

10. Era of Militant Nationalism

Militant nationalism took its birth in the 1890s, but it took a definite shape only by 1905. Later, it gave way to revolutionary extremism.

Why Militant Nationalism was born?

1. Recognition of true nature of British rule:

Disillusionment of nationalists as severe famines in 1896 and 1900 killed over 90 lakh people. Bubonic plague affected large areas of the Deccan. British rule was no longer progressive socially and culturally. It was suppressing the spread of education, especially technical and mass education.

Year	Significance
1892	Indian Councils Act was passed, it failed to satisfy the nationalists.
1898	The Natu brothers were deported without trial and Tilak and others, imprisoned on charges of sedition.
1899	Number of Indian members in Calcutta Corporation were reduced.
1904	Official Secrets Act curbed freedom of press.
1904	Indian Universities Act ensured greater government control over universities, which it described as factories producing political revolutionaries.

2. Growth of confidence and self-respect: under the influence of leaders like Tilak, Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Pal, nationalists began to repose faith on the capabilities of Indian people.

3. Growth of education: spread of education among the masses led to increased awareness but rising unemployment and under employment among the educated drew their attention to the poverty and under development under the British Rule.

4. International Influences: Rapid industrial progress by Japan after 1868, the defeat of many European nations viz., Italy by Ethiopians (1896), the British facing reverses in Boer wars (1899-1902), Russia by Japan (1905)

demolished the myths of European invincibility.

5. Reaction to increasing Westernization:

nationalists felt that excessive westernization led to subordination of Indian identity and culture. Leaders like Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee urged and inspired young nationalists to take pride in the rich Indian civilization. Dayananda Saraswati gave the message "India for Indians".

6. Dissatisfaction with achievements of Moderates:

the young nationalists were dissatisfied and strongly critical of the moderate leaders' achievements and their methods of struggle (3 Ps - petition, prayer, and protest).

7. Reactionary policies of Curzon: Curzon's refusal to recognize India as a nation, his insulting of nationalists, his administrative measures like Indian Universities Act, Official Secrets Act, Calcutta Corporation Act invoked strong criticism from nationalists.

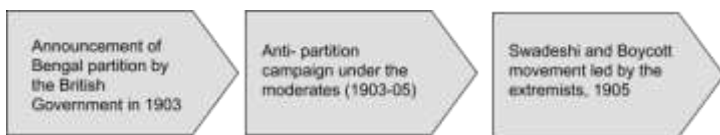
8. Existence of a Militant school of thought:

Raj Narain Bose, A K Dutta, Aurobindo Ghosh, Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal; Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar and Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai. Basic tenets of this school were:

- Hatred for foreign rule, Indians should work-out their own salvation.
- Swaraj to be the goal of national movement.
- Direct political action required.
- Belief in the capacity of the masses to challenge the authority.
- Personal sacrifices required and a true nationalist to be always ready for it.

9. Emergence of a trained leadership: it could channelize the potential of masses into the political struggle which manifested in the form of Swadeshi movement against the Partition of Bengal.

▪ The Swadeshi and Boycott Movement:



Partition of Bengal to Divide PEOPLE, 1903	
Western Bengal, Bihar and Orissa	Eastern Bengal and Assam.



Official Reasons	
Bengal, with a total population of 78 million, was too big to be administered	To help in the development of Assam



Real Motive-Weaken the Rising Nationalist Movement by Dividing Bengal	
On the basis of language - reducing Bengalis to a minority (as in the new proposal Bengal proper was to have 17 million Bengalis and 37 million Hindi and Oriya speakers)	On the basis of religion, as the western half was to be a Hindu majority area (42 million out of a total 54 million) and the eastern half was to be a Muslim majority area (18 million out of a total of 31 million).

Anti - Partition Campaign under Moderates (1903-05)

- Leadership-Surendranath Banerjee, K.K. Mitra and Prithwish Chandra Ray
- Methods - petitions to the government, public meetings, memoranda, and propaganda through pamphlets
- Newspapers-Hitabadi, Sanjibani and Bengalee were published
- Objective - exert sufficient pressure on the government through an educated public opinion in India and England to prevent the unjust partition

- July 1905 - Bengal was to be partitioned, ignoring the loud public opinion.
- August 7, 1905 - Boycott resolution was passed, Swadeshi movement was formally proclaimed in Calcutta townhall
- October 16, 1905 - partition came into force. It was observed as a day of mourning.
- **Bande Mataram** and **Amar Sonar Bangla** (the national anthem of Bangladesh, composed by Rabindranath Tagore) were sung. People tied rakhis on each other's hands as a symbol of unity of the two halves of Bengal.

Soon, the movement spread to other parts of the country

Region	
	Bal Gangadhar Tilak
	Lala Lajpat Rai, Ajit Singh
	Syed Haider Raza
	Chidambaram Pillai

Congress' position:

- **INC 1905** meeting under Presidentship of Gokhale-
 - a) Condemned Partition,
 - b) Supported anti-partition and Swadeshi Movement of Bengal
- **INC 1906** (Calcutta, President - Dadabhai Naoroji): A resolution was passed that declared that the goal of the Indian National Congress was "self-government or swaraj like the United Kingdom or the colonies" of Australia or Canada.

Other than this there were three more resolutions:

- 1- Resolution on Boycott,
- 2- Resolution on national education,
- 3- Resolution on Swadeshi Resolution.

Movement under Extremist Leadership

New forms of struggle were introduced such as,

- a. Boycott of foreign goods Public meetings and processions.
- b. **Corps of volunteers or 'samitis'**: they generated political consciousness among the

masses through magic lantern lectures, swadeshi songs, providing physical and moral training to their members, social work during famines and epidemics, organisation of schools, training in swadeshi crafts and arbitration courts.

c. Imaginative use of Traditional Popular Festivals and Melas, Jatra (local theatre):

Region	Leader
Barisal (now in Bangladesh)	Ashwini Kumar Dutta organised the Swadeshi Bandhab Samiti
Tirunelveli (Tamil Nadu)	V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, Subramania Siva and some lawyers organised the Swadeshi Sangam and Vandematram movement

d. Emphasis given to Self-Reliance: Atma Shakti (self reliance) was encouraged. Emphasis was placed on national dignity, honour and confidence, social and economic regeneration of the villages. Rabindranath Tagore mooted the idea of Atma Shakti in his Swadeshi Samaj booklet.

Region	Activity
Western India	Tilak's Ganapati and Shivaji festivals became a medium of swadeshi propaganda
Bengal	Traditional folk theatre forms were used for this purpose

e. Swadeshi programme or National Education:

- Bengal National College was set up (Aurobindo Ghosh as its Principal), inspired by Tagore's Shantiniketan.
- August 15, 1906 - National Council of Education was set up to organise national education - literary, scientific, and technical
- Education was imparted in vernacular medium.
- Bengal Institute of Technology was set up for technical education.

f. Swadeshi (Indigenous) Enterprises:

- Swadeshi textile mills, soap and match factories, tanneries, banks, insurance companies, shops, etc., were setup
- V.O. Chidambaram Pillai set up the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company at Tuticorin.

g. Cultural Impact:

- Rabindranath Tagore wrote Amar Sonar Bangla,

Subramania Bharati wrote Swadesha Geetham.

- Swadeshi influence could be seen in Bengali folk music in form of Palligeet and Jari Gan.
- Dakshinamitramajumdar wrote Thukmarjhuli
- Abanindranath Tagore broke the domination of Victorian naturalism over Indian art and sought inspiration from rich indigenous tradition of Mughal, Rajput and Ajanta painting.
- Indian society of oriental art was founded in this time.
- Nandlal Bose was first to receive scholarship from it.

h. Mass Participation:

- 1) **Students** - participated in large numbers, especially in Bengal, Maharashtra, South India - Guntur, Madras, Salem.
- 2) **Women** - took active part in procession and picketing.
- 3) **Muslims** - most of the upper and middle class Muslims did not participate. Led by Nawab Salimullah of Dacca, many supported the partition.
- 4) **Labour unrest and trade unions:** some strikes were organized in Bengal, Punjab, Tamil Nadu but such labour movement were mostly limited to middle class clerk and rise in price played an important role in them.

Difference between Moderates and Extremists

1. Social base - zamindars and upper middle classes in towns.	1. Social base - educated middle and lower middle classes in towns.
2. Ideological inspiration - western liberal thought and European history.	2. Ideological inspiration - Indian history, cultural heritage and Hindu traditional symbols.
3. Believed in England's providential mission in India.	3. Rejected 'providential mission theory' as an illusion.
4. Believed political connections with Britain to be in India's social, political and cultural interests.	4. Believed that political connections with Britain would perpetuate British exploitation of India.
5. Professed loyalty to the British Crown	5. Believed that the British Crown was unworthy of claiming Indian loyalty.
6. Believed that the movement should be limited to middle class intelligentsia; masses not yet ready for	

participation in political work. 7. Demanded constitutional reforms and share for Indians in services. 8. Insisted on the use of constitutional methods only. 9. They were patriots and did not play the role of a comprador class.	6. Had immense faith in the capacity of masses to participate and to make sacrifices. 7. Demanded swaraj as the panacea for Indian ills. 8. Did not hesitate to use extra constitutional methods like boycott and passive resistance to achieve their objectives. 9. They were patriots who made sacrifices for the sake of the country.
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Thus, the social base of the movement expanded to include certain sections of the zamindari, the students, the women, and the lower middle classes in cities and towns.

Reason for end of swadeshi movement:

- Government repression
- Internal squabble like spit in congress during Surat session 1907.
- Swadeshi movement lacked any effective organization structure.

Decline of swadeshi movement and rise of revolutionary activity:

Reason: Swadeshi movement had worked up the imagination of youth. They were willing to sacrifice for the motherland. Since after the suspension of political movement. There was no positive vent so they opted for propaganda by deed. This led to rise in revolutionary activity.

“They gave us back the pride of our manhood”

Hirendranath Banerjee on revolutionary activity

Annulment of Partition:

- It was done mainly to curb the rising revolutionaryextremism/terrorism.
- Muslim political elite were disappointed with this move. To placate them, the capital was shifted to Delhi in 1911, the seat of the erstwhile Mughal Empire, but they were notpleased.

Surat Split:



1905 INC session Presided by G.K. Gokhale

- The Extremists wanted to extend the Boycott and Swadeshi Movement to regions outside Bengal and also to include all forms of associations (such as government service, law courts, legislative councils, etc.) within the boycott program and thus start a nationwide mass movement.
- The Moderates, on the other hand, were not in favour of extending the movement beyond Bengal and were totally opposed to boycott of councils and similar associations.

INC session of 1906:

- Extremists wanted Tilak or Lajpat Rai as president but Moderates proposed DadabhaiNaoroji and thus he presided over Calcutta session.
- Therefore, as compensation, Congress adopted the resolution which included swarajya as its goal and a resolution supporting the programme of swadeshi, boycott and national education was passed
- The Extremists thought that the people had been aroused and the battle for freedom had begun. The Moderates thought that it would be dangerous at that stage to associate with the Extremists whose anti-imperialist agitation, it was felt, would be ruthlessly suppressed by the mighty colonial forces.

Government strategy:

The Moderates failed to realise that the council reforms (Minto - Morley reforms, 1909) were meant by the government more to isolate the Extremists than to reward the Moderates. The Extremists did not realise that the Moderates could act as their front line of defence against state repression. And neither side realised that in a vast country like India ruled by a strong imperialist power, only a broad-based nationalist movement could succeed.

INC session 1907:

- a. The Extremists wanted the 1907 session to be held in Nagpur (Central Provinces) with Tilak or Lajpat Rai as the president along with a reiteration of the swadeshi, boycott and national education resolutions.
 - b. The Moderates wanted the session at Surat in order to exclude Tilak from the presidency, since a leader from the host province could not be session president (Surat being in Tilak's home province of Bombay). Instead, they wanted Rashbehari Ghosh as the president and sought to drop the resolutions on swadeshi, boycott and national education. Both sides adopted rigid positions, leaving no room for compromise. The split became inevitable
- British capitalists, 2 for the landlords and 13 seats came under general electorate.
 - Indirect elections - The elected members were to be indirectly elected. The local bodies were to elect an electoral college, which in turn would elect members of provincial legislatures,
 - One Indian was to be appointed to the viceroy's executive council (Satyendra Sinha was the first Indian to be appointed in 1909).

Shimla Deputation:

Led by Aga Khan, a group of muslim elites met Lord Minto in October 1906 and demanded separate electorate for the muslims and representation in excess of their numerical strength in view of 'the value of the contribution' Muslims were making "to the defence of the empire".

▪ Minto - Morley Reforms, 1909:

- The principle of elections was introduced for the first time. Indians were allowed to take part in elections of various legislative councils.
- Separate electorate was introduced for muslims (for elections to the central council) for the first time
- The number of elected members in the Imperial Legislative Council and the Provincial Legislative Councils was increased. In the provincial councils, non-official majority was introduced. Overall non-elected majority remained.
- The Imperial Legislative Council, of the total 69 members, 37 were to be the officials and of the 32 non-officials, 5 were to be nominated. Of the 27 elected non-officials, 8 seats were reserved for the Muslims under separate electorates (only Muslims could vote here for the Muslim candidates), while 4 seats were reserved for the