

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN NORTH KARNATAKA FROM 1800 TO 1947

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ABSTARCT

The Freedom Movement in North Karnataka was more intensified widespread and radical than in the other areas of Karnataka. The sudden emergence of the associations and organizations is one of the achievements of anti partition movement, which was turned as Swadeshi movement in India general and in Bengal particular. Most of such the Samitis or national volunteer movements were quite open bodies engaged in a variety of activities. Physical and moral training of members, social work during famines, epidemics, religious festivals, preaching the Swadeshi message through multifarious forms, organizing crafts, school arbitration courts and village societies, implementing the techniques of passive resistance to the foreign rule.

In Karnataka at in Bengal and Maharashtra there were numerous organizations, Samitis and Sabhas established in every nook and corner of the state, on the eve of new national spirit far more important was the inauguration of the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals by Tilak. This may be said to have, an important landmark in the history of the Swadeshi Movement and aftermath. Tilak's object and outedly was to utilize the religious festivals and historical traditions for the purpose of engendering patriotism and national spirit among the people.

KEYWORD: North Karnataka, Association, Spirit, Movement, Preaching

INTRODUCTION

India's struggle for freedom is a subject that has been widely researched. Thousands of books have been written on the different aspects of this single theme, but still there is a scope for fresh attempts on regional levels. This project is a sincere endeavour to throw new light on a much neglected but very important phase of the freedom struggle in Karnataka. Here, the researcher tried in converting a local theme into a national one.

In 1905, Bengal was divided into two separate provinces. The origin of the partition idea lies in the Orissa famine of 1866, when it was felt that the province of Bengal was so big that in times of emergency it was very difficult to pay attention to the outlying areas of the province. In 1874, a few Bengali speaking districts were transferred from Bengal. Even then, the crisis posed by the large size of the province of Bengal loomed large. But the bold step to manage the situation was taken up by Lord Curzon who, in June 1903, prepared an exhaustive minute on the territorial redistribution of India. Efficiency of administration, unification of the Oriya – speaking population under a single administration, development of Assam and the like, were cited as the rationale behind the partition. The proposal for partitioning Bengal was officially published in January, 1904. Swarms of small boys in the Dacca streets, carried with them placards bearing the words “Do not turn us into Assamese” and the street walls were filled with slogans such as “Pray, Do not sever Bengalis”, “Do not divide us”, Do not flout

history and nationality". Lord Curzon ignored the writings on the wall and moved ahead to carryout his scheme, only to see it annulled on 12 December 1911.¹

Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, Alur Venkatrao, N. S. Hardikar, Hardekar Manjappa, Sakkari Balachar, Krishna Rao Mudvedkar, Ananthrao Dabade and many others undertook extensive tours and delivered speeches. Swadeshi industries arose in many places of Karnataka like, weaving factory at Kittur and Badami, match box factory at Dharwad, a porcelain factory at Lakshmeshwar. The Karnataka Industrial Conference held at Dharwad in 1907 to decide on the lines of development of Swadeshi industry and boycott of foreign goods. Foreign cloth was burned in Ranebennur and other parts of Karnataka. This awakening came to be sustained greatly by the work of the national schools, which were started at many places of Karnataka.

Thus, the Swadeshi movement spread all over the nation, in a short period of time it scattered in Karnataka also. The people across the country gave their full-fledged support to the progress of this movement and they were fully responsible for the growth of industries and establishment of national schools, colleges in their respective areas. But the heroic deeds of the leaders of the Swadeshi movement and the growth of this movement are highly neglected. Even on some occasions the role of Karnataka State in the Swadeshi movement is often neglected and even on some of the occasions many regional and national scholars and the researchers underplayed it. Hence, the present study makes an honest attempt to probe out the valuable role played by the Karnataka State and its revolutionaries in the epic movement of Swadeshi.

2. Objectives of the Research

1. To study the undertaken after the post-independent period even up to 1980's and 1990's Freedom movements.
2. To study the role of individuals, small groups institutions and organizations.
3. A limited time span and geographical unit of North Karnataka has been chosen for sake of the grass-root level study.
4. To study the though helped to develop broad perspectives about India's struggle for freedom,
5. To examine the role of Institutions and Organization and the response
6. To study the nature, and importance of the role of eminent freedom fighters and Journalists.

Hypotheses of the Study

To have a clear cut idea and focused approach following hypotheses are formulated which needs to be proved true or disproved as null hypotheses.

H1. The researches which were undertaken after the postindependent period even up to 1980's and 1990's appeared.

H2. Role of Individuals, small groups institutions and organizations. Yes or no.

H3. Though helped to develop broad perspectives about India's struggle for freedom Movement

H4. The role of Institutions and Organization and the response in North Karnataka. Yes or no.

H5. The role of eminent freedom fighters and Journalists has led to the regular contact even after changing the organization.

3. Significance of the Topic

Of all the Kannada speaking areas, the four districts of Bombay presidency viz., Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwad and North Kanara were the earliest to receive and nurture the spirit of nationalism like Bengal and Maharashtra as compared to the Indian context. Karnataka, though it divided in various divisions of administration

On the eve of Swadeshi movement, it could produce some of the eminent freedom fighters of great calibre and dynamism, independent ideology and organising capacity like Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, Hanumanthrao Deshpande, Govindrao Yalgi, Alur Venkatrao, Muduvudkar Krishnarao, N. S. Hardikar, Hardekar Manjappa, Karnad Sadashivarao, Srinivas Rao Kaujalgi, Hanamanthrao Kaujalgi, Jayarao Nargund, Krishnarao Jorapur, Vittal Rao Devlgoanker and several others.

The State of Karnataka played a significant role in encouraging native press which fastened the cause of nationalism. Journalists like Alur Venkatrao, Hardekar Manjappa, Jayarao Deshpande, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande and others used Dharwad, Belgaum, Mangalore, Bijapur and Bangalore as centres of their activities and carried the nationalism through their papers. Eminent Marathi papers like Kesari, Kal, Navkal and Chitramayajagat were highly circulated in the northern Karnataka. During the Swadeshi movement the role played by Lokamanya Tilak was no less significant, who was the guiding force of the time. With a result the parts of northern Karnataka like a seething cauldron as the land of Tilak's followers. All these aspects together explain the significance of Karnataka State in the Freedom Movement, hence the significance of the topic chosen for research.

4. Significance of the Study

Though the history of the freedom movement in the subnational and sub-cultural zone of Karnataka has received due attention of the historians. The studies in the short-term level in the State yet awaiting the attention of the researcher. '*History of freedom Movement in Karnataka*' by G. S. Halappa is undoubtedly a movement work on the subject. But, however, as far as the topic was concerned, it is felt that no full justice has been done. The account is less and nominally explained, not given in any details. The learned scholar has concentrated on main stream of the movement and traced the role of the prominent associations and organisations the ideologies of the role of national schools and Revolutionary groups, the role of the Provincial Congress, the common mass mobilized for the first time for the national cause etc., totally neglecting the role of local organisations and institutions, sabhas and samitis and without socio-economic analysis of the movement. Since the present study aims at filling up some of these important gaps, the topic assumes significance. Since the present work has been undertaken with an intention to do justice to the all organisations worked for

the cause of the India's independence and they as yet remained unwept, unsung and uncared. The significance of the present work therefore needs no exaggerations. Besides, the study also aims at highlighting unique features of the freedom movement, interesting events and fascinating stories which find no place in the supra-regional studies. The politico-economic analysis of the macro-scope study is also expected to make the research more meaningful, fascinating and an unusual academic exercise. All these ideas put together have enhanced to the significance of the topic chosen for research.

5. Nature and Scope of the Study

The researcher, in order to make his studies systematic, continuous and connected, is expected to define the limits and boundaries of the studies in respect of time, space and theme. The present researcher proposes to cover history of the Freedom movement in Karnataka. There was a considerable difference in the nature of the movements in parts of the British administered areas on the one hand and that of the princely states on the other. Naturally the oppressive and tyrannical rule of British resulted in the asymmetrical growth of nationalism and public awakening in their dominions when those compared to the regions under the princely states. As a result, the researcher of the study makes an honest attempt to trace the dis-uniformity in the effectiveness of the Swadeshi movement in the different regions of Karnataka ruled by the different authorities.

CONCLUSION

The freedom movement in Karnataka started in the form of a native reaction to the expansionist policy of the British rule in the State. This movement was organised and led by native landlords and chieftains who had lost their power, position and property due to British occupation. It is difficult to describe these uprisings as movement, because they were spontaneous, sporadic and stray. They were unconnected with each other in respect of time and space. They were all suppressed within no time as the spirit of nationalism did not constitute the bedrock of these armed revolts.

With the establishment of the Indian National Congress, Karnataka was very sharp in responding to the congress programmes. As the Marathi language and Maharashtra culture were predominant forces in northern parts of Karnataka. During the last-quarter of 19th and first-quarter of 20th Century, Tilak factor was a predominant motivating force in the state.

As compared to the swiftness with the spirit of nationalism gripped the country it was very slow in percolating into mofussil areas. The movements which were being organised at the national level were confined to the urban elite. It took sometime for the message of these movements to reach the rural masses. The most striking feature of the rise of nationalism in Karnataka was that it was the outcome of some of positive and constructive as well as some negative factors. The local journalism and folk literature which impressed an impact by the Marathi papers like Kesari, Kal, Navakal and others played determining role in carrying the spirit of nationalism into the mofussil areas.

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