

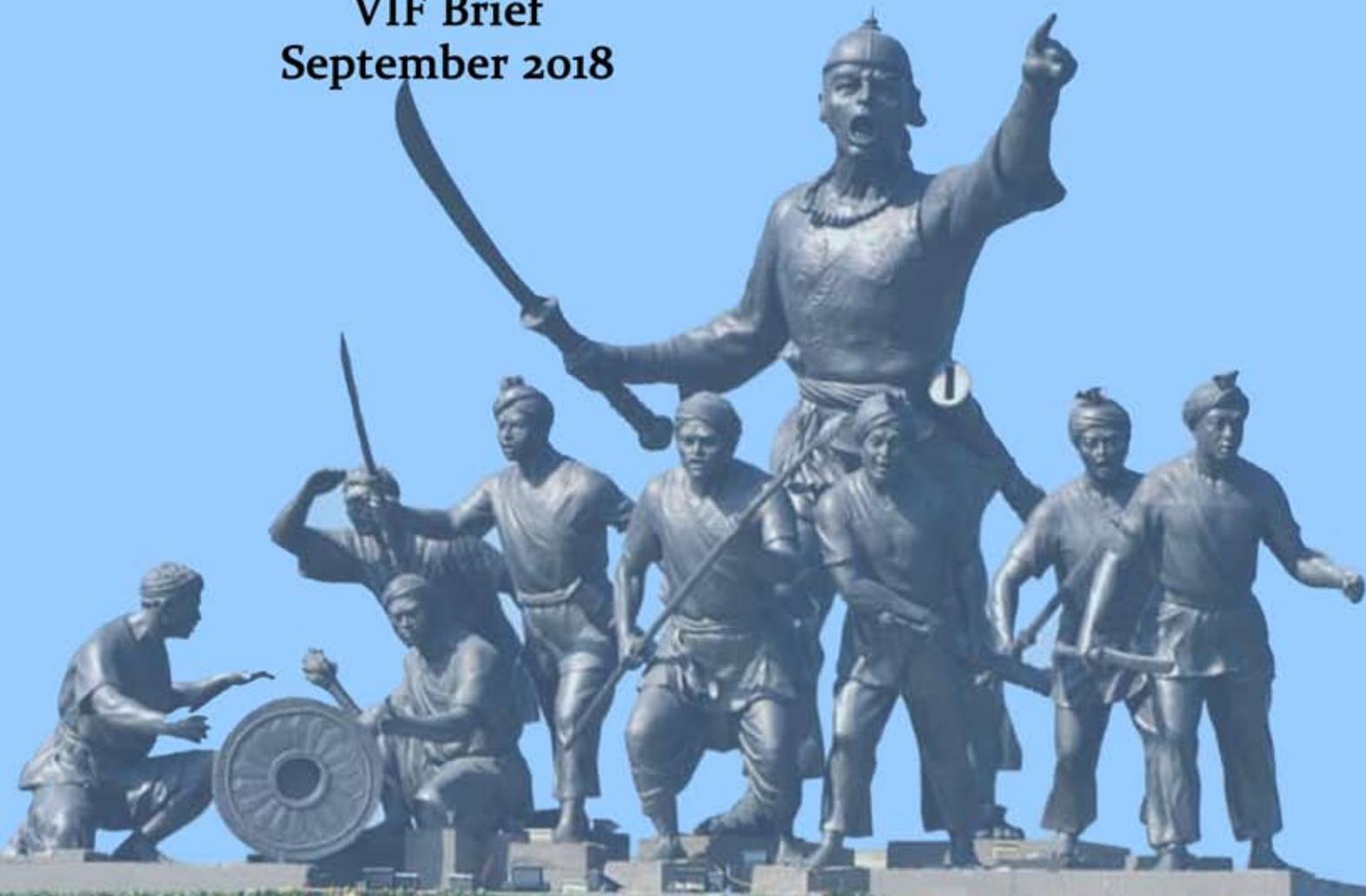


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Either Side of Historical Conclusions: Evidences and Interpretations

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“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots”, - Marcus Garvey

History Debates

Debates over a nation's history is a sign of healthy intelligentsia and an active academic environment; it is also a sign of nationalist awareness. Therefore, the trend of debates over post-conclusive evidences of India's historical past must be seen as a mark of societal progress and reiteration of our sublime nationhood. But when arguments start getting coloured by ideological afflictions and historical narrations are customised to lead the citizens into aligning with one school of conviction or the other, there arises the responsibility of the academia to rationalise the incongruencies between the currently propagated versions of history, logical interpretations of new evidences, and circumstantial evaluation of hoary civilisational memories and beliefs. The historians' fraternity is conscious in fulfilling that role, but much more research, logical evaluation and plausible deductions are needed to cover the huge gaps that afflicts an ancient civilisational entity like India.

Indeed, there is much to be added, elaborated and corrected in the currently propagated history of the Indian nation. One of the major shortcoming in India's current historical narrative is in blind rejection of indigenous oral and cultural traditions on the pretext that these fall 'short of conclusive' proof'. That, even when the entire edifice of scientific and cultural knowledge emanate from observations, hypotheses, logical explanations and deductions – only till more competent deductions can emerge. The other shortcoming is more ominous – selective, preferential recording of monumental events of the past to propagate a coloured narrative.

This paper argues that the Indian history, obscured and vandalised by usurping regimes over the past millennium, needs to be re-authenticated from more recently researched, excavated, discovered and logically deducted evidences which have come to light over the past 50 years or so. Of course, that process of updation and rationalisation of the history has to be professionally evaluated and kept free from motivated or frivolous tampering or twisting of established facts in order that the updated versions do not come to question ever.

Role of Civilisational History

Civilisational history has ever been a key determinant of societal characteristics of a nation and forms one of the vital foundations of nationhood. It is the repository of civilisational knowledge and a cognition of national characteristics - attributes which go into the making of the citizen's aspirations, attitudes and apprehensions. In similar vein, functionaries of the State, consciously or otherwise, get to administer the realm in the backdrop of their historical instincts, duly conditioning such instincts by contemporary perceptions. Conversely, obfuscation of civilisational history is liable to bring about societal disorientation and debilitate the thrust of astute statecraft. Therefore, a nation's history is to be recorded, stitched together and documented by professional historians and archaeologists for the citizens as well as the State functionaries to imbibe its lessons and experiences in formulating a nationalist discourse. In other words, national history has to be factual, true to national character and inspirational.

Import of Military History

Civilisational history is the sum of its components, namely, societal, political and military history. Among these, the first two are substantially influenced by the last - that is, the nation's military past - simply because of its profoundly destructive as well as re-constructive consequences, both politically and economically. Resultantly, understanding of military history is the first and the basic platform for delving deeper into a nation's comprehensive history, and as a corollary, the understanding of a nation's character and quest. More tellingly, a nation's *military history* provides for the ground from where its military leaders are initiated into the profession of arms and motivated towards their nationalist call.

It however it needs to be appreciated that sequencing and broad picturisation of events, battles, tales of valour etc. are not enough to qualify as military history. Delving into detailed descriptions of preparatory phases, command and control, terrain engineering, communication, battle formations, weapons technology and usage, tactical moves and manoeuvres, and finally, the after-events are mandatory qualifications for being accepted as truly educative military history. Western historians make every effort to meet such qualifications, going to the extent of recreating the scenes on actual battle fields. But that degree of study and research is rarely to be found in India's military history.

The result of that deficiency confines the Indian military theorists to the experiences culled from Western military narratives. Many times, that prevents germination of native military concepts and indigenous strategies. In effect, that is

a short-coming which manifests through in-optimal harness of indigenous strengths and assets of warfare.

Authenticity of Historical Narratives

As the learned historians aver, historical narration cannot go beyond what is conclusively established and impartially derived, and that there cannot be any scope for imagination, conjecture and anticipation in it. Truly, unless such strict measures of scholastic probity are maintained, history could turn subservient to myths, to be twisted and corrupted one way or the other according to the motivations of various schools. Admittedly however, some myths, passed down the ages by oral tradition, might be genuinely construed as possibly factual, while there are also the ones which appear to be farcically construed and blatantly exaggerated. Indeed, it is to repudiate such controversial heresies and subjectivities of conclusions that the historians' professional probity stops the various schools from perceiving 'history' according to their interests and pre-dispositions. The historians are right of course; history is replete with instances when unscrupulous interest groups have twisted history to wreck rapine and genocide – Ghazni in 11th, Ghoris in 12th, Nadir Shah in 18th and British in 1857 are some examples of barbarism inflicted in the name of religion and justice.

Even if the learned historian's stance must be respected in the interest of pure objectivity, there is another angle which cries out for serious attention – for the benefit of history itself. In the case of ancient civilisations like that of Mesopotamian or Sumerian and Indian, civilisations, it is banal to expect to find material evidences of orally handed down narrations of great significance and the fallouts of such events; though the Egyptian and Chinese histories are somewhat better off in that respect. In Indian context, the impracticability of locating lost material evidences turns into impossibility when the nation had been subjected to barbaric invaders' systematically organised mayhem, pillage and arson – particularly focused at wiping out the native heritage - as it has happened with India for nearly 1000 years.

Admittedly, cultural vandalism was a standard practice among the West and Central Asian invaders in order to break the opponents' will to renew the fight, the purpose being to save themselves from long resistance, and possibly, eventual defeat. Doubtlessly, even the historical records of the later-indigenised Sultanate and Mughal periods are but severely biased, while those of the never-indigenised British Raj are blatantly condescending, even contemptuous. And that does not help the cause of building India's factually authenticated and comprehensive historical narrative.

History: Chronicle of the Powerful

“*What is history but a fable agreed upon?*”, said Napoleon Bonaparte. Truly, the readily accepted version of the Indian history that one reads today had been recorded by minions, even if scholarly, of the forces victorious in wars and their lord-incumbents in power. The matter of partisan recoding of officially endorsed history was in full play when the historians were in the employ of invaders and foreign regimes, and when common Indians and their versions were banished from the process of history writing. The local versions do survive through folklore, ballads, obscure manuscripts, and sometimes even through tell-tale signatures, informed appreciations and *bona fide* inferences. But being bereft of official patronage and its stamp of office, such information have had to be barred from professional acceptance, and thus excluded from India’s officially promulgated history.

Partisanship in historical interpretations also comes to the fore when the ruling regimes’ propensity to mould and exaggerate their preferred construct of events becomes acceptable in modern times as long as it comes from the official versions of history - more dated, higher the authenticity ascribed. Conversely, the native versions stand disavowed by the lack of official authentication. Thus over time, even plausible but short of conclusively proved narratives are consigned to the sobriquet of ‘myth’.

Whatever be the case, the result is that one gets to subscribe to the official versions of history, even when much of these might be made up of exaggerations and interpretations favourable to the ruling agenda. When it comes to *military history*, contrast of the narratives of the victor and the vanquished is even more pronounced, the motive being to get the defeated party to accept its inability to contest the all-conquering power.

The Indian History

In its present form, India’s ancient history is sourced from antique monuments, treatise and scriptures - those of which have survived the invaders’ barbarities and arson that the Indians have been subjected to down the ages. It is a gift from the European - mostly British, some French and few others - Indophiles of the late 18th Century and after, who spent their lifetimes to re-discover, collate, authenticate and record India’s glorious past. Indians must ever remain indebted to these soldiers, explorers and scholars, and their alma mater, the Asiatic Society of Calcutta (presently, Kolkata), for what they know of their proud heritage.

When it comes to historical recordings during the Muslim dynasties, most of these were grandiosely focused on the ruling regimes’ conduct of state admin-

istration and military campaigns. Thus, beginning more or less with the Arab conquest of the Sind-Indus Valley in the 8th Century and till the end of the Mughal Empire in the early 19th Century, historical recordings have mainly been the preserve of those learned courtiers whose very existence depended upon propagation of their masters' cause. A similar situation prevailed even among the independent native Hindu dynasties as well as the native vassals in Muslim regimes who continued to rule over many parts of India at the provincial and regional rungs. Resultantly, in the Muslim period historical recordings there is virtually no scope left for finding balanced versions of history. Modern India's historians therefore had no choice but to go by what was recorded by patronised court historians who had to keep their jobs – and heads.

One-sided history writing continued during the British rule when the focus shifted to undermining any possibility of inquiries arising out of the native spirit to challenge the 'master race'. However, consistent with selective British morality, concessions were made in favour of recording more comprehensive and near-factual narrations. That however did not stop the British period historians from drawing grossly adverse inferences from events related to 'black' natives, 'uncivilised' Indians, and their 'despicable' heritage. Indeed, having been imbibed with the theories of 'white supremacy' and 'native barbarity', almost all of the foreign mentors of Indian history as well as most of their brown native disciples preferred to be rather 'reserved', choosing to be on the debit side of the historical facts and the inferences thereof. Rise of pan-Indian nationalism in the mid-20th Century saw celebrated Indian historians take up the cudgels of compiling more balanced knowledge of India's past. But even then, India's history continued to be contaminated, albeit to a lesser degree, by what most Indian believed to be clearly discernible negative biases.

The Post-Independence Tilt

"History will be kind to me because I intend to write it", wrote Winston Churchill. In similar spirit, the tradition of negative and subjective interpretation of events in favour of the powers-that-be continued to afflict the narrative of India's history even after the Independence. In the post-independence democratic India, there is an informed perception, with good reasons, that as dictated by historians in key positions and their political patrons, historical interpretations had been biased in what is termed as 'leftist' fervour – meaning a tilt towards self-effacement even when facts could accommodate more favourable conclusions. Admittedly well intended if at the cost of impartial realities, the subterfuge allowed those in power to use historical narratives as political tools to sell their ideals among the people. Through recourse to subdual of hard facts which were

considered to be administratively and electorally inconvenient, they ostensibly sought to 'save' the society from anguish or anger. Thus many facets of our independence movement and its leadership – related to Muslim League, the Azad Hind Fauz, Sardar Patel, partition riots, political corruption and military mismanagement - have been deliberately obscured in favour of artificially construed pretensions.

Indeed, it is that committed ideology which concedes to gloss over many of the recent archaeological and documentary evidences, evidences which would reveal newer angles to India's historical narratives and crystallise some of those which still remain shrouded as 'mythical nonsense'. Thus the readers continues to be told, by their own, of the 'vanishing act' of the Indus Valley Civilisation even when new evidences are unearthed to indicate its translocation to the North and East-wards, River Saraswati continues to be 'mythical' even when evidences of its long diverted water courses are identified and India's singular contributions in astronomy, mathematics, sciences and medicine are sceptically downplayed.

Viewed in light of above mentioned trends of 'liberal' or 'leftist' liberties, it is usual for the readers to be wary of the clearly biased aspects of our native historical narrations.

India's Military History

In this milieu of one-sided narratives, India's native military history has been the worst affected. Apart from sketchy chronicles of few court scholars among the Greek and North-Western invaders, there is little of substantive military value known about the native Indian armies and their wars before and during the first millennium. That deprives India's contemporary generations of the requisite level of military knowledge regarding wars prosecuted by the Nandas, Mauryas, Guptas and their successor kingdoms - Gurjara-Pratihara, Chalukya, Pala, Vardhana, Rashtrakuta, Avanti, Chola, Sena, Ahom, Hoysala, Brahamana-Shahi etc.', great ones each in their own right - which had ruled India before the advent of the West and Central Asian invaders.

By the late first millennium, pan-Indian idealism had been lost to contending, if not conflicting, independent kingdoms. That invited, in the late first and early second millennium, invading forces from West and Central Asia, who built their military prowess under the Islamic flag and claimed religious injunctions to justify their greed and barbaric misdeeds. Over a period of eight centuries, they kept inching into India at incessant intervals till, after successive repulsions from local native rulers, they succeeded in establishing control over better parts of

India. Needless to state, the native historical records of those times had been burnt and destroyed in accordance with the invaders' policy.

Later, even the surviving bits of knowledge, oral or informally recorded, were lost once India's rulership passed on to the dynasties of the West and Central Asian origin. Biased recordings thus continued during the Sultanate and Moghul-Indian periods even after the one-time invaders had assumed Indian nativity. The bias further remained in force during the never-indigenised British regime. During the entire period therefore, there were the court scholars to record their master's versions of Indian military history. Resultantly, starting from the Muslim invasions and ending with the departure of the British, narrations of wars and battles in India have remained shallow in contents and boastful of the eventual victor's pretensions.

But contrary to such partisan versions of wars in India, the growing volumes of research and fresh evidences of the past fifty years or so let out that for the foreign invaders as well as the British usurpers, the wars to rule over India had not been the 'cake walks' as these were depicted to be. Most clashes had been hard fought by the native Hindu as well as Muslim armies and many times the aggressors had been repelled in ignominy, suffering inglorious defeats. Indeed, even biased historical accounts cannot obscure the impression that the foreign invaders had had to sweat, crawl and cry to overcome native resistance before being able to buy out and eventually subdue, one at a time, the divided and de-militarised bunch of native rulers.

Not that these revelations bring about any solace, particularly when one finds that the native forces were defeated due to severe degeneration of their military prowess and below par generalship, mainly in terms of surprise, deception and logistics which are but the key factors of warfare. But more balanced historical inferences do reinforce India's pristine heritage of honour and valour while belying the invaders' expansive bombast of nonchalantly 'sweeping aside weak and incompetent infidel forces by their Allah-consecrated swords', and 'superior white man's prowess triumphing over ignorant natives' respectively (sic), as their official chroniclers would have the readers believe.

Cause of Strategic Myopia

Rarely, if ever, have the aforementioned officially promulgated narratives delved into the deeper nuances of strategic posturing, military mobilisation, logistics, and tactical conduct of battles of the native Indian armies which they had fought, first against the Muslim invaders and then against the British-French usurpers. Even the internal wars, no less in scope and intensity - Akbar's, Aurang-

zeb's, Shivaji's, Baji Rao I's, Zorawar Singh's and Ranjit Singh's campaigns, for example – are recorded but in passing. To effect, there is little of comprehensive narration of India's military history, neither are there the details of conduct of battles, generalship, logistics etc. that the free India's professionals and students of warfare may study and imbibe. Even the battles of Panipat, Deccan, Buxur, and Maratha and Sikh Wars remain well short of being comprehensively described, analysed and inferred in a manner that students of warfare may learn and innovate their own brand of indigenous concepts; only Clausewitz, Napoleon, Fuller, Liddle Hart, Simpkin *et al*, foreigners all, have to be their mentors.

In the post-independence period, there have been many military accomplishments which any nation would be proud of. However, when it comes to recording the details of planning and execution at tactical, operational and strategic levels, there is little beyond the unit histories which had been written during and after the battles and which lie scattered between units, regimental centres, formations and the Ministry of Defence. Admittedly, there are officially recorded accounts of the 1947-48, 1962, 1965 and 1971 Wars but these need more serious effort to qualify as educative military history. Further, when it comes to the more or less disjointed and faded accounts of conduct of counter-insurgency operations in the North East, Punjab, Sri Lanka and Kashmir - all of these but matchless examples of military professionalism and best study material of outstanding prosecution of operations against humungous challenges – there is little to learn beyond the superfluous.

Voids in Indian Military Theology

Spirituality, religion, doctrine, divinity Military theology is a term that defines the source of intellectual development of military culture of a nation and customisation of its military strategy. That leads to crystallisation of a nation's military doctrine and the devising of its most appropriate concepts of warfare. These in turn guide the contemporary military leadership to formulate, update and revise operational plans for the prosecution of warfare according to the mandate given to it. In all such counts, the post-Independence India has little to show but for the military leadership's ingenuity and soldiers' readiness to prefer duty over death. No wise and mature nation depends so much on its soldier's capacity to struggle, suffer and bleed to keep the nation secure, not the least a nation which is under relentless aggression from innately hostile neighbours. Disorientation of strategic vision in the Indian state is mind boggling!

It is not difficult to imagine that the deficiency in the native Indian civilisational history, as discussed above, is the root cause of the strategic naiveté

ingrained into our contemporary polity that revels in marginalising the military institution and strangulating the defence industry even at the cost of harassment and humiliation from an inimical neighbourhood. Similarly, superfluous and one-sided versions of the native military history is the reason that the Indian military leadership have to fall back upon Western treatise and practices of warfare when the key factors of waging war under the Indian context are substantially different.

Indeed, there must be a cause for deeper scrutiny and authentication, by proof as well as professional appreciation of possibilities, over the past thousand years of the Indian history - civilisational as well as military. The span of such scrutiny may begin with the first Islamic invaders of the eighth century CE, through the periods of their native assimilation, go on to cover the indigenised Sultanate and Moghul periods, and end at the Anglo-Indian Wars - that was the last time Indians led their own armies, till the Independence came.

Remedying Historical Negativity

While growing up as Indian citizens, the post-Independence generation has been exposed to many historical narratives of the native civilisation to be proud of, just as there are episodes which might be considered as slur upon sensitivities – relevancy lies in either case. It is natural for these impressions to go into the making of the present as well as coming generations of Indian citizen's persona and perceptions, and that fact establishes the salience of truthful representation, balanced interpretation and full dissemination of historical narratives.

It is a situation when reckonable parts of India's historical narratives have been afflicted with either subdual of facts in their entirety, or negatively biased interpretations - 'left bias' so to say. It is also a situation when contemporary historians of free and democratic India, freed from any 'master' regime's obligations and patronage, have unburdened choices to make - for the benefit of the coming generations. These options could be:-

- a. One, to continue to discard 'inconclusively proved' historical accounts, distrust the 'rightist' school of historians' efforts to unshackle subdued facts, and stick to propagation of negatively biased and fixedly interpreted narratives, till 'conclusive evidences' emerge – if ever these do. That indeed could be a professionally valid stance only if 'conclusive' proof is appropriately defined. But when that is not the case, the modern historians could let the civilisational stories remain repudiated as 'wild and motivated' imaginations, and so completely disassociate with the very purpose of history, that is, generational assimilation of India's native heritage.

- b. Two, to correct the 'leftist' or 'politically convenient' biases and to present a balanced narration of history with all its beauties and warts. Inheritors of a great civilisation which has cradled astute leadership, great sages, scientists, artists, and a proud military tradition, fairer accounts, duly updated with more recent discoveries and understandings of India's past, can help the coming generations to identify with their Indianness. Here, the corrections have to be balanced, there is no use in replacing one bias with another.
- c. Three, taking a step further, to make informed inferences from probabilities and plausibility's of widely believed oral and cultural traditions, and accord deliberately and professionally construed recognition of these. Facts that are short of 'conclusive evidence' maybe classified as 'traditional knowledge and likely' narratives – narratives that have to await new discoveries to qualify as conclusive history, but plausible and understandable enough to formally disseminate.

In the first case, deeply ingrained civilisational memories, when summarily repudiated, would breed contempt among the people for a 'negative-leaning history as recorded by captive scholars'. Worse, our celebrated historians would be excluded from the mentorship of national awareness and character building, the very purpose that they are relevant for.

The second option would require solemn commitment from the contemporary historians to rise above the deliberately self-effacing scripts to delve into modern research, recent discoveries and deeper interpretations. Assimilation of such narratives would result in propagation of an elaborated and updated Indian history.

In the third case, there would be the historians' responsibility to elaborate the historical recordings to include plausible, orally and culturally consistent, and most likely courses of events. Of course, these elaborations have to be duly qualified till more research and discoveries either lead to full authentication or confirmed negation of such elaborations. Here, there would be the danger of history being flooded by over-jealous, ludicrous versions – Ravana's ten heads, for example. Professional courage and indomitable righteousness would be needed to restrain such disoriented mentality and confine the re-interpretations to what might be plausible, likely and understandable. Obviously, the effort has to earn due endorsement coming from the academic fraternity and the societal leaders across the board.

Recent Developments in Historical Interpretations

Over the past half a century, in steps corresponding with wider discoveries and exposures to historical traditions among the old civilisations, the fraternity of history researchers and scholars have proliferated many folds. In the resultant scholarship, there are instances galore when historians and archaeologists have fallen back on professional experience and informed guess-work to string together various deductive signatures of events and arrive at plausible and professionally endorsed interpretations of great historical value. The narratives of mathematical and scientific traditions among the Babylonians, Indians, Sumerians, Egyptians, and Mayas are some such examples when discarded ‘fables’ found new evidences to trigger re-consideration of the prevailing narratives. In fact, contemporary science historians are convinced that the so far instantly attributed inventors of galactical, gravitational, atomic, electromagnetic, quantum and even the relativity theories had actually been but successor developers of concepts propounded and progressed over time through long chains of great scientific thinkers of the antiquity – Indians, Babylonians and Arabs, to wit. The history of science is thus under updation; there is no reason as to why that development should bypass the fields of cultural and military history.

In the Indian context, narratives of the Aryan’s (in-and-out) migration, assimilation of *Adivasi* (aboriginal) traditions, North and Eastward spread (and not a vanishing act) of the Indus Valley Civilisation, authentication of the course of River Saraswati, India’s cultural connection with East Asia nations etc. have found fresh evidences and professionally adjudged re-interpretations of these. Similarly, in India’s post-Independence research, there are new revelations regarding the Indian freedom struggle, scientific postulations, contribution to the World Wars, etc. which would need much updating, even some revision, of India’s current history. On the flip side, there are fresh revelations which negate many of the ambivalent ‘historical’ narrations - like the roles played by various interest groups, parties and personalities in the partition of the nation, circumstances leading to outbreak of insurgencies, the Sino-Indian Border War, the Emergency, the Kashmir imbroglio, and so on. All such inputs, duly researched and recovered, need to be reconciled with the prevalent historical discourse.

Role of Deductive Logic in Picture Building

Science is distinguished by its consistent provability. Yet, great scientific postulations are derived from intelligent interpretations of indirect observations, probability analyses and logical deductions. Indeed, many aspects of particle physics, evolutionary biology and even the ultimate ‘string theory’ can not be

practically 'proved'; all these have to be derived from logical and systematic study, and remain liable to revision in the future. That however, has not led to science going astray. Similarly, much of the world's cultural history is construed out of deeper application of professional understandings rather than production of physical proof. Why should then the Indian history be deprived of its deserved narratives, authenticated as well as qualified with professionally adjudged probability.

Balanced and sanctified interpretation of history and its elaboration through assimilation of informed and deductive understandings is a sensitive undertaking. Ultimately therefore, it has to be the professionals who have to adjudge as to what might be nearest to the truth and the sublime, correct the 'left tilt' or a 'right tilt', and conform to the rational. If India's celebrated historians had the liberty of interpreting events through left-leaning and self-effacing perspectives, they could also take the initiative of correcting that tilt. In so doing, they could view such events through more self-realising angles, for the larger purpose of propagating balanced and updated historical narrations. The State and the historian dons could also trust the Indian public to be mature enough to take good and bad stories in their stride. Maybe that would put an end to the crass rabble-rousing in the name of history as one sees often these days in the name of Shivaji, Tipu Sultan, Ambedkar and Nehru.

Taking Up the Cudgel

Whatever be the case, it needs no reiteration that in the final analysis, historical narratives should be right, as far as possible accommodative of duly qualified civilisational memories, and so balanced and trust worthy that these cannot be repudiated unless contradictory inputs surface. Whether dignified or infamous, in either case, balanced historical narratives bring great advantages to the society, the state and the military. It is therefore for the independent India's learned historians to take a rational call and commit to the updating of the formal versions of Indian history. To the nation, that would be a service par excellence.

Much work in this field has been undertaken by certain historians of high repute, fraternity of the Vivekananda International Foundation being the prominent one. But such efforts have to be accorded State support. Recording, preservation and update of national history being its sanctified responsibility, the State has created many institutions charged to that purpose. Marshalling such institutional efforts through an umbrella set up of broad-based academic persuasions - like 'Indian History Conference' or 'National History Commission' etc. - with time

bound mandate to update Indian History, might be a good idea for the State to attend to that responsibility.

(The paper is the author's individual scholastic articulation. The facts and figures quoted are believed to be correct).

Image Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/opinion/move-over-rana-pratap-and-shivaji-bjp-has-a-new-hindu-icon-to-rewrite-assam-history/story-hl9bAFvL5Kt2O5ZepAfCvJ.html>

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About the VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Vivekananda International Foundation is an independent non-partisan institution that conducts research and analysis on domestic and international issues, and offers a platform for dialogue and conflict resolution. Some of India's leading practitioners from the fields of security, military, diplomacy, government, academia and media have come together to generate ideas and stimulate action on national security issues.

The defining feature of VIF lies in its provision of core institutional support which enables the organisation to be flexible in its approach and proactive in changing circumstances, with a long-term focus on India's strategic, developmental and civilisational interests. The VIF aims to channelise fresh insights and decades of experience harnessed from its faculty into fostering actionable ideas for the nation's stakeholders.

Since its inception, VIF has pursued quality research and scholarship and made efforts to highlight issues in governance, and strengthen national security. This is being actualised through numerous activities like seminars, round tables, interactive dialogues, Vimarsh (public discourse), conferences and briefings. The publications of VIF form lasting deliverables of VIF's aspiration to impact on the prevailing discourse on issues concerning India's national interest.



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