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Moral and economic bases for the legitimacy of British Raj in colonial India (1757-1858): An overview

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Abstract

In the present Research Paper I Attempt to focus upon the colonial policies and programmes which were responsible for the establishment of a moral and economic base to British Raj in India. I am discussing the tools, techniques and policies and programmes and their implementation and validation in India. From Placecy to Regulating act and from Regulating act to Victoria declaration I am evaluating how the East India company became a colonial power. I also discussed the Role of Executive, legislation, Judiciary, Role of patterns of Colonialism and Role of western Orientalist school who established the theory of Whitemen's burden and Provide a moral base to the India as a Backward country and India society was a closed and not changing society.

Keywords: colonialism, Whitemen's burden, moral base, legitimacy

Introduction

South Asia always remains a center of attention for explorers, invaders and for the merchant from the ancient times because this specific region was very fertile, prosperous according to availability for natural resources The present discussion specifically belongs to the British mindset. Actually East India company came to India on December 31,1600 A.D.And started her journey with the learning of trial and error methods .Firstly East India Company struggled with the other western company like Purtugees,Dutch, French and at the same time struggling with the native states of Indian subcontinent. But with the effective and informative leadership East India company became leader of the race and won the Battle of Plassey and Battle of Buxar. And the battle of Buxsar provided the collection of Revenue rights to the East India Company for Bengal, Bihar and Orisa .With the help of The regulating Act and Permanent settlement British stated the drain of wealth as propounded by Dada Bhai Norojee, Agrarian polices and Successful suppression of the revolt of 1857 And the Victoria declaration played landmark role for established of British Raj in India.

1. Role of executive, legislatiive and Judiciary

These three pillars of Govt played a pivotal role for the legitimacy of British Raj in India. The pattern of Government, Role of executive branch in which viceroy played a effectively and informative role with the coordination of other members and special assistant of secetary of state. The act passed by British parliament in August 1861.for establishing High Court of Judicature in India .Under that act it was lawful for her Majesty, By letter patent under the great seal of the United Kingdom to erect and establish high court of Judicature at Calcutta, Madrass and Bombay ^[1].

2. Role of Placey, Buxsar, Allahabad treaty, Regulating Act

After the winning of battle of Placey and Buxsar and Allahabad treaty and Regulating act provide a moral and economic base to British Raj in India. Actually the treaty of Allahabad treaty provide a right to collect the revenue from Bengal, Bihar and Orrisa and Brithisher had opportunities to know how the mindset of Zamindar as well as peasants also. British recorded a great revenue from the area annual base.

¹ PN Chopra, BN puri, MN Dasd(1974) A social, cultural, economic History of India, Volume 111 p 43

Table 1: Gross Revenue and land Revenue collected in Bengal and Bihar (in Sterling)

Years.	Gross Revenue	Land revenue (Part of gross revenue)	Revenue other than land Revenue
1772-73	2,866,968	2,298,441	568,527
1773-74.	3,160,186	2,438,405	721,786
1774-75.	3,564,913	2,777,870	787,043
1775-76.	4,198,017	2,818,071	1,379,946
1776-77.	3,971,440	2,755,043	1,216,397

Source: R.C Dutt, Economic history of India under Early British Rule, p 69,(.from reports of the committee of Secrecy, 1782,11 p 362)

3. The Role of the three phases of the rise and growth of colonialism

Many economist historian explain that there were three stages like First was from 1700 to 1757, Indian economy before the Placey before the Battle of Placey British gained a lot of wealth. While around 1700 agriculture accounted for much the larger portion of India's national product in physical form, manufacturer too claimed a significant Share, S. Moosvi, who has calculated the Gross domestic product (GDP) for 1600 AD, Including the contribution made by services, put the share of agriculture in GDP and animal husbandry at 59 per cent, And manufacturers at 12.percent [2].

It is just a one example, and lot of historical evidence in British officals record how British creatated and genertaed wealth in India.

From 1757 to 1813 a mercantilism pattern was working in India and exploited our natural resources and human resources for established British Rule. In 1784 the British Parliament declared in what is known as Pitts India Act(Art 39) that 'to pursue Schemes of Conquest and Extension of dominion In India are measured repugnant to the Wish, the honour and policy of the 'Nation '.The reality of course was different. Three years earlier (1781), an Indian historian was sure that the European stateman are determined to carry out the conquests of the country of India, having already established their authority over much of its territory. There was an overwhelming impulses towards increasing the flow of wealth from India to Britain -the so called 'tribute '- which made constant territorial expansion in India an inescapable pursuit for the East India Company, whatever be the public and parliamentary professions made on behalf of the British Nation [3].

Third phase was versatile and mature phases of British colonialism, many economic historian considered it the age of free trade (1813-1857) when East India company focused for the free trade polices and paradigm. Because East India Company had a lot of Surplus money and she wanted to invest it in different sector like Railway, communication, education, health, sanitation And waterworks etc for the establishment of robust infrastructure and for established a steel framework.

4. Role of western Orientatelist schools and Missionaries

Due to the proactive and visionary role played by the western scholar and Christian missionaries their were many educational, Medical and sanitary institutions established in India and the develeped a quality of institutionalalze the public utility things in a western style not in ancient and medieval patterns. Their were many Orientatelist leadership Which played a landmark role. The Orientatelist among them William Jones, Horace Hayman Wilson and Henery

Thomas Colebrooke, developed such a fascinated for Sanskrit that they deleved deep into the field by way of serious research [4] So The western scholar started the establishment of Modern school and colleges, Becuse their basic interest was in deep learning of oriental knowledge because it was the need of the hour to know how about the Indian ethos. The establishment of Fort Williams college, Hindu college, Makauly Minutes, General committee of Public Instructions, spread of English Education (1835-1854), Spread of modern health, Sanitation and waterworks, Introduction of Vernacular education etc provided a strong moral base to British Raj in India. For a dozen years from 1869,the conservative were able to impossible their ideas on India, their opportunity came in 1868 when first the first time, they were required to select a Viceroy. Disraeli 's many relied on his intuition rather than any carefully of merit and and achievement, and on this occasion Disraeli 's instinct did not play him false. Energetic, buoyant and self assured, Mayo was suited for India, which at that time demanded a strong hand. While as it is clear from his corospondence, Mayo was not a high educated mänge had a sturdy and Unhesitatiting mind which grapped firmly with the problems of Administraton [5].

Review of literature

A large number of books have been written on British Administration specially (1757-1858).They provide general information about the British Administration. The existing literature had been categories in to Two parts basically.

- Books of First category deal with political Administraton of British.
- The second category includes books on society, economy and cultural of British India.

The category gives information about the British mindset, ideologies and their moral and legal base for legimacy of British Raj.

First category: These books covered the political and historical development of British administration in Indian subcontinent like executive, Military, Police and criminal Administraton and judicial, public health and sanitation and waterworks administration etc.

- In his book History of Modern India by BL Grover, Alaka Mehta and Yaspal provide a specific chapter for historical chapter for the Constitution development of British India. It provided a lot of information about structural aspects of the British administration also the historical development of East India company. But the authors has ignored the moral and economic bases which were responsible for legimacy of British Raj in

⁴ PN Chopra, BN puri, MN Das, A social, Cultural and Economic History of India, volume three, Macmillan India LTD.

⁵ S. Gopal, British policy in India,1965,Cambridge south Asian studies (Gladstone to canning 23 July 1859,Canning papers

² .Ifan Habib, (2013)Indian economy under Early British Rule p 5

³ .Ifan Habib(2013)Indian economy under Early British Rule p 25

India.

- In his book political Administrator of India, David C Potter provide a detail sketch about the achievements of political administrator, their life, sacrifices, and dynamic contribution to the Nation. But the author did not identified the ideology like 'Whitemen's Burden, Britain's Christian Duty which provides the moral bases to the British Raj in India and British were giving the training of discrimination to the Indian and training of superiority to the British .So the work of David C Potter require lot of interpretation and explanation.
- In his book Anil Chandra Banerjee 's Anglo-Sikh relations(1949) gives a lot of Information about the Maharaja Ranjit Singh 's relations with the British specifically. And the conversation between British Anglo and Sikh but did not paid much attention on which factors which are dominating the Sikh empire and wearing the Sikh empire and day by day Ranjit Singh was becoming irrelevant and useless.
- In his book Amar Farooqui(2013) 'The establishment of British Rule -1757-1813'
Only provide a detail review about the establishment and expansion of British Rule and specific the struggle of East India company with the French and Native Indian states. The book also Gives Military and other cause which were responsible for the success of Britisher in India but not paid much attention upon the ideological moral base and detail economic causes which were responsible for the establishment of robust British Raj in India. So the book require detail discussion and interpretation.
- In the book 'Making India great Again -A learning from history writing by Meeta Rajivlochan and Prof.Rajiv LOCHAN. Both esteemed authors explore the question repetitively how can India become a great nation again. The book indicates the wonderful achievement in Science, technology Math and Commerce by Indian indigenous people. In this book a good SWOT analysis of Indian history, culture and Intellectual property has been done in very effective way. But the book ignored the moral and economic bases of British Raj which were responsible for the establishment of British Raj in India. So the book require more interpretation and more explanation.

Second Category

These works deal with the society, Culture and economy of British India. The sociteal values, Cultural perspective and the economic factors discussed in these works.

In his book ' A social, Cultural and economic history of India Volume- Three (1974) written by P. N Chopra, BN puri, MN Das the esteemed authors gives a beautiful sketch about the socio-economic life, art and architecture and education. This book helps for the understanding of overall understanding of Indian culture and ethos but book lacks in perspective of the moral and economic bases of British Raj in India.

- In his book History and culture of Punjab (2006) Ragnath Rai focused upon Early British Administration, British policy towards the Army, Agriculture Industry, Trade and commerce, spread of modern education, Socio religious reforms movements, growth of political consciousness in Punjab. Really the is very ellobraive and information based but it does not

the ideological base of British and the economic patterns and programmes of British administration.

No special chapter is mentioned in this book about the moral bases of British Raj in Punjab.

- In his book 'Advanced Study in the History of Modern India,(1981) volume -2 1813-1919,The author review a chronological Survery about the Governor General of India in the perspective of the expansion of the British Empire in India and also special chapter about about Raja Ranjit Singh, the Anglo -Sikh relations, the North west frontier policies discussed but the book ignored the moral bases like British ideologies, health, Sanitation and waterworks and canal policies are missed which provides British Raj a moral base.
- In his book ' The continent of Circle' Nirad C. Chaudhury described the people of India and herterogenous quality of life styles. The main agenda of this book is the imaginative and live explanation of Hindu community based upon original literature. The books also covered the historical as well as geographical settings of Indian. But the books ignores the aspects the moral bases of British Raj which were responsible for the domination upon they May Indian Hindus or Indian Muslims. Many times the books seems as an intertersting novel or drama.

Research Gap

A number of good works have been written on British Administrative system,social set up, Land revenue policies, Agrarian polices, Drain of wealth, colonization, Education policy, Foreign policy, police and criminal Administraton, Judiciary, Health and sanitation and waterworks. But these work provides brief introduction and information about the importance ideological stance and moral and economic bases which were responsible for the legitimacy of British Raj in India.

Justification of the Topic

After discussing the research gap it is clear that the previous work has focused upon British administration, organization and hierarchy only and explain only the different policies in the perspective of Princely states and the expansion of the British Empire in India. But ignore overall parameters and moral base which are responsible for the legitimacy and validation of British Raj in India.

Research questions

1. What was the concept of Whitemen's Burden?
2. What were the tools, techniques and methods of Colonialism in India.
3. What were the contribution of Western Orientatlist leadership in establishing British Raj in India.
4. What kind of Attitude Britisher adopted when Dealing with the princely states, elite Indian and Laymen.
5. How did social economic, cultural aspects played a role for established a moral base and legitimacy to the British Raj in India.

Objective of the Proposed Study

1. To explore the unexplored area like health, sanitation, hygiene and waterworks in colonial India under the British Raj.
2. To examine the impact of British administration upon society, culture and economy.

3. To examine the work of Cornwallis, Lord Wellesely, Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning?
4. Examine the relationship between the British Raj and native Indian states?

13. Tripathi A. Trade and Finance in Bengal Presidency 1793-1833, Oriental Longman, Bombay 1956.

Hypothesis

The executive, legislation, Judiciary, western Orientalist leadership and missionaries played an important role for the establishment of moral and economic bases and legitimacy of British Raj in India and become responsible for the decline of Mughal Empire.

Research Methodology

I used primary as well as secondary sources related to overall British Administration. I used British record and gazetteer of the districts of India. I visited National Archives, Panjab state Archives Patiala and consulted a lot of libraries for collection of data and information. And visited Public health centers, cantonment, railways library, and Municipal corporation offices specially Abohar, Fazilaka, Ferozepore, Sri Ganganagar, Handing, Hisar for searching the moral and economic bases of British Raj in India.

Time and Area of My Research Proposal

The Title of Present Research work deal with the from the Battle of Plassey to Victoria Declaration. The study Covered the overall British policies and programmes which were responsible for the establishment of robust knowledge institutional framework which were responsible for the establishment of moral and economic bases for the British Empire in India.

Concluding remarks

In Conclusion we can say that British were good strategican, record keeper, keen learner and visionary for future And basis of these qualities they legitimate themselves in India.

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