

**NETAJI**  
**SUBHAS**  
**CHANDRA**  
**BOSE**  
**AND**  
**INDIAN WAR OF**  
**INDEPENDENCE**

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## FOREWORD

At a very young age, Subhas Chandra Bose dedicated his life to the service of the motherland. He believed that India had a mission to fulfil—a mission, not only pertinent to people of India but also to the entire humanity. Dr. S. C. Maikap, a distinguished historian, has in his book entitled “Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Indian War of Independence” projected the life and times of Subhas Chandra Bose against the background of India's struggle for independence from British Raj. The book is not just a biography. It portrays India's struggle for independence against the background of socio-economic realities at rural India which is the abode of the overwhelming majority of the Indian people. People's participation as generated by Mahatma Gandhi in the independence movement was utilised and augmented by Netaji Subhas. Influence which he exerted even in time of his physical absence from the Indian scene has been carefully analysed and logically and lucidly presented. The historical, political and sentimental aspects of the last days of British Raj have been presented in an analytical language and in logical sequence which make it highly readable.

The author's close association with ‘Quit India’ programme at Midnapore, and his attachment to INA Associations & Naval Mutineers all over India have provided him with the materials and competence to write the biography of the great Indian. An educationist and an ex-commissioned Naval Officer in National Cadet Corps, an erudite research scholar, Dr. Maikap has probed all the relevant factors and the readers will find with his interpretations as logical and direct. The author's intrinsic knowledge of and experience with the militant nationalism are well-reflected. It is obvious that his active connection with the people and intellectuals within India and abroad, has enabled him to produce a very useful and relevant document which provides a valuable record of the past and present, not only of people of India but also of other parts of the world who fought or are fighting against imperialism and/or despotism.

Dr. Maikap has made a critical analysis of the conflicts amongst leading Indian political personalities like Gandhi, Nehru and Bose on ideological and pragmatic issues. He has also discussed how the great intellectuals of the contemporary World as Rabindranath Tagore, Romain Rolland, revolutionaries such as De Vallera, Ernst Bevin, and other distinguished personalities have viewed Netaji Subhas Bose's leadership in emancipating India from bondage. The value of this work has been considerably enhanced on account of the analytical approach as Dr. Maikap has adopted in dispassionate projection of Netaji and his actions as a radical revolutionary. The author has demonstrated

how from a scratch Bose could build up the edifice of the mighty Indian National Army recruited from the prisoners of war of the British Indian Army and the people of Indian origin in South East Asia and led the war of India's liberation against mightiest imperial power of that time.

Dr. Maikap, has in many chapters of this work, quoted official records of British Parliament, Indian National Congress and International Commissions to support his pains-taking findings. He has dwelt on, in detail, strategy adopted in the heroic battles of the I.N.A. at Imphal & Burma Fronts and Civil & military intelligence net-work of INA with expert analyses. The author has collected authentic information on INA's march to Indian soil and strategic withdrawal under the command of Netaji Subhas from his direct contacts with Indian Legion at Bonn, concerned Indo-logists in Moscow and I.N.A.'s secret service personnel in Indonesia and Bengal. The author had also the opportunity to consult "Top-Secret" files from archives in Moscow and Vietnam. Relevant letters presented in this work are self-explanatory, and confirm that the author adopted an impartial historian's approach in his interpretation of facts.

The work explores many areas which had till now remained in the dark. I believe this book should serve as a reference as well as text book in private and public libraries, academic institutions and other organisations interested in the history of man's struggle for self-determination.

I congratulate Dr. Maikap for the laudable work which, I have no doubt, will be very valuable to serious scholars, students, and other readers who desire to have a correct perspective of Subhas Chandra Bose's life and activities, which are shining examples of self sacrifice, patriotism, dedicated leadership and love for the people.

The appendices to the book, arranged bibliographically, with valuable illustrations and maps make the book of particulars value to the scholars.

21.10.96



Dr. A. N. Bose  
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## PREFACE

The study of history is a difficult process which involves unravelling the historical forces, its causes and consequences. Exposure of historical phenomena is difficult as it involves delving deep into the past layers diverse events beginning in the remote past, shrouded in mist, and have rushed in to write history of great epoch and the messianic role of a great leader in this web of history. When one studies it, one becomes afire with enthusiasm and is sometimes moved even to tears. To write history of a man, or the history of an epoch or the attempt to combine the both, may prove futile and baffling venture. But I have made it my specific task to write it upon a strictly historical foundation.

Artists and biographers often dramatise or play down the personality of history. But history demands a search for truth. I believe that there are leaders who just swim with the currents of time and there are few only, like Caesar, Bismark, Napoleon, Washington and or Lenin who can run the river of history in direction sought for. It is the political genius that make them supreme, they shape the destiny of the nations. Where genius and character intersect, a focus for searching of the soul is essential which explain the soul-stirring history made by these leaders. The present work deals with the great phenomenon of emergence and consolidation of an Empire and great personality of the leader Subhas Chandra Bose who challenged it and acted as the chief agent of its dissolution. In this leader, the genius and character did intersect which moved Indian history during the last phase of the British rule.

I have tried to interpret the history of the foundation of the British Indian Empire, its rise and integration. A group of traders-East India Trading Company arrived in India in the year 1600, and then by transfer or sale from the Company to the British Crown, came to possess the greatest empire in the globe. The national consciousness in India in the beginning of the 20th Century experimented various ideas and techniques to secure its right of self-determination. Tilak-Gandhi-Nehru and Jinnah and others had their own thoughts and actions. Great Britain with her immense resources and with her being the master of navy in all the seas of the world, turned a deaf ear to India's woes. And the more dreaded aspect of the drama that veers round the whole play is that India's men and materials have been England's strength to keep India and other colonial countries under her iron heels. Many a great

nation of the world looked down upon the Indians with contempt-some 400 millions remaining enslaved, emasculated human beings under the far-flung tiny British island whose size is smaller than Uttar Pradesh and whose numerical strength did never exceed 50 millions. And the situation continued for centuries. The English knew the sword and sword alone can establish their illegal occupation right and without it, nothing was meaningful to them. India, after the slumber of hundreds of years, produced in Subhas Chandra Bose a man who could understand sword and wield it against the intruder. He challenged the British Imperialism in the language the Britishers understood, and galvanised the whole Indian body politic with dynamic force -morally, psychologically and on the physical level. His stature has continually increased till it tends to day to become almost legendary. Bose's connection with the War lords of Europe and Asia, with leading statesmen, revolutionaries, poets, philosophers, and religious preachers only go to show the dynamic strength of head and heart he possessed. What we have all learned about Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as a political leader and a statesman, had been restricted to a limited purposes. We have not been concerned with his stature as a whole in public career and in private life as representative of mankind. And this is the purpose of my book namely how to present the colossus in his deeds and actions, its actual interpretation of life.

Netaji's life & personality have not been treated here as a miraculous, nor as split-up into abstract concepts. In the episodes of his life, I have tried to grasp the idea that his rise was a logical, and a natural phenomenon. To explain his resolves, his deeds, and sufferings, his determination and dedication as issued forth from the core of his heart is the disclosure of a great chain of events. His life is a great epic, and is written by the hand of destiny. One is unable to reveal all its splendour in full, if one draws upon imagination. What a man can attain through self-confidence and courage, through devotion, industry and will, Netaji has fully exhibited. He is a legendary figure in an age of charlatanism.

I fell in love with Netaji for his challenging spirit and undaunted courage. I admire him because he has done everything in his power for his land of birth, because he has displayed the most extraordinary energies ever conferred upon a mortal being to revive the age-old history and heritage of a great nation, to promote its prosperity; because he has, regardless of comforts of life, cheerfully endured all toil and vicissitude that he might elevate and enrich his motherland in bondage, because he had a high sense of dignity, and he greatly revered religion. Such is the true character of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, and the narrative contained in these pages, is presented as an explanation of the truth of this confirmation in the context of the 20th century history of India.

Some hostile politicians have tried to tarnish his image as a Fascist; a

few has also attributed him to be a Communist to propagate their designs in the democratic countries. 'A man of outstanding organising ability', the Political Warfare Division Records of the British Government say, 'is a dangerous politician that can not be found in the whole gamut of Congress leadership. Haughty and arrogant to the extreme, he knows no compromise.' Even Gandhi, who has been recognised as the apostle of non-violence, has been violent to Bose and forced him to leave the Indian National Congress, but again he is the person who admitted him to be the "Patriot of patriots, the prince of patriots." Netaji Bose's non-compromising formula against that of Gandhi's is complete Independence against Dominion Status for India; against the Britishers, the use of force in the last resort as the latter was never to quit India in peace. His ideas & actions are out and out are that of a revolutionary, which have made him the apostle of strength and leadership. 'Just as the British had not feared Gandhi, the reducer of violence', a British historian (Michael Edwardes) writes, 'they no longer feared Nehru, who was rapidly assuming the lineaments of civilized statesmanship ... The British, however, still, feared Subhas Bose, or rather the violence he represented'. And another British authority belonging to Intelligence Branch, Hugh Toye writes, 'By the example of his magnetic burning zeal, his tenacity and personal force, by the tradition he left of sacrificial patriotism, must be measured the stature of Subhas Chandra Bose. His place in Indian history can not be denied.'

The spirit of Swami Vivekananda, the warrior saint, has entered him in his veins and nerves, and thus, fostered in him a spirit of service and renunciation literally and instinctively—a rarity. Mother India was not a geographical feature that appeared before him but an impoverished-Mother in slavery and in tears. She is a living person before his senses. He offered his body and soul for her succour and he unsheathed his sword, bled himself and did not spare the foes bleeding. Freedom was the song of his soul and, therefore, he cared not what price he was to pay for it.

"The return of the I.N.A." writes Dr. Pattabhi Seetarmayya, the author of the official history of Congress, "the sensational trials that it led to, the wide advertisement that followed in their train, brought to light the hidden facts of this great adventure in modern history and revealed the real man in the mystic, the brave soldier in the civilian, the genuine revolutionary in the administrator ... the fact remained that the attempt unprecedented in character, colossal in magnitude and stupendous in achievement must be assessed in its innate worth without being discounted either by the rights and wrongs of the case or by the facts of its success or failure. A new faith and fervour, yea a new philosophy has been generated in millions of driedup and despairing hearts much as the showers of the monsoon would cover a fallow land with patches of green verdure. Subhas has proved to the world that Hindustan is

still a land of valour and prowess that the Indian has still in him that sense of national honour for the preservation and perpetuation of which his forefathers had shed their red blood. Subhas may be alive or dead in body, but his spirit and his name will endure long, yea for ever in history in common with the names of Alexander and Darius, of Caesar and Hannibal ....”

Subhas Chandra is greater than his achievements. It reminds us of the poet Browning's emphasis on aspiration as against achievement :

'Not on the vulgar mass  
Called work must sentence pass,  
Things done that took the eye and had the price,  
O'er, which from level stand,  
The low world laid its hand,  
Found straight away to its mind, could value in a trice  
Thoughts hardly to be packed  
into a narrow act,  
Fancies that broke through language and escaped :  
All I could never be,  
All men ignored in me-  
This was I worth to God, whose wheel,  
the pitcher shaped.'

Subhas Chandra wrote, “Why do I believe in Spirit? Because it is a pragmatic necessity, my nature demands it. I see purpose and design in nature; I discern an 'increasing purpose' in my own life. I feel that I am not a mere conglomeration of atoms. I perceive, too, that reality is not a fortuitous combination of molecules. Moreover, no other theory can explain reality, (as I understand it) so well. This theory is in short an intellectual and moral necessity of my very life, so far as I am concerned.” His address to the soldiers of the Indian National Army whom he led to the attack of the Anglo - American allied army, on July 4, 1944 is self - explanatory :

“We should have but one desire to day : the desire to die so that India may live, the desire to face a martyr's death so that the path to freedom may be paved with the martyrs' blood.”

The author must not expect to speak on behalf of Bose and not draw upon himself the assault. Claiming the privileges of expressing his own views freely, he cheerfully accords that privilege to the readers. The writer believes that every incident here recorded and every statement attributed are authenticated. And this thesis is intended not only for the Indians, but for the historians, research scholars and the youth in particular, of other nationalities as well.

In this endeavour, the author is highly grateful to his Excellency Giani Zail Singh for his writing the Foreword as President of Indian Republic for the author's previous book 'BANHIMAN NETAJI SUBHAS', and is greatly

indebted to Comrade Ram Kishen, former Chief Minister of Punjab for his keen interest in this study. He is very much indebted to Dr. Freda Kretschmar of Bonn, an Executive of the Free India Centre & Indian Legion of Netaji in Berlin, and is also highly thankful to Dr. (Mrs.) E. Yurlova of Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, for furnishing the author with latest materials at their possession. The author owes a great debt of gratitude to Captain N.G. Roy Bardhan, Secretary of I.N.A. Association, West Bengal, Mr. Americk Singh Gill of Indonesia and Liet. S.K. Sengupta, for their very valuable information along with recorded reports of as Officers of the I.N.A.

I gratefully acknowledge my debt to Mr. Nanda Mookerjee for allowing me to quote materials of the India Office Record, London, from his work 'Subhas Chandra Bose- The British Press, Intelligence And Parliament' and besides granting this privilege, he has also lent me his co-operation with his expertise in Berlin and London in this subject. I must record my deep sense of regard for financial assistance rendered by Mr. P. Debnath from West Indies and am grateful to Prof. A. K. Gupta, Jadavpur Univeristy, as well as Mr.. Bijan Ghosh, Advocate on Record, Supreme Court, and Mr. Bidyut Kr. Mukherjee, Rtd, Govt. Officer Vidyasagar Niketan, Salt Lake for their varied help and assistance. My heart felt acknowledgement is due to Prof. Ashoke Kr. Mukherjee Head of the Deptt. of English, Presidency College who has corrected my Manuscript, and to Prof. B.R. Sengupta, former Professor of Manipur College, Imphal, for invaluable service in the editorial work. My thanks are also due to Mr. Ashoke Sen, Mr. Sunil Jana, Dr. Sarat Chandra Patra, Mr. Soumitra Pal, 'Dalapoti' N. P. Nayar of Azad Hind Dal, Mr. Girish Chandra Maity, Mr. K. L. Mitra and many others who have helped and encouraged me in the preparation of this work. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not mention that Mr. Gopal Chandra Bhattacharya has typed hundreds of pages of this script with patience, and that my daughter Mrs. Rama Mukherjee and my son Mr. Santanu Maikap have rendered secretarial service for many years.

Most of the photographs in the book have been presented to the author by former revolutionary Mr. Bimal Shome of South Calcutta. Mr. S. Rahman (elder brother of Col. Habibur Rahman, Deputy Chief of Staff of I.N.A.), while leaving Calcutta for East Pakistan during the partition of India handed over a large number of photographs & records of Netaji and I.N.A. to Mr. Shome, who has most kindly gifted them to the author for utilisation.

For materials, such as Transfer of Power, Netaji Enquiry Reports, Court Martials, I have the active co-operation of the institutions like the British Council Library, Indian National Archives, Netaji Research Bureau, National Library, Netaji Institute for Asian Studies and the I.N.A. Association of West Bengal, Netaji Smaraka Nidhi, Kerala, I.N.A. Assn., Delhi. Among the outstanding personalities, I have the excellent opportunity to meet are, Raja



Mahendra Pratap, Jay Prakas Narain, Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa, Admiral R.L. Pereira, Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Dr. S. N. Sen, Vice Chancellor, Shri L. K. Advani, Mr. Chittatosh Mookerjee, former Chief Justice and Commodore S. Bose, of Indian Navy, Mr. Chitta Basu Member of Parliament, besides a good number of freedom fighters of Quit India movement and Naval Mutiny. The nephews of Netaji Subhas Chandra, Mm. Guidalu, the Rebel Queen of Nagaland and Saradananda, the founding father of Soulmari hermitage, and Mr. V. P. Saini, Director of Netaji Model School of Punjab as well as Mr. Sen Joseph M. of Thiruvananthapuram have been met and discussed for long. Knowledge and experiences obtained from these individuals and institutions in respect of Netaji, about India's struggle for independence and the World War II, have been of great value pertaining to the field study, and have been incorporated in this work. I should be failing in my duty if I do not mention that the psychological reactions of the relatives of those 8 villagers who laid down their lives in the guerrilla fight in 'Quit India' movement in my native village in Midnapore, of which, I, as a school student, was an eyewitness, and later on was involved in the struggle for freedom though on a very insignificant scale. This has been a permanent source of light and inspiration for this work which I leave to the readers for its assessment.

I acknowledge my gratitude to Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa who agreed to write the FOREWORD of this book. But I regret he could not do it as he expired. Under this event I approached Dr. A. N. Bose, ex-Vice Chancellor of Jadavpur University to write the FOREWORD which he readily agreed, for which I express my thanks and gratitude.

In fine, my thanks are due to Mr. Sandip Nayak of M/s. Punascha, the Publishing Concern of Calcutta, and its manager Mr. Nabakumar Chakraborty, who have tried their best to bring out the book with all care and responsibility.

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S. C. Maikap

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# CHAPTER-I

## THE EMPIRE

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*The loss of India would be final and fatal to us. It could not fail to be part of a process that would reduce us to the scab of minor power.*

—Winston Churchill

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**N**o Caesar or Charlemagne had ever ruled over such a vast far-flung realm as did the British rulers for about three centuries. The British India was an extension of the empire of the Great Moghuls with its dependent and protected states reaching from Baluchistan to Burma, besides including Aden and Ceylon. The British Crown and the India Office played almost an identical role as that of the old Turkoman Empire. The establishment of the British rule in India is an entirely novel and unparalleled phenomenon which is not comparable with any other form of conquest or political expansion in other parts of the globe. It is a new thing in political history, a larger in dimension and more complicated process with global significance than what we find in the revolutions of France, America, or Russia. It guaranteed peace and security in this subcontinent, that is why it was endured and supported by many men of the subject races inspite of its basic foundation in tyrannies and oppression.

Captain William Hawkins, more a pirate than an explorer, dropped the anchor of his 500-ton ship 'Hector' in the Port of Surat, north of Bombay, on 24th August, 1600. The Captain found himself very shortly 'face to face with a sovereign beside whom Queen Elizabeth appeared to be the ruler of a provincial hamlet. Reigning over 70 million subjects, the Emperor Jehangir was the world's richest and most powerful monarch, the fourth of India's great Moghul rulers.' The Emperor granted an imperial 'firman' authorising the East India Company to open trading depots north of Bombay. The ships started unloading heaps of spices, gum, sugar, raw silk and Muslin of the dockyards along the river Thames and sailing off with holds full of English manufactures.

The actual conquest of India by Great Britain began in 1757 with the Battle of Plassey near Murshidabad about 150 miles north of Calcutta. It was only

by slow and gradual stages that the British could occupy Bengal and annexed other parts of India. In her occupation, "The British used not only the arms-but more than arms, the weapons of bribery, treachery and every form of corruption. For instance, the founder of the British Empire in India, Robert Clive, who was later made a Lord, has been proved by historians to have been guilty of forgery. Likewise Warren Hastings, a Governor General of India, was accused before the British Parliament by Edmund Burke, a member of the House of Commons, as being guilty of "high crimes and misdemeanours". (Subhas Chandra Bose).

It took a long time for our predecessors to realise that the Britishers had come to conquer and plunder and not to settle down like the Mughals, Pathans and other foreigners preceding the British. No sooner had the reality reflected upon the mind of the Indians, a great revolution broke out in 1857 and the history of this mighty upheaval which has been deliberately and incorrectly called by English historians, as the 'Sepoy Mutiny', is regarded by the Indian people as the First War of Independence. The country was disarmed. Having once disarmed the nation completely, it has been easier for the British rulers to hold India with their small but efficient modern army and bureaucracy.

In the first War of Independence, a number of Indians, like the famous and heroic Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Nana Sahib, Kunwar Singh fought against the British authority. However, many Indian rulers remained neutral and some like Maharaja of Nepal, sided with them. Southern India took almost no part in this war as well as the Sikhs of the Punjab. It then occurred to the British mind that it would be advisable not to disturb the existing Princes, but to make a treaty of alliance and friendship with them so that their being any trouble for the British, the Princes would come forward to their aid. Since then, till the transfer of power to the hands of the Indians, the 'Native Princes' numbering 565\* have been their allies. With the beginning of the 20th century, the British rulers for their stronger hold in the Indian body-politic, discovered the Muslim cause and since the year 1906 they followed in devious ways and tactics, the principle of 'Divide and Rule'. In the Battle of Plassey and in the Great Revolution of 1857, the Hindus and Muslims fought shoulder to shoulder and shed their blood against the British, and it is under the Flag of Bahadur Shah Zaffar, the Muslim ruler, that the Indians conducted India's War of Independence. Bahadur Shah proclaimed, 'GAZIONMAIN BOO RAHEGY JABTALAK IMMANKI/TABTO LONDONTAK CHALEGI TEG HINDUSTHANKI'. (As long as the last particle of faith exists in the souls of India's freedom fighters, the sword of India shall continue to penetrate the heart of London.) This faith, of which they were afraid, the British did their best to destroy.

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\* In 1947, 565 Maharajas, Nawabs, Princes and Rajas still ruled over one third of India's land with about 100 million subjects.

The British people were not prepared for the coming up of the Indian Empire. It was chance directed acquisition. When they saw it had emerged as if on a platter two-thirds the size of that of Alexander the Great, they took up a hostile attitude. It was founded against formal approval of the authorities in London. According to Alexis de Tocqueville, the great French historian, it happened so because of the failure of the deliberate attempts made by the East India Trading Company, the British Government of the day and even their public views, to arrest the growth of the Indian Empire. Until the last quarter of the 19th century, the controversy on it went on independently of the actual possession and governance of India. But the slumber did not last long. The Regulating Act was the 'first heave of the British giant'. This was followed by Pitt's India Act, a number of Charter Acts culminating in the end of Company Bahadur' with the Government of India Act, 1858, where it proclaimed that India thenceforth would be governed by and in the name of Her Majesty the Queen. By the proclamation of Victoria, the Queen of England as the Empress of India, the Imperial form and feature had its appearance after the Great Army Revolt of 1857.

Disraeli, the imperial romantic Prime Minister of Great Britain perhaps rightly termed India to be 'the brightest jewel' in the British Crown. With the English Education in India, the Indians had the first contact with the Western ideas at an opportune hour when they were greatly influenced by the French Revolution and the Age of illumination of the 18th Century. Rationalism liberated the mind from dark superstition and blind faith, individualism started supplanting the tyranny of dogmas, and ideas of social justice and political rights shook off the lethargy awakening India from a slumber of centuries. The Science, Arts and Culture of Europe not only infused and generated new ideas in Indian life, but it helped to turn their search light inwards. It fanned the fire of nascent nationalism which ultimately proved to be the grave-digger of the empire. So one of the precious gifts of the Western education and culture is the birth of nationalism in India. The most vital impact India had, was the sudden revelation of the past treasures of the Hindus. From the book 'History of British India' by James Mill, the great English historian, India learnt that the Hindus had never been in the same appalling condition in which the British found them in the 18th Century. The teachers of Fort William College wrote books in which they had ridiculed the history and culture of ancient India. This humiliating picture of the Indians, current till then, was now gone. The works of the Oriental Scholars like Sir William Jones, Prinsep, and others brought changes by way of enhanced understanding and confidence of India's glorious past history and heritage. And then came the archaeological explorations and excavations as regular feature which commenced in the middle of the 19th Century, that is in the year 1861, under the supervision of Alexander Cunningham.

The works that marvelled most were those European scholars like Max

Muller, Fergusson, Wilson and English-educated Indian Scholars like Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar and Rajendra Lal Mitra. These persons brought home to all westernised Indians the glory and greatness of the ancient Hindus, the Indians, a subject people then without any status in the world. Suddenly we Indians came to learn that our forefathers were as great as the Greeks and the Romans and belonged to the same family of man from which were descended all the famous nations in Europe who flourished in ancient, medieval and modern age. It was brought to light later, that as long as three thousand years prior to the advent of Jesus Christ, our great ancestors built up a very highly advanced society in all its forms and features of administration-religious, economic, social and political.

Is there any heart which is not roused in the deepest emotion when an Indian reads these lines, as addressed to an English audience by Max Muller, the great Oriental scholar?

“If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well-deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact, more truly human, a life, not for this life only but a transfigured and eternal life-again I should point to India.”

The knowledge that revealed her past greatness imbued the people of India with a sense of glory and of common bond. It brought them together and their subsequent inter-relationship with the English people by use of English as the medium. After the foundation of the British empire the Hindus and later on the Muslims had, in them, the common basis of unity through a common historical tradition of past glory and greatness. Indian vernaculars sang the glory and greatness of ancient India, the Urdu literature was the reminiscences of Persia and Arabia. The distinction between the Hindus and the Moslems had no bearing on public life so long as neither section developed a parochial national consciousness giving rise to a spirit of segmentation and separatism in this sub-continent. The verdict of history is that this growth and development of nationalism in India fomented by the rulers to split it widened the gulf between the two communities till India was finally cut into two.

The Empire is no more there. After the first Great War, the Imperialism hitherto uncontested, was challenged by the growing nationalism. But unlike the French Revolution or the Bolshevich Revolution, the nationalist struggle in India was a unique upheaval. Traders turned rulers. Less than a fifty million islanders through the process of trade and commerce, through evangelical preachings and by the sword, overpowered an old nation of about four hundred

million souls from a distance of several thousand miles across the seas, oceans, hills and mountains, It took about three centuries to cause the downfall of this largest political trade in the world. "In a quarter of a century of inspired agitation and protest, its leadership had forced history's greatest empire to the decision Attlee's Party had taken : "let Britain leave India in good time rather than be driven out by the forces of history and armed rebellion."\* India was sliced into two-India and Pakistan. At the fag end of the British rule in India-"three million people died of starvation during the great famine of 1943 in Bengal alone. Close to three quarters of a million Punjabis massacred each other during the first days of Indian independence in 1947," with a royal representative of the British Crown still in the Viceroy's throne in Delhi.

Let us look at the modus operandi of India's struggle against the British. Revolutionary, Non-cooperation and Non-violence, and waging of war to get rid of the alien rulers had been used. India had been invaded and conquered by other foreigners long before the British traders set their feet on her soil. Like the Normans in England and the Manchus in China, the previous invaders made themselves part of India's society. India had never lost her independence and had never been enslaved. Each of them had accepted the structural unity of India's social and economic life and tried to fit into it. The British rulers, on the otherhand, were of an entirely different character. With their base in England, there was a great gulf between them and the Indians. The difference lay in tradition, in outlook and in other ways of life. "There were two worlds : the world of British Officials and world of India's millions, and there was nothing in common between them except a common dislike for each other. Previously, races had merged into one another. Now racialism became the acknowledged creed and this was intensified by the fact that the dominant races had both political and economic power without check or hindrance."<sup>1</sup>

Sir Charles Metcalfe, one of the ablest British Officials in India, wrote in 1830 :

'The village communities are little republics having nearly everything they want within themselves; and almost independent of foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself....is in a high degree conducive to their heppiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and indepedence.'

The Britishheres destroyed the village industries, a powerful blow to the village communities. The more direct attack was thrust with the introduction of the landlord system transforming the whole conception of traditional ownership of land. The revenue farmers and businessmen appointed by British Governors developed into landlords and the villagers were deprived of all

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1. Jawaharlal Nehru : *The Discovery of India*- P. 303 Asia Publishing House.

\* Larry Collins & Dominique Lappierre : *Freedom at Midnight*

—Bikash Publishing House