

Rise of the Extremists (Phase of Militant Nationalism or Radical Politics)

The Extremists did not emerge all of a sudden in the first decade of the 20th century. The extremist ideology had been simmering ever since the Revolt of 1857 and finally surfaced in 1905 during the Bengal partition. The Moderate politics had already trained the educated Indians in political agitation. Some of them had now begun to get disillusioned with the methods of the moderates which had achieved little and evoked a cold and contemptuous response from the British. Consequently, there emerged a strong demand for a more vigorous political action than mere prayers, petitions and protests.

The Moderate ideology based on the adoration of Western culture did not find appeal among the masses and the Congress remained limited to a narrow social base. There was an awkward void which got created between the common people and the first all-India representative body. In due course of time, this gap was filled by the Extremists—the English educated Indians who took pride in their glorious past.

Let us recall that during the Revolt of 1857, the educated middle class remained aloof and did not participate in the Revolt. With time, there emerged a section of educated Indians who began to see the evils of colonialism, and simultaneously took pride in their cultural past. These educated Indians were particularly influenced by the teachings of Ramkrishna Paramhansa, his English educated disciple Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

Within the Indian National Congress, this change was reflected in the emergence of a new and younger group that demanded Swaraj as the goal to be achieved not by passive petitions but by more active and self-reliant methods, through self-help, determination and sacrifice. This new group came to be known as the New Party or the Extremists within Congress.

Note: the term militant in 'militant nationalism' means vigorously active, combative and aggressive, in support of a cause. As per the dictionary, the word 'militancy' may or may not include physical violence or armed combat.

CAUSES FOR THE RISE OF THE EXTREMISTS

Recognition of the True Nature of the British Rule

The early nationalist leaders made painstaking effort in exposing the evils of the British rule in India. *Ranade's Essays in Indian Economics* (1898), Dadabhai Naoroji's *Indian Poverty and un-*

British Rule in India (1901) and RC Dutt's *Economic History of India* had been published. These works demolished the moral basis of British rule in India and formed the arsenals from which the new leaders shot their arrows.

The politically conscious Indians were now able to see the true nature of British rule and were convinced that its main purpose was to exploit India economically and to enrich England at the cost of India. They were now able to see that the Indian economy and industry could progress only under an Indian government which would protect and promote it.

Increasing Miseries of Indian Life

The evil consequences of British rule emerged in the form of destitution, famines and diseases. The plight of the Indians in their own country moved many Indian leaders into extremism or radical politics. **Terrible famines** took place during 1896–97 and 1899–1900 while **bubonic plague** broke out in Maharashtra killing thousands of Indians. Tilak criticised the government's relief efforts and the arrogant attitude of the Government Plague Commissioners. When riots broke out, the government tried to stifle public opinion. In 1903, Congress President Lal Mohan Ghose referred to the **Darbar of 1903** and stated, 'Nothing could seem more heartless than the spectacle of a great government imposing the heaviest taxation upon the poorest population in the world, and then lavishly spending the money so obtained over fire-works and pompous pageants, while millions of the poor were dying of starvation.'

Even on the socio-cultural front, no progress was being made under the British rule. Primary and technical education was already neglected; the British had now also become suspicious of higher education. In 1904, the Indian Universities Act was passed which was seen as an attempt to tighten British control over higher education.

Thus, increasing number of Indians were now getting convinced that self-rule was an absolute prerequisite if India was to make any kind of progress.

The Rise in Number of Educated Indians and Unemployment

The number of educated Indians had perceptibly increased by the close of the 19th century. Many of them worked in the administration at very low salaries while many others faced unemployment. The lack of opportunities available to them turned them against the British government and attracted them powerfully towards radical politics. These Indians were thoroughly influenced by the Western ideas of democracy, nationalism and radicalism and were convinced that European revolutionary methods need to be adopted to meet European imperialism.

Socio-Cultural Reforms After 1858

The writings of Vivekananda, Dayanand and Bankim had begun to grasp the imagination of the educated Indians. Vivekananda was a great Vedantist who urged his countrymen to conquer the West with India's spirituality. Dayanand referred to India's rich civilisation during Vedic times when Europe was steeped in ignorance. Bankim Chandra dreamt of a united India under the leadership of Lord Krishna, who fought evil and stood for righteousness.

This kind of literature filled the Indians with 'new confidence' and a common vision for a New India. They had now acquired faith in their capacity to govern themselves and to create the India of their dreams.

Dayanand Saraswati: He was the first man to give a call for Swaraj as 'India for Indians' in 1876, which was later pursued by Lokmanya Tilak. Some historians also call him 'the grandfather of the Indian Nation'.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–94): He was a Bengali writer and poet associated with the Bengal Renaissance. While serving as a civil servant under the British Indian Government, he noted that the British were trying to promote 'God Save the Queen' as the national anthem for Indian subjects. It is believed that he wrote the poem Vande Mataram to counter the British attempt, and was later published in Bengali script in his novel Anandamath (1882), set in the backdrop of Sanyasi Rebellion. During the Congress Session of 1896, the poem was first sung as a song by Rabindranath Tagore. In October 1937, the Congress adopted the first two verses of the song as the National Song of India.



International Influences

Contemporary international events exercised a powerful influence on the minds of younger generation in India-

- They despised the humiliating treatment meted out to Indians in other British colonies, particularly in South Africa.
- **Boer War** (1899–1902) in South Africa showed the Indians that united people willing to make sacrifices could challenge even the most despotic governments.
- They felt inspired by the nationalist movements in **Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Ireland, China and Russia**.
- The rise of modern Japan after 1868 showed that a backward Asian country could develop on its own. Within a few decades, Japan had emerged as a top industrial and military power and introduced universal primary education.
- The confidence of Indians immensely increased upon seeing the **defeat of Italian army** at the hands of the Abyssinians (1896) and the **defeat of Russia by Japan** (1905). It showed that even a small Asian country (Japan) could defeat the biggest military power of Europe.

Such events pricked the balloon of British superiority and gave the Indians new hopes and aspirations.

Disillusionment with the Methods of the Moderates

The Congress had achieved little in its first 20 years of existence and the younger elements within the Congress had begun to turn desperate. They had begun to lose faith in the British sense of

justice and fair play and decried Moderate methods as political mendicancy. Instead of giving Indians wider political rights, even their existing rights were being taken away:

- The Indian Councils Act of 1892 was a complete disappointment.
- In 1897, the Natu brothers were deported without trial.
- In 1897, Tilak and some other editors were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for arousing the people against the government.
- In 1898, exciting 'feelings of disaffection towards the British government' was made an offence.
- In 1899, in the Calcutta Corporation, the number of Indian members was reduced.
- In 1904, the Indian Official Secrets Act was passed restricting the freedom of the Press.

In 1905, Lala Lajpat Rai returned from England and told his countrymen that the British were too busy with their own affairs to do anything worthwhile for India. Further, if the people really cared for their country, 'they would have to strike a blow for freedom themselves, and they should be prepared to give unmistakable proof of their earnestness.'

Tilak decried the Congress as 'a Congress of flatterers' and the Congress session as 'a holiday recreation'. He asserted that, 'We will not achieve any success in our labors if we croak once a year like a frog.'

The Rise of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Other Militant Nationalists

Militant nationalism in India found exemplary personification in the form of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, also known as Lokmanya Tilak. Born in 1856, he graduated from Bombay University and dedicated the rest of his life in the service of his country. In 1880, he founded the New English School which later became the Fergusson College. Tilak did not believe in an armed struggle, rather he felt that the Indians should **withdraw all cooperation** with the foreign government and attain Swaraj through self-help, determination and sacrifice. He gave the slogan, '**Swaraj is my birthright and I will have it**'. Tilak was militant and was ready to make sacrifices to get wrongs redressed. He was the first Congress leader to serve several terms of imprisonment for speaking his mind against the government.

Apart from Tilak, other outstanding leaders of militant nationalism were Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose and Lala Lajpat Rai.

The Reactionary Policies of Lord Curzon

Curzon held a very low opinion of Indian Intelligentsia, refused to recognise India as a nation and condemned nationalist activities as 'letting off of gas'. Several acts passed during his tenure such as the Official Secrets Act (1904) and the Indian Universities Act (1904) created great resentment in India. The Delhi Darbar held in 1903 during his tenure (at a time when India had not fully recovered from the devastating famine of 1899–1900) attracted loud criticism and was dubbed as 'a pompous pageant to a starving population'.

The Partition of Bengal

The Partition of Bengal into two provinces was the most hated act of Curzon administration. The partition was forced upon the people in the face of immense opposition. It was a clear attempt to divide Indians on the basis of religion. Now, it was abundantly clear that the British administration was deaf to popular Indian demands and opinions.

THE EXTREMIST LEADERS

The Extremist leaders emerged in three geographical groups—the Maharashtra group led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Bengal group led by Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose, and the Punjab group led by Lala Lajpat Rai (also known as **Lal-Bal-Pal triumvirate**). Most of the extremists belonged to the urban lower middle class and aimed at spreading the Congress message to the masses.



Bipin Chandra Pal

Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928): Popularly known as **Punjab Kesari**, he was a veteran leader of the Congress and one of the **Lal Bal Pal triumvirate**. He was born in a Hindu **Agrawal family in Punjab**, as son of a Urdu and Persian government school teacher. While studying law in Government College at Lahore, he came in contact with other freedom fighters such as Lala Hansraj and Pandit Guru Dutt. At Lahore, he came under the influence of Arya Samaj movement of Swami Dayanand that shaped his views on Hinduism and nationality. He was also deeply influenced by the nationalism of Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini. In 1886, he helped setting up of **Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School at Lahore**. The same year he moved to Hissar (where his father was transferred) and founded the Hissar district branch of Indian National Congress. In 1907, he was deported to **Mandalay** in May 1907 without trial for taking part in political agitation in Punjab. In November, however, he was allowed to return once Lord Minto decided that there was insufficient evidence to indict him for subversion.



Travel to Britain and America: 1914, Lalaji quit his law practice and joined the freedom struggle full time. Believing that it was important to explain India's position to the world, he left for Britain in April 1914. At this time, WW1 broke out and he was unable to return to India. He then left for the USA to gather support for the Indian cause. In the USA, he founded the **India Home rule League of America** (1917) and wrote a book called **Young India**. He was able to return to India only in 1920 after the war ended.

After his return, Lalaji led the Punjab protests against the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre and the Rowlatt Act. He was given the title of 'Punjab Kesari' for fiercely opposing the Rowlatt Act.

In 1921, he founded the **Servants of the People Society** at Lahore, a social welfare organisation. Disappointed with the suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement, he went on to form the **Congress Independence Party**, with a Hindu ideology.

In 1928, when the Simon Commission visited Lahore, Rai led a peaceful march in protest. However, the Superintendent of Police, James Scott, ordered **lathi charge** and struck blows on Rai himself. Despite being grievously injured, Rai addressed the crowd and famously said, "The blows struck at me

today will be the last nails in the coffin of British rule in India." Later, when Rai succumbed to his injuries, Bhagat Singh vowed to avenge his death and decided to kill Scott. He plotted the revenge along with other revolutionaries Rajguru, Sukhdev and Chandrasekhar Azad, but mistakenly killed another police official John Saunders.

Lajpat Rai was associated with the activities of **Hindu Mahasabha**, **Punjab National Bank** and **Laxmi Insurance Company**.

Other prominent works written by him include: The Story of My Deportation (1908), the United States of America: A Hindu's Impression (1916) and England's Debt to India (1917).

Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950): He was an influential nationalist leader who later became a spiritual reformer. In 1926, he founded Sri Aurobindo Ashram (Auroville) in **Pondicherry** with the help of his spiritual collaborator Mirra Alfassa. He was **nominated for the Nobel Prize** in Literature in 1943 and for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950.



THE EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY

The extremist ideology did not spring up all of a sudden on the Indian political scene but had been brewing invisibly since the revolt of 1857, which the extremists believed was inspired by the ideas of Swadharma and Swaraj. They felt that Western ideas and high rationalism had alienated the moderates from the masses, which was urging to look up to its ancient past.

The historic task of bridging this gulf between the masses and the educated few was accomplished by Ramkrishna Paramhansa along with his English educated disciple, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902). Swami Vivekananda had carried his message of nationalism to the West and generated immense self-confidence among the educated Indians. The Bengal extremists were also greatly influenced by Bankim Chandra (a liberal conservative like Edmund Burke) who believed that reforms should wait on moral and religious regeneration since an abrupt break from the past would only create more problems than it would solve; that change should come from within rather than being precipitated from outside forces. Aurobindo was also very much attracted by the teachings of Dayanand Saraswati and credited him with more definite work than any other Indian reformer.

In this way, Vivekananda, Dayanand and Bankim Chandra prepared the ideological ground on which the Extremists based their ideology and political program.

- They firmly believed that the remedy to Indian problems lay in the hands of Indian themselves and that they should now become fearless and strong.
- They had no faith in British benevolence and declared in a clear-cut manner **Swaraj** or self-rule as the goal of the national movement.
- They firmly believed that swaraj could be obtained only through direct political action based on **self-reliance**, **self-sacrifice** and **strong will**.
- They had deep faith in the capacity of the masses and worked to make both the Congress as well as the national movement **mass movements**.

- They were inspired by India's glorious past, but at the same time they had no desire to eternally dwell upon the past, but wanted to manfully build the future.
- They were inspired by the ideology of Swami Vivekananda, Dayanand Saraswati and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.
- The hallmark of extremist ideology was emotionally charged nationalism. All their socio-economic and political ideals revolved around this central vortex.
- The Extremists were attached to their native culture, religion and polity.
- They were inspired by their traditional cultural values, had tremendous sense of self-respect and wanted to keep their heads high.
- They are also sometimes termed as political radicals who wanted to have relations with other countries along lines of equality and self-respect.
- They wanted to build a new India of their dreams in which the British had no contribution to make.
- The Extremist thoroughly criticised the Moderates and called them servile and political mendicants.

Swaraj of the Moderates vs. Swaraj of the Extremists

It is noteworthy that the extremists' demand for Swaraj was a demand for complete freedom from British rule and full independence to manage national affairs without any foreign interference, while the Swaraj of the Moderates was merely a demand for self-government within the colonial rule.

Swami Vivekananda: Anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison, there so no life in it, it cannot be true.

Tilak: 'Swaraj or self-government is essential for the exercise of Swadharma. Without Swaraj, there could be no social reform, no industrial progress, no useful education, no fulfilment of the national life.'

Bipin Chandra Pal: the demand of the New Party is 'the abdication of the right of England to determine the policy of the Indian Government, the relinquishment of the right of the present foreign despotism to enact whatever law they please to govern the people of the country, the abandonment of their right to tax the people according to their own sweet will and pleasure, and to spend the revenues of the country in any way they like'.

Aurobindo Ghose: 'Swaraj is the fulfilment of the ancient life of India under modern conditions, the return of satyug of national greatness, the resumption by her of her great role of the teacher and guide, self-liberation of the people for final fulfilment of the Vedantic ideal in politics, this is the true Swaraj for India.'

Lajpat Rai: 'A subject people has no soul, just as a slave can have none..A man without a soul is a mere animal. A nation without a soul is only a dumb driven cattle. Swaraj is the first requisite for a nation and reforms or good government could be no substitute for it.'

WORK OF THE EXTREMISTS

- In 1891, Tilak opposed the Age of Consent Bill (introduced after the death of a child bride from sexual injuries and which aimed to raise the age of consent for sexual intercourse for all girls, married or unmarried, from 10 to 12 years, its violation subject to criminal prosecution as rape) and insisted that the British should not interfere in the private life of Indians.
- In 1893, Tilak started using the traditional Ganapati festival to propagate nationalism.
- During 1893-94, Aurobindo published a series of articles entitled 'New Lamps for the Old' in the Indu Prakash wherein he described the Congress as being out of contact with the 'proletariat' and as 'dying of consumption'.
- In 1895, Tilak introduced the Shivaji festival to further stimulate nationalism among young Maharashtrians, holding up Shivaji as a patriotic hero figure to be emulated (The first Shivaji festival was held on 15 April 1896).
- In 1895, Tilak ousted Gokhale and Ranade from the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and now the control of the Sabha came into the hands of the Extremists.
- Later, on 4 November 1896, Gokhale organised a separate political association called the Deccan Sabha. This completed the division between the Extremists and the Moderates in Maharashtra.
- In 1897, when Tilak was arrested on charge of spreading hatred and disaffection against the government, he set an example of boldness and sacrifice.
- Tilak started newspapers the Mahratta (in English) and the Kesari (in Marathi) and encouraged his countrymen to become self-reliant and selfless fighters.
- He urged the peasants of Maharashtra to stop payment of land revenue if their crops had failed due to famine.
- Between 1893 and 1900, Lala Lajpat Rai did not attend the Congress sessions.
- Till 1902, BC Pal remained in the Moderate camp and it was only in 1902 that he first wrote 'The Congress and its British Committee in London are both begging institutions.'

With time, what we see is a gradual weakening of the Moderates while Extremists moved from strength to strength. International events such as the defeat of the Italian army by the Ethiopians (1896) and the defeat of Russia at the hands of the Japanese (1904-05) finally pricked the bubble of European superiority and gave new self-confidence to the Extremists in India.

THE EXTREMIST PROGRAMME

The Extremist programme comprised of boycott of foreign goods, use of Swadeshi goods, National Education and Non-Cooperation or Passive Resistance.

- **Boycott and Swadeshi:** The Extremists promoted boycott of British-made goods and use of swadeshi or goods made in India to encourage Indian industries and provide employment to Indian people. Boycott proved to be one of the most effective weapons to injure British interests in India. Besides, it was also hoped that the newly rising Indian manufacturing class will provide liberal funds to the Congress and strengthen it.

- **National Education:** National Scheme of Education was set up for students who boycotted the government schools and colleges:
 - The Bengal Council of National Education was led by **Gurudas Banerjee** (Earlier in 1890 Gurudas had become the first Indian Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University).
 - A large number of national schools were opened in East Bengal and a Bengal National Education College was established at Calcutta.
 - In Madras, Pachaiaappa National College was established.
 - In Punjab, the DAV schools were set up.
- **Non-Cooperation or Passive Resistance:** Tilak was the most ardent preacher of non-cooperation. He asserted, 'You must realise that you are a great factor in the power with which the administration of India is controlled. You are yourselves the great lubricants which enable the gigantic machinery to work smoothly...You must be conscious of your power of making the administration impossible if you choose to make it.'
- **Co-operative Organisations:** The extremists also encouraged cooperative bodies. Organizations were formed on voluntary basis for rural sanitation, organising fairs and pilgrimages and relief work during calamities.

Bipin Chandra Pal explained the objective of co-operative movement in the following manner-'To create in the first place a strong civic sentiment in the people with the help of co-operative organizations for the furtherance of the common good, and thus to train them gradually for heavier responsibilities of free citizenship.'

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MODERATES AND THE EXTREMISTS

Though there was much in common, yet there were marked differences between the Moderates and the Extremists which finally culminated in the Surat split in 1907. The differences may be understood as follows:

- **Difference in the understanding of Swaraj:** The extremist's demand for Swaraj was a demand for complete freedom from British rule and full independence to manage national affairs without any foreign interference. While the Swaraj of the Moderates was merely a demand for self-government within the colonial rule.
- **Difference in attitude towards British benevolence:** While Moderates had infinite faith in the British sense of justice and fair play, the Extremists had no such faith.
- **Difference in methodology:** While the Moderates relied on 3Ps—Prayer, Petition and Protest to press their demands, the Extremists emphasised on self-reliance, self-sacrifice and strong will (3S). The new leadership sought to create passionate love for the country and willingness to suffer for the cause for the country.
- **Difference in the personalities of BG Tilak and GK Gokhale:** The Moderate vs. Extremist controversy in Congress also revolved around the personalities of BG Tilak and GK Gokhale. In many ways, their early careers were quite similar, both were Chitpavan

Brahmins from Pune, both attended Elphinstone College, both became mathematics professors and both were important members of the Deccan Education Society, yet when they joined the Congress, their divergent views began to surface.

- While Gokhale was gentle and soft-spoken, Tilak was militant (though he did not believe in an armed struggle) and felt that the Indians should withdraw all cooperation with the foreign government and attain Swaraj through self-help, determination and sacrifice. He was the first Congress leader to serve several terms of imprisonment for speaking his mind against the government and was charged of sedition three times (1897, 1909 and 1916).
 - In 1882, Tilak was first sentenced to four months' imprisonment for criticising the government over treatment meted out to the Maharaja of Kolhapur.
 - During the summers of 1897, bubonic plague raged in Poona in severe epidemic form. British troops were deployed to deal with the emergency and harsh measures were used such as forced entry into houses and examination of occupants. Though well meant, these acts were widely seen as acts of oppression. Tilak wrote inflammatory articles in his papers **Kesari** and **Maratha** quoting the Gita that no blame could be attached to anyone who killed an oppressor without any thought of reward. Following this, when **Commissioner Rand** and Lt. Ayerst were killed by Chapekar brothers, Tilak was charged with incitement to murder and for preaching disaffection against the Raj and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment.
 - In April 1908, Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose threw a bomb at a carriage in Muzzafarpur to kill a British Magistrate Douglas Kingsford, but erroneously killed two women travelling in it. Bose was hanged while Chaki committed suicide when caught. Tilak, in his paper **Kesari**, defended the revolutionaries and gave a call for immediate Swaraj. The government quickly charged him with sedition and sentenced him to 6 years' imprisonment in **Mandalay**, Burma (1908-14). In this case, he was unsuccessfully defended by lawyer Muhammad Ali Jinnah. After the sentence, **Max Muller** had pleaded for mercy and had said 'My interest in Tilak is that of a Sanskrit scholar.' While in prison, he wrote *Gita Rahasya*.
- While Gokhale set up the **Servants of India Society** to train a band of Indians in the service of motherland, Tilak wielded a powerful pen and greatly influenced public opinion through his papers the **Maratha** and the **Kesari**.
- During Bengal partition, Tilak extended support to the extremists led by Bipin Chandra Pal and this Tilak-Pal alliance became a cause of distress to many in the government as well as in the Congress. It was because of these differences that the Moderates tried to keep Tilak and his group members out of positions of power within the Congress and never allowed him to become the Congress President. The tussle for presidentship that ensued for the 1906 and 1907 Congress sessions culminated in the Surat Split of 1907 (Read about the Surat Split in the next chapter).

Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920): Tilak was a nationalist and a social reformer who is considered as the first leader of the Indian national movement, and conferred with the title of 'Lokmanya' meaning 'accepted by the people (as their leader)'. The British authorities called him as the '**Father of the Indian Unrest**' by the British authorities (**Valentine Chirol**). He was the first to advocate Swaraj and gave the slogan 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it.' Tilak was a radical nationalist but a social conservative. Though he was personally opposed to early marriage, **Tilak was against the 1891 Age of Consent Bill** (which raised the marriageable age for girls from 10 to 12 years), seeing it as an interference with Hindu religion. In his view, self-rule took precedence over any social reform.

Tilak started two weeklies, **Kesari** in Marathi and **Mahratta** in English. He popularised the **Ganapati** and **Shivaji Festivals** in 1893 and 1895 respectively and dispersed the values of Swaraj in the air of Maharashtra. Tilak opposed the moderate views of his contemporary, Gopal Krishna Gokhale.



ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTREMISTS

Criticisms

Extremists are mainly criticised for being backward looking in matters of social reform. For instance, Tilak opposed the Age of Consent Bill (which proposed to raise the age of consummation of marriage for girls from 10 to 12 years), encouraged anti-cow killing societies and organised Ganesh festival. All these project him as Hindu orthodox leader. Similarly, Lala Lajpat Rai and BP Pal spoke of a Hindu nation and protection of Hindu interests at all political levels. Though these revivalist measures were directed against the British government, they also encouraged communalism.

Achievements of the Extremists

- The Extremists saw clearly the clash between the British interest and Indian national interests. They realised that their goals could not be achieved without pressure tactics and some sort of direct action. Their pressure tactics included 3S—self-reliance, sacrifice and strong will.
- Their agenda included boycott and swadeshi, non-cooperation, national education and setting up cooperative organisations. In this way, the extremists successfully transformed patriotism from 'an academic pass time' to 'service and suffering for the nation'.
- The Extremists were successful in getting **annulled the partition of Bengal in 1911** which gave a new sense of self-confidence to Indian nationalists.
- The aim of Swaraj, though denied by Morley, was no longer seen as a revolutionary demand and the British government (still under shock of the First World War) was compelled to declare self-government institutions as the goal of constitutional development in India.

OPINIONS

Daniel Argov

Both the Moderates and the Extremists came from the middle class, both were reacting to British rule and both voiced Indian grievances. The Moderates claimed social equality and a share in the British government of India on the grounds that they were British subjects; the **Extremists demanded social equality and political emancipation as their birth right**. The Moderates appealed to Englishmen in England and placed their reliance on English history and English political ideas; the extremists drew sustenance from India's heritage and appealed to Indians by invoking religious patriotism. The Extremists disparaged the constitutional agitation of the moderates as "mendicancy". Instead they called for self-reliance through Swadeshi, Boycott and Passive Resistance. In contrast, the moderates stressed that their constitutional agitation was practical statesmanship that emotional idealism was fraught with peril, that rashness was not courage, that British rule would not come to an end because of Boycott and above all, the removal of British rule would result in chaos and anarchy.

BG Tilak

The new words have recently come into existence with regard to our policies, and they are Moderates and Extremists. These words have a specific relation to time and they, therefore, will change with time. The **Extremists of today will be Moderates of tomorrow**, just as the Moderates of today were Extremists of yesterday.



Lal-Bal-Pal



Previous Years' Questions – Preliminary Exam

- Which one of the following defines the extremist ideology during the early phase of Indian freedom movement?
[UPSC 1998]
(a) Stimulating the production of indigenous articles by giving them preference over imported commodities
(b) Obtaining self-government by aggressive means in place of petitions and constitutional ways
(c) Providing national education according to the requirements of the country
(d) Organising coups against the British Empire through military revolt
- The Indian Muslims in general, were not attracted to the extremist movement because of the [UPSC 1998]
(a) Influence of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
(b) Anti-Muslim attitude of Extremist leaders
(c) Indifference shown to Muslim aspirations
(d) Extremists policy of harping on Hindu past
- Who organised the 'Abhinav Bharat' a secret society of revolutionaries? [UPSC 1999]
(a) Khudiram Bose (b) VD Savarkar
(c) Prafulla Chaki (d) Bhagat Singh

4. Who among the following gave a systematic critique of the moderate politics of the Indian National Congress in a series of articles entitled 'New Lamps for Old'? [UPSC 2008]
- (a) Aurobindo Ghosh
(b) RC Dutt
(c) Syed Ahmed Khan
(d) Viraghavachariar



Previous Years' Questions – Main Exam

- What were the attitudes of the moderates and the extremists toward the freedom movement in India? What led to their showdown in Surat (1907)? [UPSC 1986]
- How did Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak champion the cause of militant Nationalism in India? [UPSC 1990]
- Analyse the main differences between the approaches of Tilak and Gokhale on social and political issues. [UPSC 1993]
- What was Tilak's contribution towards shaping the course of the nationalist movement in India? [UPSC 1996]
- Bring out the ideological basis of the moderate-extremist divide in the Indian National Congress. [UPSC 2003]
- Evaluate the contribution of revolutionary terrorism represented by Bhagat Singh to the cause of India's struggle for independence. [UPSC 2007]



Practice Questions – Preliminary Exam

- Whose teachings among the following influenced the extremists?

(a) Rammohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Dayanand
(b) Swami Vivekananda, Derozio and Rammohan Roy
(c) Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayanand and Bankim Chandra
(d) Derozio, Bankim Chandra and Rammohan Roy
- Which of below are correctly matched?
 - RC Dutt-Essays in Indian Economics
 - Dadabhai Naoroji-Indian Poverty and un-British Rule in India
 - Mahadev Govind Ranade-Economic History of India

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

(a) 1 and 2 (b) 1 and 3
(c) 1, 2 and 3 (d) 2 only
1. The Extremists firmly believed that Swaraj could be obtained only through direct political action based on violence.
2. The Extremists had no faith in British benevolence.
With regard to the ideology of the Extremists, which of the above statements is/are correct? Choose the correct answer from the following options.
(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) both (d) neither
1. In 1891, Tilak opposed the Age of Consent Bill which aimed to raise the age of marriage for girls from 10 to 12 years.

2. Tilak introduced the Shivaji festival to further stimulate nationalism among young Maharashtrians, and it was first held on 15 April 1891.

With reference to the activities of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, which of the above statements is/are incorrect? Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) both (d) neither
5. Which of the following international events contributed to the rise of Extremism in India?
- Boer War in South Africa
 - Nationalist movement in Turkey
 - Rise of modern Japan
- Choose the correct answer from the following options.
- (a) 1 and 2 (b) 1 and 3
(c) 1, 2 and 3 (d) 3 only
6. In 1896, which separate political association for the Moderates was organised by Gokhale?
- (a) Poona Sarvajanik Sabha
(b) Satya Shodhak Samaj
(c) Deccan Sabha
(d) Dharma Sabha

7. The programme of the Extremists included the following-

- Boycott
- Passive Resistance
- Direct military action

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 and 2
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 1 and 3
(d) 3 only



Practice Questions – Main Exam

1. What were the socio-economic and political factors that led to the emergence of

8. Consider the following statements with regard to the 1907 Congress session-

- The 1907 Congress Session was held at Surat, at the bank of the Tapti River.
- The Surat Congress was presided over by Moderate leader GK Gokhale.

Which of the above statements is/are correct? Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) both (d) neither

9. Which of the following statements are incorrect?

- Valentine Chirol described Bal Gangadhar Tilak as the 'Father of Indian Unrest'.
- The first propounder of the doctrine of passive resistance was Aurobindo Ghosh.
- The 1907 Surat session of Congress was presided over by Rash Behari Ghosh.

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) None of these

10. Which of the following statements is/are true?

- The Bengal Council of National Education was led by Gurudas Banerjee.
- Tilak started Shivaji festival in the year 1898.
- Tilak extended full support to Age of Consent bill in 1891

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) 3 only (d) None of these

extremists during the beginning of 20th century?

6.44 Modern Indian History

2. Critically analyse the role of extremists in securing India its freedom from the colonial rule.
3. 'The revolutionary movement progressed in phases with breaks and changing its character.' Comment

Answers

Previous Years' Questions - Preliminary Exam

1. (b)
2. (d)
3. (b)
4. (a)

Practice Questions - Preliminary Exam

1. (c)
2. (d)
3. (b)
4. (c)
5. (c)
6. (c)
7. (a)
8. (a)
9. (d)
10. (a)