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The Contribution Of Lala Lajpat Rai As Social Reformer & Nationalist In The Early 20th Century.

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Abstract- Lala Lajpat Rai was a great freedom fighter and was also a significant social reformer. His reformist ideals were deeply influenced by the “Arya Samaj” a Hindu reform movement. He believed that social and moral regeneration were essential for political independence and the creation of a strong nation. Lala Lajpat Rai was an energetic social worker, a very generous philanthropist and a champion of people’s cause. His contributions primarily focused on education, combating social evils, economics and advocating for the rights of the underprivileged. He was known as “Lion of Panjab”, and was a pivotal figure in India’s national movement . He was a lawyer, author, and revolutionary who played a pivotal contribution in the Indian independence movement, notably leading the protest against the Simon Commission in Lahore, where he was fatally injured in a police lathi charge.

Keyword -The story of reform, young India, unhappy India, New national movement swadeshi & Swaraj, “Lal-Bal-Pal”.

Introduction – Lala Lajpat Rai was born on January 28, 1865, in the village of Dhudike in Punjab. He was an influential Indian nationalist, writer and social reformer. He played a pivotal role in the Indian's struggle for independence. He began his legal practice in Hissar and later moved to Lahore, where he was a successful lawyer .He advocated for a more assertive approach, including mass agitation and self-reliance, to achieve Swaraj(self -rule).He was elected president of the Indian National Congress at the Calcutta special session of 1920 and played a significant role in leading the Non-corporation Movement in Punjab. Political subjection is the punishment of social evils and national crimes, ones imposed, it adds their volume and intensity. It accentuated social evils and weakness. It leads to poverty in all its hideous forms, mental, moral and physical. The British Government is responsible of more dependents for more dependencies the all the others nation .As a nationalist, Lala Lajpat Rai was a key member of the extremist trio of the Indian national Congress, along with Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, also known as “Lal-Bal-Pal”.

The story reform: Lala Lajpat Rai was a vocal arbitrator of the caste system. He actively worked for the abolition of untouchability, advocating for the equal right of all Hindus, regardless of caste, to access religious text like the Vedas. He also saw the British policy of categorizing the Indian population by caste as a tool for their “divide and rule”.

He was strong in women's rights and challenged them. He opposed social evils like a child marriage, dowry, and purdah system . He supported women’s education and economic independence were essential for their empowerment .Rai actively involved in social services and humanitarian work. He founded the *Hindu orphan Relief Movement* to ensure that these children were cared for and not converted by Christian missionaries. He established the *Dayanand Anglo-Vedic college* in Lahore also which became a hub for nationalist education. He believed education was crucial for empowering all sections of society.

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The religious and communal elements and in India Nationalism: Lala Lajpat Rai's perspective on the role of religion and communalism in Indian nationalism was complex. His views were strongly shaped by the "Arya samaj", a reformist Hindu movement. He believed that Hindu and Muslim were bound by a common political interest in achieving self government or Swaraj.

He argued that while they separate cultural entities, they constituted a single political community, the "Indian Nation". He urged both communities to "live and struggle for freedom as brothers" and to Islamic State, warning that such aspirations would be ruinous for both Hindustan and India.

Young India

The Bengalee Babu: The 'Bengalee Babu' by the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The only parts of countries which received the same education on modern line were the provinces of Bengal, Bombay and Madras. The number of educated men even in these provinces was small. Consequently, the English-knowing Indians were in great demand and secured ample series to make them "happy and loyal" The English Knowing Bengalee spread over the whole of northern India, lately the scene of mutiny and materially helped in bringing about a settled condition of life. The Bengalee Babu worshiped Feringhee¹ began to imitate him in his testes. For a time the fled that was opened for the employment of English educated Verbalise in Upper India (in the then N.W provinces, in the Punjab, in Behar, in Central India in Rajputana ,even in Sindh) checked the growth of these tendencies. The feeling of gratitude and contentment was supreme. The Bengalee was indispensable in almost every department. The rains of practical management were mostly in Bengalee hands, whether it was a court of justice, or a Revenue Commissioner's office, or a commissariat depot, or an adjutant's camp ,or the department of land survey, or education.

New National movement swadeshi and Swaraj: No sooner was the cry raised than the country was swept by a wave of political activity which deeply and intimately influenced the proceedings of the Congress in 1905 and 1906. Calcutta might have witnessed this in 1906. Lala Lajpat Rai was a fervent advocate of the Swadeshi movement. His contributions were particularly significant in Punjab. He strongly supported the use of Indian made goods and the boycott of British products, especially cloth and salt. The goal was to hit the British economically and promote indigenous industries. He was instrumental in mobilizing the masses in Punjab to participate in the Swadeshi movement, which had been ignited by the partition of Bengal in 1905. The protest, strikes, and

boycott that began in Bengal soon spread to other parts of India, largely due to the efforts of leaders like Lajpat Rai.

Swaraj: Lala Lajpat Rai vision of swaraj was comprehensive and went beyond mere political independence. He was a staunch proponent of complete political independence from British rule. He believed that only through self-governance could India achieve true progress and prosperity. He believed a free India required a complete overhaul of the economic system that was exploited by the British. He emphasized the importance of preserving and promoting Indian culture and heritage, seeing it as an integral part of national identity and strength. Lala Lajpat Rai's role in the new national movement was pivotal. He was a champion of mass mobilization, and a radical. Vision of independence that was not just political but encompassed all aspects of Indian life, from the economic to the social and cultural. His leadership and ideal contributions significantly contributed to the shift in the Indian National Congress strategy and helped lay the groundwork for the future nationalist movement.

Unhappy India

Lal-Bal-pal : Lal-Bal-pal was a triumvirate of three prominent Indian nationalist leaders: Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra They were key figures in the Indian Independence movement during the 1906-1928. Lal means Lala Lajpat Rai was from Punjab and was known as the "Lion of Punjab". Bal means Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a leader from Maharashtra and was famous for his slogan, "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it". Pal means Bipin Chandra Pal was from Bengal and was a powerful orator and writer.

During the early 20th century, Lala Lajpat Rai lived in the United States, where he founded the Indian Home Rule League of America in New York city. He returned to India in early 1920. And later that year he led a special session of the Congress party that launched. Having been imprisoned from 1921 to 1923, Rai was elected to the legislative assembly on his release.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was famously known for his slogan, "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it!". He was a staunch nationalist who believed that true political progress could only be achieved through "Swaraj". Tilak shrewdly used traditional Hindu festivals like the Ganesh utsab and the Shivaji Festival to mobilize people and spread nationalist sentiment.

Bipin Chandra Pal was a multi-faceted personality who used his literary and rhetorical skill to inspire a new generation of revolutionaries. He used his journals, such as Bande Mataram, and powerful oratory to popularize

the concepts of Swadeshi and Swaraj. He was a gifted speaker who could articulate his ideas with great conviction, earning him the title of the “Father of Revolutionary Thought”. He was a social reformer who opposed the caste system.

The Lal-Bal-pal triumvirate fundamentally changed the trajectory of the Indian independence movement. Their assertive nationalism, their use of mass mobilization, and their unwavering demand for swaraj gave a new direction and energy to the struggle. Their ideology and sacrifices laid the foundation for future leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, who would build upon their work to finally achieve independence for India. He led a peaceful protest in Lahore against the all-white Simon Commission on October 30, 1928. He was severely injured by the police, under orders from superintendent James A. Scott, carried out a brutal lathi charge. He later succumbed to these injuries on November 17, 1928.

Conclusion: Lala Lajpat Rai was a strongly influenced “Arya Samaj”. The term ‘Bengalee babu’ particularly within the educated middle class of Bengal. The Lal-Bal - Pal trio and extremist faction of the Congress capitalized on this stereotype to criticize the Moderates. His sacrifices in 1928, leading the protest against the Simon Commission, cemented his legacy as the embodiment of this fusion of fearless political activism and profound social conscience. He played a leading role in the Swadeshi movement following the partition of Bengal and presided over the Calcutta special session of the Indian National Congress in 1920 where the Non-cooperation movement was adopted.

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Foot Note

1. A native term equivalent to for Europeans.