Chandra Chatterji, *Bhawani Mandir* by Arabindo Ghosh, *Sikher Balidan* by Miss Kumudini Mitter, and many more which are still preserved in Bengal State Archives, Kolkatta, in a very brittle condition. The contents of these papers were highly inflammatory in the eyes of the British but today its study would provide more information relating to British Raj which has not, yet, been disclosed. To censure these papers a new section 153-A to the Indian Penal Code was added in which writings or speeches inciting class hatred were made punishable. A final amendment was made in section 505, defining the general law of sedition which covered statements creating public mischief.

THE BEGINNING OF MODERNIZATION UNDER THE 'RAJ'

Since the establishment of British rule, the English were engaged in making propaganda of the superiority of the West. While doing so, they declared the East as backward and uncivilized and they pleaded for English education as 'key' to all progress in Indian society. Various arguments have been put forwarded regarding the image of India from the Western and Indian perspectives. The British scholars have projected their own image of a 'civilized nation' on one hand and they had perceived India as 'backward and uncivilized' country on the other hand. By doing so, the English prepared Indian educated minds psychologically to accept the superiority of the west and they were made to believe that for the modernization India British rule was badly needed for which the English had come all the way from Britain to India to make the Indians civilized. Charles Grant, a servant of the East India Company, on his return to England published a pamphlet entitled, '*Observation*' wherein he made a critical observation of the state and society of the Asiatic subjects of the Great Britain, particularly with respect to morals and on the means of imparting knowledge. While discussing about Indian society, he charged the Hindus of Bengal with dishonesty, corruption, fraud mutual hatred and distrust and described their custom such as sati, as barbarous. To Muhammadans he endorsed with the terminology such as "haughtiness, perfidy, licentiousness and lawlessness." As a remedy to all these evils, Grant suggested a 'healing principle', that was, the supersession of existing religions by Christianity through the dissemination of knowledge of

science and literature of Europe, 'a key which would at once open a world of new ideas'. Later, Lord Macaulay did the same; he praised English education and stated in his minutes on education that '*a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia*'. Indian also accepted this position. It is evident from Rammohan Roy's letter to Lord Amherst, the then Governor-General, in 1824, pleading for the introduction of modern education as the cultural world of the intelligentsia was shaped by British education. The Indian traditional system of education, compared to the western knowledge, was considered inadequate and stagnant, even if its accessibility was fairly satisfactory. The traditional system of education in the words of Ram Mohan Roy loaded 'the mind of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society'. But these arguments of early nationalists and social reformers were completely discarded by revolutionary nationalists of the twentieth century.

NATIONALIST CRITICISM AGAINST THE BRITISH POLICIES

One Ramsubhag in his leaflet entitled, '*Bhartiyo*' gives an account of the sufferings of Indians under the British Raj and he pleaded for unity amongst Indians required for the welfare of the country. According to him, the 'Mother India' was lamenting with utmost grief under the 'Raj' and asking her sons to think of it. He makes a critical analysis of the British Education system and argues that the promise given to the Indians for government service after acquiring modern education were false and misleading. Contrary to it modern education had made the Indian slave of the English, says Ramsubhag. He also criticizes the opening of Hospitals and the use of foreign (Allopathic) medicine because of its side effects. For him, the use of traditional medicines had effectiveness without any side effects. He was critic to the establishment of modern factories as it would be the source of pollution and ecological change in the country what we are experiencing today. The reason for the spread of Cholera, Plague, asthma, cough and fever all over the country was the result of the establishment of modern industries which has polluted the environment. The export of food grains from India to Britain has also been criticized as it was the main reason for great famines in the country which affected millions and millions of people and there were tolls of life due to starvation. The export of raw cotton and Jute from India and in return the import of finish products from Britain had affected Indian handicrafts industries. It has also been pointed out that the English send Rs. 600-700 millions to Britain every year from India to import foreign cloths. The other means of exploitation was the establishment of kutchheries (Courts) and stamp papers in the country. By appointing *Vakils* (Advocates) in the court they taught us the art of speaking lies which was against Indian culture. They introduced the evil practice of bribery and intoxicants like Ganja, Bhang, Cocaine and wine to pollute Indian minds.

Satyendra Nath Majumdar in his Bengali pamphlet entitled, '*Svadinatar Dabi*' (claim to Independence) supports the claim of the Indian National Congress and said it was based on 'justice' and 'reasonableness' but the British imperialists' writers refute this claim. He went on arguing that the British imperialistic policy that lasted two hundred years witnessed movements and conflicts against the British rule in various parts of the British Empire in India. The demand for independence or self-government in India was an outcome of the problem Indian had been facing. According to him, the tyranny and apathy in India was due to the British imperialist's policy. To address India's problems a brief account of the political history of India under the Hindu and Muhammadan periods have been narrated to make a comparison with the British regime. According to him the British rule had brought disastrous effect on the Indian civilization, economy, political and spiritual progress of India; hence the only course open to her was the attainment of *Purna Swaraj*, that is, complete independence by severing the British connection. The writer considers it to be a sin against humanity and God to remain under the British which had inflicted on our country with the 'four gold' evils- the transformation of nationalism in the form of literature, science, music and art and industry. Satyendra Nath has criticized the British policy of oppression on weak races by means of organized

robbery along with the expansion of trade; the daring crafty, cruel, self-conceited and deceitful Anglo-Saxon have had extended its supremacy in America, Africa and Asia. They had established colonies by destroying the weaker races and by applying various tricks of exploitation under the false veil of administration. In the course of a review of the British rule, Satyendra Nath argues that the English began to achieve their goals by setting one sections of the society against another. All this was happening because the people of India were foolish and devoid of political consciousness. Hindus and Muhammadans of India, taken into service as sepoys on a monthly salary of Rs. 6/- began to cut the throats of their countrymen as servants of the East India Company. Criticizing the servants of the Company, Satyendra Nath says that the cunning unprincipled Bengali acting as a *gomasta* (Agent) of the Company made plunder easy for the company by defrauding the artisans and traders of the country by means of trickery and stratagem.

It has also been debated in the pamphlet how did English become rich? The tyrannies of Lord Clive and of Hastings are recorded as notorious in history. The great 'famine of seventy-six' (1876) had affected one third of the population of Bengal fell into the jaws of death during this terrible famine. Historians may narrate that when man were being goaded by hunger, they went on eating raw flesh, the officers of the company, unmoved by the sight of that extreme misery of the people were engaged in prosecuting their selfish ends. According to Smith, Hastings administration was only another name for cupidity, perfidy, tyranny and barbarity. India suffered endless miseries owing to the establishment of British sovereignty in India- particularly the relentless operation of the imperialistic policy guided by a mercantile people. This perception for the British has been narrated by Sri Muktjiv in his Hindi leaflet, *Gaurang Gunanubad (Bande Matram)* that the English were: deceitful, cunning, oppressors, dishonest, mischievous, murderers, dogs of hell, selfish, cruel, unfaithful, evil-doers, Dacoits, thieves, pickpockets, tyrants, irreligious, looters, loafers, bloodsuckers, parrot-eyed, betrayers bastards, robbers, oppressors and asses. It also discusses how did the English come to India and having seen our wealth how did they become greedy to snatch away our wealth by teaching us a formula of deceit and forgery, and made us to fight amongst ourselves. Taking advantage of our disunity they took possession of our country. It put much emphasis on the unity of the country.

The leaflet, '*Bande Matram Swadhin Bhatat Ki Jai*' addressed to the lovers of the country that the people were sufferings under the Raj. It further says that the blood of innocents were shed, the slaughtering of females and children had taken place in the name of modernization. The pamphlet, '*Congress ki lalkar*' (the challenge of the Congress) narrates about the British atrocities and argues that how did the British sow the seed of dissention among Indians and they instigated people to fight with each other and made them weak by creating disunion finally they captured power in the country.

"He who has ruined my country alas!
May evil betide him who has cheated us!
Coming here as a trader they asked for a yard of land.
Sowing the seeds of disunion they let us fight amongst ourselves.
Usurping our rights they made their influence felt".

But Mahadeo Prasad Singh put focus on the British system of justice in the context of Indian handicraft industries in his *Kunti Biyog*. He says that there was de-industrialization in the country under the Raj that affected people in large numbers who were engaged in small scale industries. As a result, people lost their means of livelihood and to take revenge from the British, they decided not to touch British cloth on the one hand and they would prepare *motia* cloth for self consumption on the other hand. By doing so they would reduce the Manchester and Lancashire mills into dust. He went on saying earlier Indians were ignorant of British rule but now they had realized the reality of the British rule and therefore for making

rough cloth charkha had been introduced.

“Alas o cruel: you have done much injustice;
I shall not touch your cloth with my hand,
Alas o cruel: I shall prepare *Motia* (cloth).
I shall reduce your Mills and Machines to dust;
Alas o cruel; I shall introduce charkha.
While we were ignorant”.

Mahadeo Prasad also argues about the Punjab incident and says that in Jallianwala Bagh, men, women and children were massacred in large numbers without any reason that affected the sentiments of Indians to the extent that the Punjabies became highly alert from the British Government. After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre the Indians did not become violent against the British Government as Gandhiji had taught them the philosophy of wisdom (non-violence). The use of intoxicants has also been criticized by Mahadeo Prasad Singh that the English, at first, allowed the use of intoxicants and after its use when someone became senseless he was arrested and put behind the bar. When Gandhiji began his movement for the boycott of wine and toddy, the English came ahead with the policy of appeasement saying that the wine was used by the great men of the world to attract Indian towards intoxicants.

You created a dispute in the Ganja shop;
Alas o cruel: you broke the head of Chuhur Roy.
You thought the brave Punjabis to be birds;
Alas o cruel; Dyer became a bird killer;
You took the lives of innocents persons;
Alas o cruel; you played a good game of shooting
(Shikar) in India; you dishonored the female folk
Alas o cruel; you arrested the mob, you went to the Punjab and fired bullets
Alas o cruel; you offered a nice salvation to India,”.

One Manna Lal Pathak in his *Bhandaphor* (Secret exploding) incites the people to make the mother India free from the bondage of slavery. To achieve this goal, he suggested for the unity among Indians and the boycott of foreign goods as they were unlawful. He put forwarded argument in favour of Swadeshi goods that the use of Swadeshi goods would affect British economy. The decrease of their income would affect their trade and commerce and that would force them to go away straight to London.

“We are Deshi (native) and we want Swadeshi.
What have we to do away with Bideshi (foreign things).
Their income will decrease and expenditure increase.
Thus these people will themselves be seen walking away
out of sight.
When they will become insolvent they will be puzzled;
They will not then talk of India but go away straight to
London wherein the rest of the enemies get shelter there.
Then pick them up to a man: whither will they run to.
Look at their doings they looted us with love”.

The foreign cloth boycott campaign in the United Provinces gained momentum on a large scale.

Demonstrations were held in every district at which foreign cloth collected by students were burnt publicly. In Aligarh an innovative idea was framed to attract the attention of people towards the boycott of foreign cloth. Donkeys were paraded with European clothes that show aggressive character of the movement. Another technique used in Aligarh to mobilize masses against foreign cloths was the circulation of printed leaflets in Hindi and Urdu by Lakshmi Narayan Sharma, the Secretary, District Congress Committee, Aligarh, stating that either cow's or pig's fat was used in the manufacture of foreign cloth and it was endorsed by Pandit Kali Prasanna Kavivisharad and Muhammad Ikram. Even the boycott of foreign cloth movement of Gandhiji had a considerable effect on its sale of foreign cloths in India. But the leaflet had also a great effect on the sale of foreign cloth as it is evident from the letter of District magistrate Aligarh made a denial of the use of Cow's and Pig's fat and the letter written in Hindi and Urdu was circulated among the people. A Hindi pamphlet, 'Bande Mataram-Bharat Udhar' tried to argue that Indians were fighting for their own right which was not at all unfair. The English, on the contrary, had been committing tyrannies and making stringent laws against Indians. The British system of justice was unjust and therefore God was with the just. It was immaterial for them whether they would be put on the gallows or they had to face Dyer Shahi oppression like Jallianwala Bagh incident.

"We are standing for our own rights; this is not at all unfair.
Give us these very rights; this is but a reasonable demand of
ours.
For this, you tyrannies passed stringent laws.
What a policy is yours! You are doing injustice.
Even God does not ever do good to the unjust.
We are standing on the path of truth, (no matter) whether
you spare or out off our necks.
You pay no heed to the Dyer shahi oppression,
You mind very little about what is justice and what is
otherwise."

The publication of proscribed pamphlets and leaflets were not confined to Northern India alone, a large number of vernacular literature were being published from Lahore (now in Pakistan). One Om Prakash Sahni of Lahore in the preface of his Urdu pamphlet entitled, *Dard-i-Watan*, narrates the suffering of people in the country and argues for the attainment of Swaraj in these words: "may God give us strength so that by putting up with suffering in the service of the Bharat we may be able to attain *Swaraj*." According to him the British had cut off the heads of innocents at the Jallianwala Bagh and on many occasions the Indian did not object and they sacrificed everything what they had, the only thing they had now was life that too, they were ready to sacrifice for the British.

"India is now-a-days helpless in every way
How shall I at this moment narrate to you my afflictions,
If I get released from one the other (affliction) is ready,
If your sword is there for innocents
You can cut off the head without fear we don't demur at all
We have sacrificed for you whatever we had
Only life is left you can take that also"

Munshi Abdul Khaliq of Delhi in his poem headed, '*Cry of Distress at the Martial Law*', compares the

British atrocities with that of the Halaku Khan, the Mongol invader, and argues that the atrocities made by Halaku Khan were faded and insignificant in comparison to British atrocities. The poem runs thus:

“By turning back over and over again they perpetrated such atrocities that they made Halaku Khan’s memory fade into insignificance.
One slain one was over another slain one like the winding sheet while another one was rolling about in a wounded state
If life was still left in any one they turned back and inflicted on him a wound.
Who could give redress when helplessness was weeping over the head?
They buried whomsoever they liked and they burnt whomsoever they wished
They did not hear anybody’s complaints, to whom could they narrate their stories?
When the Indians demurred they declared the Martial Law
The very people who had been brought up in luxury had to crawl on their bellies,
They were subjected to so much flogging that their whole body became swollen
Those orphans on whom the affliction has fallen are bewailing
Those women who have been made widows are alas! Weeping at homes”.

Commenting on Indian mind set Om Prakash in a poem headed ‘*O donkey why don’t you feel anxious about Swaraj?*’ argues that Indians were not sincere towards their goal for the attainment of Swaraj; they were more concerned for the welfare of the British than their own countrymen. The Indians were great traitors in comparison to donkeys, he says.

“Yesterday I casually asked a donkey
Why are you not anxious about Swaraj, O donkey?
On hearing this donkey said-‘Hold your tongue’.
You do not speak of your nation at all
Who after abandoning their own people are devotedly
attached to others?
Sir! They are worst traitors than the donkey”

One Aksir Sialkoti in his Urdu pamphlet entitled, *Watan Ka Rag*, has asked the people to awake from the deep sleep because the trumpet of love of nationalism has been sounded. A true sense of nationalism has been defined by him that provoked people against the Raj. The *Bihar Bandhu* did not lag behind in its mission of criticizing sycophants; it published a letter of Ramkrit Sharma of Jagdispur to vote only for those who stand as candidates for the Swaraj Ashram and not to the *Ji Hazoors*, the sycophants of the Government. One Ramesh Chandra Sharma also contributed a poem headed ‘The Mother’s Call’ to the *Bihar Bandhu* (Patna) that exhorted and excited the youth to move ahead to protect the honour of motherland. It further argues that it was a right time to create a terror in the minds of demons, the foreigners, that the sons of soil had come to the battle field. The writer goes on saying about the miserable condition of the country where the mother had lost everything, she had become beggar to the extent that there was no water pots and plates left to her and she was passing worst days and her lips were being sealed, even then she had been calling her sons with much grief and pain crying that her feet were fettered, come and save her honour and make her free from the troubles and poverty and this was debt of Mother due on to you. One Pandit Chandrika Prasad ‘Jigyasu’ through his Hindi pamphlet “*Swatantra Bharat Ka Singhnad*”, exhorts the people that the only remedy against foreign rule was the boycott of foreign cloths and intoxicant articles including the manufacturing of salt and non- payment of taxes. By doing so, Indians would achieve freedom

from the British rule. It also exhorts the people that they should rely on their duty and action, to teach a lesson to the world. The English had been categorically told that they should not miscalculate our strength we were not girls rather we are Durga, the destroyer of demon. It also narrates by shouting the slogans of liberty; we would shake the heart of wicked. By taking national flag in hand we would sing the national song, and in this way we would put life even among the dead. It further suggests that by doing so we would achieve freedom, then the desolate garden of India would bloom with lover- flowers, on that day not only the earth trembled rather the sky would shake. This time Kabiratan would flash like thunder bolt to shake the heart of the English.

In "*Rashtriya Jhankar urf Swaraj Ka Jhanda*", Rup Narayan Lal of Patna exhorts Indians to achieve freedom at any cost. He further expresses his desire to go to jail for the cause of the motherland, in case if magistrate record his statements he would say, "let India be free". In this battle against the British, his desire was to secure the position of Lord Prahlad. In his opinion, India is for Indians and the God alone was the friends of Indians, for the freedom of the country he was ready to open his chest. To see the desire of sacrifice for the motherland, Lord Indra continues to sing the national song. While Pandit Prabhu Narayan Misra in his Hindi pamphlet "*Rashtriya Talwar*" highlights the fragile condition of India and says that the children of India were starving and dying for the want of food while in England dogs take biscuits and milk and the reason for this scarcity of eatable items was the plunder that the English had been committing since long. Misra while addressing the youth as "lion of India" calls them to awake to free your motherland. For those cooperating with the British, Misra asks them, the food of this country were forbidden for them. At the same time he asks them by cooperating with the British, they were unnecessarily disgracing the mother. He further asks them to come ahead and become volunteers, for him swing from the gallows was equal to heaven.

CONCLUSION

The vernacular press had continuously been publishing a large volume of literature dealing with British atrocities in India; it created political consciousness in the country that India could not progress under the Raj. They had also developed a firm belief among Indians that all the policies framed by the British was for the systematic exploitation of Indian economy and therefore the only way to save India was to combat colonial rule both by revolution and through literary tradition of the country. As a result, a large number of literatures came under publication which deals about the atrocities of the Raj. The revolutionary writers of the early 20th century evoked the people through their writings regarding the goal of life what has been written in the Gita and other religious texts. By citing relevant text from the religious texts, the press had been preparing people for a greater sacrifice. It has further stated how Indians had devoted their life for the cause of motherland in the past and the duty they had for the welfare of the country. By doing so the press had provoked people to sacrifice life for the well being of their countrymen and free Mother India from the yoke of British rule. Out of fear from the vernacular press and their revolutionary writings, the British Government came with a number of legislation restricting the freedom of press

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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3. N.G Barrier, *Banned Controversial Literature and Political Control in British India, 1907-1947*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1976, p.4 see also Percival Griffiths, *The British Impact on India*, Macdonald, London,1952,pp.266-67

4. Percival Griffiths, *The British Impact on India*, Macdonald, London, 1952, p.267
5. A.R Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay 1948 (Reprint 2010), pp.215-216
6. Ibid, p.268.
7. Ibid.
8. Percival Griffiths, *op.cit*, pp.268-9.
9. Sharad Karkhanis, *Indian Politics and the Role of the Press*, Vikash Publishing House Pvt Ltd., New Delhi, 1981, p.36., see also NG Barrier, *op. cit*, p.4
10. S N Sen, *Modern India*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi, 1991, p.152
11. Ibid, pp.151-152
12. Percival Griffiths, *op.cit*, pp.270-72
13. NG Barrier, *op.cit*, p.4
14. Ibid, pp.5-6.
15. J C Ker, *Political Troubles in India*, Allahabad, 1917, p.64.
16. Ibid.p.136
17. Ibid
18. NG Barrier, *op.cit*, p.4-5; see also J C Ker, *Political Troubles in India*, pp.63-65
19. J C Ker, *op.cit*, pp.30-135
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21. T.B Macaulay *Minute on Education*, in C. H. Philips (ed.): *The correspondence of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck*, vol.2, letter No.793, p.1405
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24. Ibid
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26. Ibid
27. Ibid
28. Ibid
29. Ibid
30. Sri Muktjiv, '*Gaurang Gunanubad'* a leaflet in Hindi was found in circulation in Muzaffarpur, Bihar [See PSBSA, .239/1931, BSA]
31. The leaflet, '*Bande Matram Swadhin Bhatat Ki Jai'* was published by Indian Youth League and printed at the Shambhu Press, Chatgaon, was found in the possession of one Dinkar Dutta Chaubey son of Tara Dutta Chaubey of village Baijnathpur P.S Mirzapur, District Saran. [See PSBSA, 150/1932, BSA]
32. The '*Congress ki Lalkar'* a Hindi pamphlet printed at the Sri Lakshmi Vilas Press Ltd. Indore, was found in circulation in Muzaffarpur. [PSBSA, 172/1932, BSA]
33. Mahadeo Prasad Singh, *Kutni Biyog*, a Hindi pamphlet, printed at the Sree Press, Calcutta [see PSBSA, 143/1924]
34. The term '*motia'* (rough) cloth has been used here for Khadi cloth
35. Mahadeo Prasad Singh, *Kutni Biyog*, *op.cit*

36. Ibid

37. Ibid

38. Manna Lal Pathak, Rae Bareilly, "Bhandaphor", a pamphlet in Hindi, published and compiled by Pandit Ram Jiawan Lal Chaturvedi. It was printed by Pandit Bhagwati Prasad Pande at the Swaraj Press, Allahabad[PSBSA ,7/1923]

39. See pamphlet, "Bhandaphor", op.cit.

40. See Home Political File No.707/1921,U.P State Archives, Lucknow

41. A Hindi pamphlet entitled, " Bande Matram Bharath Udhar" beginning with the words," He vir putra" and ending with the words," Subparan karori-mata," and recommend its prescription under Section 99-A Cr.P.C . The pamphlet was found in circulation at Jhajha District Monghyr, where it was being sold by one Kanhya Prasar Singh Congress worker of Gandhi Ashram, Gidhour.[PSBSA 77/1923]

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44. Ibid

45. Ibid

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50. See Hindi pamphlet, "Rashtriya Jhankar urf Swaraj Ka Jhanda" by one Rup Narayan Lal of Patna and published by the Ramashwar Pustakalaya, Athmalgola (Patna). The name of the press where it was printed is not mentioned.[Political Special file No. 353/1930]

51. See Hindi pamphlet entitled "Rashtriya Talwar" Publisher by Pt. Prabhu Narayan Misra, Bookseller, Pustak Bhandar Chauk, Gaya, Printed at the Arjun Press Kashi (Benaras). [Political Special file No.372/1930]