

INDIAN POLITICAL THAUGHT UNIT III

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Faculty Name – M.Deepa

Contact No. 9489345565

RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY

LIFE AND TIME OF RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY

- ✓ He was born in 1772, in Radhanagar village in Murshidabad District of West Bengal.
- ✓ Bengal, after 1765, came under British East India company, Colonial rule, centred in Kolkata, was expanding in all parts of India. Limited constitutional reforms, capitalist economy, English education, etc were being introduced.
- ✓ Studied Arabic & Persian in Patna, Sanskrit in Banaras, English later on a company official, Besides Bengali and Sanskrit, Roy had mastered Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and many other leading language.
- ✓ Besides Hinduism, he learnt Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity. Through this he developed belief in unity of God, and Religion.

INFLUENCE

- ✓ John Locke, Bentham , David Hume,
- ✓ 1830 he went to England with many purposes-one was requesting more pension to Mughal King Akkbar-II Who gave him the title of Raja. He died there on 1833.

HIS RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

- ✓ Influenced by Enlightenment spirit and Utilitarian Liberalism.
- ✓ Human have God gifted sense of reason and intellect to assess the trust and social utility in religious doctrine, no need for any intermediary-priest, Pandit

UNITY IN ALL RELIGION

- ✓ Universal Supreme being, Existence of soul, Life after death
- ✓ But, all religion suffer from dogmas, ritualism, irrational beliefs & Practices; to benefit the intermediaries and keep people in dark
- ✓ Hinduism suffered from polytheism, idolatry, superstitions, ritualism.

- ✓ Ancient purity of Hindu religion-as contained in Veda & Upanishad-lost in faulty interpretation, orthodoxy, conservatism in the wake of tyrannical and despotic Muslim and Rajput Rules.

Believed in Vedantic principle of Monotheism and Unitarianism.

- ✓ Religious reform must for socio-political reform and modernization. To him, Hindus must accept some changes in their religious practices at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort.
- ✓ Individual should have right to adopt good elements from any religion and reject anything irrational and against social comforts/utility in his/her own religion.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

- ✓ He attempted a spiritual synthesis, the unity of all religious experiences-synthesizing a transnational humanist culture.
- ✓ Synthesis of 'private' and 'political' ; He sought to combine the deep experiences of spiritual life with the basic principle of social democracy.
- ✓ He founded Atmiya sabha in 1815, the Calcutta Unitarian Association in 1821 and the Brahmo sabha in 1828- as instruments of religious reforms and through that socio-political transformation of India of that time.
- ✓ Between 1815 to 1823, he translated an abridgment of the Vedanta principles and translation of several of the Upanishads to Bengali, Hindi, and English.
- ✓ Created awareness for religious reforms through his periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, town-hall meetings, and associations.
- ✓ He sought Govt. intervention in form of legislation for socio-religious reforms.

SOCIAL REFORMER OF MODERN INDIA

- ✓ Social reform was an essential precondition of political liberation
- ✓ Multiple strategies for social reform
- ✓ Invoking rational thinking, building public opinion
- ✓ Re-inventing traditions-selective appropriation of Hindu Sashtra/Shutra to prove his point for reform
- ✓ Modern English education
- ✓ Seeking socially progressive legislations from colonial Govt.
- ✓ Vision of cosmopolitan modern Indian society based on the principles of, reason, rationality, tolerance, liberty, equality, and fraternity.
- ✓ Pillars of his social reforms;
- ✓ Improving Women's condition
- ✓ Modern education

- ✓ Ending all socio-religious practice, such as caste-system, purification, 'Sati' child-marriage, Parda pratha etc. inhibiting intellectual flourishing of individual, against social comforts/utility, socio-political unity.

WOMEN'S RIGHT

- ✓ Linked improvement in women's condition to national development as women are bearers of national identity
- ✓ Did not limit women's rights only to equality with men, but linked it to compassion, justice, liberty, right-as a matter of faith.
- ✓ Root cause of miserable condition of women-no property and inheritance rights
- ✓ Ancient shastra/tradition gave these rights, which were encroached by men in modern times by faulty interpretation of legal codes-Meetakshara and Dayabhaga
- ✓ No inheritance rights led to polygamy, miserable life of widow, and also factor behind 'sati pratha'.
- ✓ By nature, women not inferior, rather superior to men in some respect. Their inferiority due to denial of right education/knowledge, and confining them to 'private domain'-domestic chores
- ✓ He vehemently opposed 'sati pratha' as violation of every human and social feeling and symptom of the moral debasement of a race. By his efforts, this was declared illegal by law in 1829.
- ✓ He also fought against child marriage, for widow re-marriage, removing 'parda pratha', and for modern education to women.

POLITICAL THOUGHTS

- ✓ Liberal utilitarian supported limited constitutional Govt, rule of impersonal laws, individual rights-life, liberty, property, equality.
- ✓ But more active role of state in social reform and improving socio-economic conditions of poor, marginalized.
- ✓ Broke 'private-public' dichotomy; liberty and rights in political domain meaningless unless the civil society is reformed.
- ✓ Hence, he supported British rule, as it was better in modernizing and reforming Indian society and extending civil rights, than the tyrannical and despotic Muslim and Rajput rules.
- ✓ Anti-Monarchist, against despotic rules-constitutional government best guarantor of individual freedom and rights.
- ✓ Political freedom self-governing only after social reform and civil rights.
- ✓ Separation of power British parliament making laws for India, Codification of laws, administrative and judicial reforms – more Indians in higher Bureaucracy and Jury services, substitution of English for Persian as court language.

POLITICAL ECONOMICS

- ✓ Contradiction between his liberal capitalist and feudal aristocratic values
 - ✓ Supported right to property – on same logic as of Locke
 - ✓ Supported British capitalist system as modernizing influence on Indian feudal economic system
 - ✓ To him, liberal capitalism better for individual rights, and socio-economic progress than the despotic monarchical rules and feudal economic system
 - ✓ Advocated reform in 'permanent settlement' – less revenue demand, better condition of actual tillers, security of tenants
 - ✓ Supported free trade and ending monopoly of East Indian company on British trade in India and China.
 - ✓ Opposed heavy export duties imposed on Indian goods. He was the first one to figure out 'Drain of wealth under colonial rule-East Indian company was flowing approximately three million pounds a year from India to England.
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- ✓ Too harsh criticism undermining his modernizing and liberalizing role
 - ✓ He had the intellect, vision and pragmatism to compare colonial rule with Muslim & Rajput rule, liberal capitalism vs economic system
 - ✓ He had the wisdom and courage to defend as well as criticize his own faith, see similar faults | other faiths, and ready to take good elements from other faiths/culture.
 - ✓ He saw hope in British rule for socio-religious reforms, civil rights, economic development, greater integration of India with world community-a kind of India Renaissance
 - ✓ His efforts towards improving women's condition, freedom of press, modern education, transnational humanist culture, etc. were path breaking.
 - ✓ Truly, he was called 'father of modern India' by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and 'Pioneer of India Renaissance' by many, and 'a luminous star in the firmament of Indian history' by Tagore.

SWAMI DAYANAND SARASWARI

- ✓ Swami Dayanand Saraswati was born 1824 in Tankara, Gujarat in Brahmin family
- ✓ His parents, Lalji Tiwari and Yashdhabai were orthodox Brahmin.
- ✓ He was a self-taught man and a great leader of India leaving a significant impact on the Indian society.
- ✓ During his life, he made a prominent name for himself and was known among a wide array of princes and the public.
- ✓ He was against Idol worship and considered it as pointless.
- ✓ He supported the idea of women empowerment and condemned all the misconceptions which did not allow women access the Vedas
- ✓ He brought about a radical change in the education system of that time by establishing Anglo Vedic School in which the Indian students were taught about the Vedas along with English education.

- ✓ He was never directly involved in the political scenario of the country at that time but his opinions inspired a lot of political leaders to strive for India's Independence.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

- ✓ His real name was Narendranath Dutta
- ✓ He was born on 12 Jan 1863 in Calcutta
- ✓ His father was attorney at the Calcutta High Court
- ✓ His mother was a housewife and religious lady. I am indebted to my mother for the efflorescence of my knowledge
- ✓ He was interested in spirituality from a young age. He used to meditate before images of Shiva, Rama, Hanuman
- ✓ In 1871, he took admission in Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's School
- ✓ In 1879, he cleared the Presidency college (Calcutta) entrance exam for BA

HE WAS A GOOD READER

- ✓ He finished 11 volumes of Britannica Encyclopedia
- ✓ He read wide range of subject-philosophy, religion, history, social science, art and literature
- ✓ He was also interested in Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas
- ✓ He studied the work of David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Hegel, August Comte, J.S.Mill, Charles Darwin etc.
- ✓ He was so impressed with evolutionary theory of Herbert Spencer that he translated Spencer's book Education into Bengali.
- ✓ In 1880, he joined Keshab Chandra Sen's Nava Vidhan
- ✓ In 1884 he became member of Sadharan Brahma Samaj
- ✓ It was Sen who introduced him to Ramakrishna
- ✓ Inspired from Ramakrishna's teaching, he accepted him as his Guru
- ✓ After the death of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda established a Math in Baranagar
- ✓ Here he decided to live the life of monk and took the name of Swami Vivekananda
- ✓ In 1888, for next five years he travelled vastly in India
- ✓ During this period he observed diverse religious traditions and social patterns. Here he developed sympathy for the suffering and poverty of the people, and resolved to uplift the nation
- ✓ He reached Chicago in 1893 where in parliament of Religions he gave his famous speech

- ✓ He began his speech with 'sisters and brothers of America'. For which he received two-minute standing ovation from the audience
- ✓ In 1897 he returned to India where he received warm welcome
- ✓ May 1897 in Calcutta, Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission for social service
- ✓ Both Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission have their headquarters at Belur Math
- ✓ Two journals were founded; Prabuddha Bharata in English and Udbhodan in Bengali
- ✓ On July 1902, he died while meditating

PHILOSOPHY OF NEO-VEDANTA

- ✓ Vedanta philosophy believed that God above was real and the visible world was unreal
- ✓ The absorption of individual soul in the one supreme soul was the goal of every human being
- ✓ This is called liberation which could be achieved with the help of true knowledge
- ✓ There were three important principles of NeoVedanta philosophy of Vivekananda;
- ✓ Vedanta philosophy believed in the oneness between God and man and the solidarity of the universe
- ✓ It did not stand for a life of renunciation but stood for self-less action in the services of humanity, Hence, service for man should be treated as services of god.
- ✓ It propagated the principles of universal tolerance and believed that different religious faiths were different paths to reach the goal of liberation.

IDEA OF NATIONALISM

- ✓ He strongly believed that the Indians should be proud of their history, culture and religion
- ✓ He believed that religion is the dominant force of nationalism in India
- ✓ Social reforms are secondary and religion is main theme of India
- ✓ He worked to build the foundations of a religious theory of nationalism which was later advocated by Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh
- ✓ Vivekananda was highly critical of the British rule in India because he held that due to their rule Indians lost confidence, famine engulfed the land, farmers and artisans were reduced to poverty and deprived.
- ✓ According to Vivekananda, the national regeneration of India would begin when people became fearless and started demanding their rights
- ✓ He was of the opinion that the evils of caste system divided the Indian society into classes and created the feeling of inferiority and superiority among them
- ✓ Vivekananda held that though there was a variety for language, cultures and religions in India, there existed a common ground between India people
- ✓ For the Indians religion was unifying force as the spirituality was Blood in the life of India

MADHAV SADASHIV GOLWALKAR

- ✓ Golwalkar was born on 19 Feb 1906 to Sadashivrao and Lakshmibai in a Matathi Karhade Brahmin family at Ramtek, near Nagpur in Maharashtra.
- ✓ His family was prosperous and supported him in his studies, activities. Sadashivrao, a former clerk in the Posts and Telegraphs Department, became a teacher in the Central provinces and ended his career as headmaster of a high school
- ✓ Golwalkar was the only surviving son of nine children. Since his father was frequently transferred around the country, he attended a number of schools.

EDUCATION

- ✓ In 1922 Golwalkar enrolled in Hislop College, a missionary-run educational institute in Nagpur.
- ✓ In 1924, Golwalkar left Hislop College for Benaras Hindu University in Varanasi, receiving a Bachelor of science degree in 1925 and a master's degree in biology in 1927
- ✓ His students called him 'Guruji' because of his beard, long hair and simple robe, a practice later continued in a reverential manner by his RSS followers. Golwalkar returned to Nagpur and obtained a law degree by 1935

THE RISING

- ✓ The founder of the RSS, Keshav Baliram Hedgewar or 'Doctorji' as he was fondly called, came to know about Golwalkar through a student from BHU. He met Hedgewar in 1932 and appointed him sanghchalak at BHU
- ✓ In a search for spirituality, he left for Sargachi in Bengal in 1936 and spent two years in the service of Swami Akhandananda of Ramakrishna Math
- ✓ Upon his return, Hedgewar convinced him to dedicate his life to the sangh. In 1940, when the RSS chief passed away, Golwalkar took over as sarsanghchalak at the age of 34

DARK CHAPTER

- ✓ Gandhi, the father of the nation, was assassinated on 30 Jan 1948 by Nathuram Godse, a radical Hindu nationalist who is said to have been an RSS member. The RSS maintains that he had quit before committing the assassination.
- ✓ In the aftermath of the event, Golwalkar and RSS members were arrested in Feb 1948. The RSS was also banned by home minister Patel.
- ✓ Golwalkar decided to challenge the ban of RSS with a satyagraha, launched on 9 Dec 1948 in Delhi. The ban was finally revoked only in July 1949 after the RSS pledged allegiance of the Indian Constitution.

LEADER

- ✓ RSS supreme leader for more than 30 years, Golwalkar made it one of strongest religious-political organizations in India; its membership expanded from 100,000 to over one million, and it branched out into the political, social, religious, educational and labour fields through 50 front organizations.
- ✓ The RSS expanded into Jammu and Karshmir in 1940, when Balraj Madhok was sent as a pracharak to Jammu with Prem Nath Dogra as direction

IDEAS OF A NATION

- ✓ Bunch of Thoughts, which has become Golwalkar's most cited work, is a collection of talks and lectures by him around RSS Shakhas in India
- ✓ Published in 1966 in Bangalore, the book is divided into four parts; The Mission, The Nation and Its Problems, The Path to Glory and Moulding Men.
- ✓ Golwalkar wrote about the glories of the motherland, or punyabhoomi, and its chief religion, Hinduism. The RSS chief wrote of Hindu society as the only one that could fulfill the grand mission of salvation of mankind. He also wrote about the caste system, defending it by saying that it kept Hindus organized and united through
- ✓ However, the Sangh Parivar has argued that Golwalkar's concept of 'Hindu Rashtra' has been misconstrued and vilified.
- ✓ Golwalkar believed that the values which the government adopted at the time of independence were from Russia in the form of Socialism, and Britain through the 1935 Government of Indian Act. And he believed that India should adopt its own culture and values. Hindu Rashtra had a broader meaning, which could be used to refer to faith as well as Indian society,; said Alok Kumar, international working president, Vishva Hindu parishad
- ✓ The VHP's first conference was organized at the Prayag Kumbh Mela in 1966.
- ✓ Guruji's biggest achievement at the conference was to persuade the gathering to disown te varnashrama, or the caste system, and unanimously passed resolution Hindavaha sadoraha, na Hindu patito bhavet. Therefore, they brothers and no Hindu can be treated as untouchable.
- ✓ RSS volunteers saved thousands of Hindus and Sikhs at the cost of their lives, home and families. They worked from Sindh to Punjab to Jammu and Kashmir to Bengal. Golwalkar was felicitated in Punjab by the jathedars of Gurdwara Gursagar Mastuana Sahib, Sangru, in recognition of his work as a savior of society.
- ✓ He was as allergic to publicity as Hedgewar and even refused to release a book recounting the RSS role during this period.
- ✓ One doesn't publish the news of serving one's mother. We carried out duty. We do not complement our swayamsevaks as they were just doing their duty to the motherland,; he said.
- ✓ In his 33 years as RSS chief, he travelled through the whole country 66 times, mostly by train in the third class while battling cancer in the terminal stage
- ✓ As hid health started deteriorating, Golwalkar made one 1st tour across the country in 1972-73. It came just after India's victory over Pakistan in the Bangladesh Liberation War, for which Golwalkar congratulated then-PM Indira Gandhi.

- ✓ In Mar 1973, he returned to Nagpur for the last time. He died three months later on 5 June
- ✓ But by then, Glowalkar had already established the RSS as a socio-cultural organization with political ambitions. Today, its offshoot, the Bharatiya Janata Party, stands as India's pre-eminent national party.

SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE

- ✓ Shyama Prasad mukherjee (6July 1901 – 23 June 1953) was an Indian politician, barrister and academician, who served as Minister for Industry and supply in Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet.
- ✓ Mukherjee quit the Indian National Congress and founded the right wing nationalist political party Bharatiya Jana Sangh, a predecessor to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1950.
- ✓ He was also the president of Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha from 1943 to 1946. Mukherjee was strongly opposed to Article 370 seeing as a threat to unity.

EARLY LIFE

- ✓ Mukerjee was born in a Bengali Hindu family on 1901 in Calcutta. His father was Ashutosh Mukherjee, a judge of the High Court of Calcutta, Bengal, who was also vice-chancellor of the University of Calcutta. His mother was Jogamaya Devi Mukherjee.
- ✓ He enrolled in Bhawanipur's Mitra Institution in 1906 and his behavior in school was later described favourably by his teachers. In 1914, he passed his matriculation examination and was admitted into Presidency College.

CAREER

- ✓ He stood seventeenth in the Inter Arts Examination in 1916 and graduated in English, securing the first position in first class in 1921.
- ✓ He was married to Sudha Devi on 1922. Mukherjee also completed an M.A. in Bengali, being graded as first class in 1923.
- ✓ He enrolled as an advocate in Calcutta High Court in 1924, at the age of 33, he became the youngest Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta; he held the office until 1938.

POLITICAL CAREER

- ✓ Mukherjee started his political career in 1929, when he entered the Bengal Legislative Council as an Indian National Congress candidate representing Calcutta University.
- ✓ However, he resigned the next year when the INC decided to boycott the legislature. In 1937, he was elected as an independent candidate in the elections which brought the krishak praja party-All Indian Muslim League coalition to power.
- ✓ During his tenure, his statements against the government were censored and his movements were restricted.
- ✓ He resigned on 20 Nov 1942 accusing the British government of trying to hold on to India under any cost and criticized its repressive policies against the Quit India Movement.
- ✓ In 1946, he was again elected as an independent candidate from the Calcutta University. He was elected as a member of the Constituent Assembly of India in the same year.

HINDU MAHASABHA

- ✓ Mukherjee joined the Hindu Mahasabha in Bengal in 1939 and he was appointed as the working president of the organization in 1940.
- ✓ He was elected as the President of Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha in 1943. He remained in this position till 1946, with Laxman Bhopatkar becoming the new President in the same year.
- ✓ Mukherjee demanded the partition of Bengal in 1946 to prevent the inclusion of its Hindu-majority areas in a Muslim-dominated East Pakistan. He wrote a letter to Lord Mountbatten telling him that Bengal must be partitioned even if India was not.

RESIGNATION

- ✓ Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru inducted Mukherjee into the Interim Central Government as a Minister for Industry and Supply on 15 Aug 1947.
- ✓ Mukherjee began to have differences with Mahasabha after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, in which the organization was blamed by Sardar Patel for creating the atmosphere that led to the killing.
- ✓ Mukherjee resigned along with K.C. Neogy from the Cabinet on 8 April 1950 over a disagreement about the 1950 Delhi Pact with Pakistani Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan.

BHARTIYA JANA SANGHA

- ✓ After consultation with M.S. Golwalkar of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Mukherjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh on 21 Oct 1951 in Delhi, becoming its first president.
- ✓ In the 1952 elections, the BJS won three seats in the parliament of India, including Mukherjee's.
- ✓ The BJS was created with the objective of nation-building and 'nationalising' all non-Hindus by 'including Bharatiya Culture' in them. The party was ideologically close to the RSS and widely considered the proponent of Hindu Nationalism.
- ✓ Mukherjee was arrested upon entering Kashmir on 11 May 1953. He and two of his arrested companions were first taken to Central Jail of Srinagar.

- ✓ Later they were transferred to a cottage outside the city. Mukherjee's condition started deteriorating and he started feeling pain in the back and high temperature on the night between 19 and 20 June.
- ✓ On 22 June, he felt pain in the heart region, started perspiring and started feeling like he was fainting. He was later shifted to a hospital and provisionally diagnosed with a heart attack. He died a day later in mysterious circumstances.