



Revisiting Nationalism: The 1857 incidence of Devaji Raut in Peth (Nashik)

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Abstract

In 1857 there was a struggle against a political family from Peth in Nashik district. Devaji Raut's struggle against the British East India Company was important. The incident of 1857 known as 'Peth Disturbances' was led by Bhagwantrao, the chief of Peth. This incident caused serious confusion in Peth. (Bombay Gazetteer) The result of this regional revolt was claimed to be a reflection of the influence of nationalism. Both Devaji Raut and Bhagwantrao were tribal leaders. The struggle was crushed. The British tried to suppress it by violence. Bhagwantrao along with about fifteen of his followers were hanged at Nashik on 19 December 1857. (Bombay Gazetteer) Devaji Raut was hanged on 08 January 1858. (Divekar, 2002:224).

P.P. Gokhale, V.D. Divekar, Dr. Govind Gare, Dr. Saral Dharankar, a scholar from Maharashtra, has written about the 1857 Peth conflict in Nashik district from a nationalist point of view. V.D. Savarkar wrote that the struggle of 1857 was a war of independence. Devaji Raut was the village head (Patil) of Malegaon in Peth tehsil. He was empowered to collect revenue on behalf of a political family from Peth in Nashik district of Maharashtra. He took part in this struggle because of restrictions on his authority due to British policies.

Keywords: Political hegemony theory, proving cultural self-identity, Consequences of regional rebellion such as national rebellion, Unity of Hindu-Muslim community, Struggle between Feudalism and Modern Powers, Thought of Nationalism of Tribal People

Introduction

The revision of nationalism has become a major topic in social science research. Revisiting nationalism should be considered for what it is now. It continues to be a 'crowded area of intellectual enquiry, seeking to sharpen the theoretical framework'. Rethinking nationalism depends on four key factors. For one thing, scholars who engage in such an approach question dominant theories; second, can language, folklore, history, and religion be combined to form a pantheon of nationalism? An identification checklist used to prove it is discussed; thirdly, an examination of the dark side of nationalism reveals that it encourages populism or political violence; and fourthly, to re-discuss the nature of post-nationalism and cosmopolitan culture^[1].

After India's independence, to write about 1857 at the regional level, Kayan Kumar Sengupta began survey work in March 1973. He found that after 1957 some themes were used in writing by scholars. Survey, thematic vision was found to be the mainstay of his study. It gives an idea of the state of research on the writing revolution. Historical research on mutiny reveals some interesting new angles. It

also reveals some gaps in our knowledge of the subject. (Sengupta, 1975) In this regional study of mine, I have tried to show how post-insurgency nationalism emerges.

Theory of Nationalism

Political hegemony theory raises the question of hegemony theory. Tribal people have proven cultural self-identity. This identification, which stands for political supremacy theory, departs from his realistic conclusion in the case of 1857. In their eyes, the idea of self-identification becomes important. Therefore, the argument that rebellion is a war of independence is emphasized. Since the cataclysmic events of 1857, historians and political leaders have been discussing and debating the true nature of this uprising. Which was described by the British as a 'soldier's mutiny'. According to Karl Marx it was a 'national revolt reminiscent of the French Revolution'. According to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar there was 'Indian War of Independence'. But it should be noted that this book of Savarkar was written as an inspiration during the freedom struggle. Which was banned by the British in 1909 soon after its publication. Marx's

writings were also published for the first time in 1959, 100 years after the incident ^[2].

The first question is whether language, folklore, history and religion can be combined to form a nationalism. The 'identification checklist' used to check it is discussed. The historiography of the 1857 rebellion and the subsequent freedom struggle against British rule created a cult following. It has created dichotomies revivalist and reformist, secular and religious, progressive and jihadist, communal and nationalist. He has marked his findings in later historical studies. One conclusion is, high nationalism ^[3]. To examining the dark side of nationalism, it seems that it encourages populism or political violence. Ordinary villagers and landless tribes could only identify their power through such stories of violence and revenge ^[4]. The struggle was limited to the use of traditional weapons against the ruling class. There was no ideological role behind this process of violence.

Discussions about the nature of post-nationalism and cosmopolitan culture tend to reify nationalism. For example- take the so called 'Indian Mutiny'. Scrutinizing this, the struggle did not reflect 'Indian' in any pan-Indian or collective sense. It was not just a 'rebellion' either. Also alternative interpretations are given to this event as Sepoy Mutiny, Sepoy War, Mutiny of 1857, Uprising of 1857, Great Mutiny of 1857, First War of Independence ^[5]. Seema Alvi argues that 'the history of mutiny is largely anti-colonial, secular has been written as a nation state. As a result, the history of peoples who took their proto-nationalist sentiments out of the colonial and Islamic conflicting frameworks has been neglected ^[6]. Professor Rajat Ray and Nupur Choudhary explain that, 'the idea of rebellion reflects either a sense of race. And secondly it represents the spirit of religion. He is conscious of the entire country and its legitimate Mughal sovereignty, but no sense of nationalism ^[7].

Nature of rebellion in peth tehsil

Rebellion in Peth Tehsil took place due to the following reasons. Prominent among them were forest acquisition, looting of property, land revenue system, destruction of village group, scanty supply of silver ^[8] and role of traditional aristocracy. At the same time, the British East India Company's various policies in India were also the reason for the rebellion of 1857. If we consider the economic reason, it is found that one is that the British government took over the forests in the tribal areas. Second, the British controlled the land revenue system that came under British rule. Thirdly, the economic status of the new imperial groups that emerged during the medieval period was destroyed by the British rule. The British colonial rule made India barren. This colonial exploitation led to the uprising of 1857. The nature of the uprising in Peth has to be examined in terms of economic exploitation.

Before 1857 many tribal revolted against the British rule. They included Hira Naik (1882, Shivram Lohar (Ghisadi-1825), King Pratapshing of Dang (1840) Kuwar Singh Vasava (1841), Umaji Naik and Bhagoji Naik (1855-1859), Bhimasingh Naik and Kazisingh Naik (1857), Devaji Raut (1857) etc. (Veer Vanvasi Yodhe: 5) Devaji Raut lived in Malegaon in Peth taluka. They were Patils meaning revenue collectors under the Peth. At that time, Peth was a Sansthan in the Nashik subdivision of Ahmednagar ^[9]. There were twenty-four villages under this state, and the head of this

region was Bhagwantrao. In 1857 he was associated with Nanasaheb Peshwa. Majority of his followers were from the Koli tribe. Some Konkan tribal leaders were also under his influence. Arjun Patil (Jategaon), Maoji Patil (Barhe), Raoji Deshmukh (Gopalpur), Gatu Patil (Kumbhale) and Devaji Raut (Malegaon) were the leaders. (Divekar, 2002:224).

Before the uprising in the Peth, the revolutionaries attacked Harsul Mamlatdar Kacheri, another major part of the Peth. The government treasury there was looted. British soldiers arriving in Peth attacked the revolutionaries led by Lieut. Glasspole. The Glasspole was damaged. Captain Nuttall was successful against the revolutionaries. For some time the revolutionaries had to live underground in the hilly areas of Dharampur (Gujarat). Bhagoji Naik was the leader of the Bhils. He helped the revolutionaries. Faldi Khan was killed in the battle of 18 December 1857. (Thorwat, 2013:310) 44 km from Peth, on 22 December 1857, a major conflict took place at Basivkheda. The British were successful in this battle. (Kayande. 1996:19) Devaji Raut never fought against the British. They didn't want to fight. But he was interrogated by the British police and executed on January 08, 1858 at UMBERPADA ^[10].

The incident of Peth conflict in 1857, historians write as a perspective of nationalism ^[11]. Also the oral tradition of tribal society can be seen in a similar perspective. Dr. Saral Dharankar says, 'Devaji Raut loved freedom, he was angry against the British rule. And he participated in the rebellion of 1857. Dr. Shyam Kayande writes about the Peth incident, 'Government employees Sadu Sonar and Fateh Mohammed were related to Raje Bhagwantrao. This anti-British sentiment was nationalist in nature ^[12].

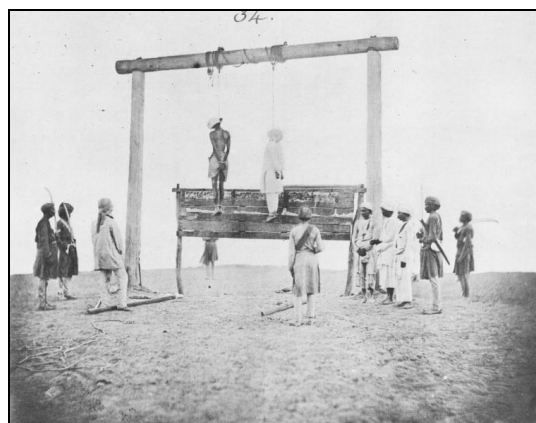


Fig 1: www.google.co.in#1857+revolt

Conclusion

The main reason for the rebellion of 1857 was the policy of the British East India Company against the various communities in India. Its main reasons were the land revenue system, control of forest resources, and destruction of the rights of the medieval royal people. It was colonial policies of exploitation that were behind the rebellion. Devaji Raut was actually avoiding conflict. The conclusion of this struggle is that 'the basis of these revolts was not national identity. So it was only the mind-set of the royal family and their followers to cultivate their own identity. Finally, it can be said that the Uprising in Peth Tehsil was to maintain the right of the Sansthan. The leaders of this struggle came forward against the British government to get their rights. In defence of feudalism ^[1] these leaders tried to gain political advantage against the modern empire or the

British government, to establish success in it' was the main conclusion of this struggle.

Reference

1. www.google.co.in/#revisiting+natonalism-Revisiting Nationalism: Theories and Processes-Ed. by Alain Dieckhoff & Christopher Jaffrelot.
2. www.csas.ed.uk/mutiny/Abstracts.html- Kuldeep Kumar, Abstracts.
3. www.csas.ed.uk/mutiny/Abstracts.html- Conference at Edinburgh University, 23rd-26th July 2007, Seema Alavi (Jamia Milia Islamia) 'Travel and the nation: Maulana Jafer Thanesri as a mutiny convict.'
4. www.csas.ed.uk/mutiny/Abstracts.html- Gautam Bhadra (Centre for Studies in Social Science, Calcutta) Socially marginal groups- the "subalterns" ranging from criminals to tribal peoples to whites- have been accorded a special focus as also those areas that have been on the periphery of the main theatre of the revolt. The idea seems to be to revisit the historiography of 1857 and challenge some of the prevailing notions embedded in it.
5. www.branchcollective.org/?psar_title=priti-joshi+1857
6. www.csas.ed.uk/mutiny/Abstracts.html
7. www.csas.ed.uk/mutiny/Abstracts.html- Professor Rajat Ray (Vice Chancellor, Vishva Bharati University) and Nupur Chaudhuri (Presidency College Calcutta): 'We and They in 1857: The Mutiny from the Mutineers Mouths.'
8. Marxist Theory- Recent Writings on the Revolt of 1857- A Survey.
9. Thorwat SR. MRP Project, In 1818, during Captain Briggs advance to Trimbak, Laxdir III gave him much assistance in dispersing hostile bands of Marathas and Kolies. Laxdir III, his daughter Nurjahan ruled in 1837 to 1878 under by British administration. After the death of the Begum, Peint state became British territory and was made into a sub-division in 1878; c2016.
10. Another account of people's oral tradition was Devaji Raut hanging rope cut away and he escaped. Then he was run to direction at Barhe, British were catch him and hanging on one tree, today this place called as Rautmara Phata.
11. Gokhale PP. 1857 cha Maharashtra (Marathi), V.D. Divekar- South India in 1857 War of Independence, Dr. Govind Gare- Swatantya Ladhyaatil Adivasi Krantikarak (Marathi), Dr. Saral Dharankar- 1857 che Swatantya-samar ani Veer Bhagoji Naik Marathi). This are Maharashtra scholars a write about 1857 incidence as Peth in Nashik District the nationalist approach.
12. This Nationalist nature like as 'Vague Feeling of Nationalism.'
13. This Revolt was the mentality to achieve of medieval feudal nature and to save their traditional rights. The Nationalism framework has emerging on books and peoples oral tradition to disappeared fillings, love of the country and their past activities.