



Shri Guruji
and
Indian Muslims

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Introduction

The cultural nationalism has been a central theme in Indian social and political discourse since late 19th century. A galaxy of thinkers, spiritual personalities and philosophers, which included people like Rajaram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Maharshi Aurovindo, B. C. Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai, B. G. Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Dr K. B. Hedgewar, V. D. Savarkar, Swami Dayananda, M. S. Golwalkar (Guruji), K. M. Munshi, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, made enormous contributions to the evolution of idea and debate on it in the modern historiography. They differed with each other on many accounts and on their approaches to outline and define the contours of Indian nationalism but all of them largely concur that the cultural foundation gives shape to Indian nationalism. All of them perceived patriotism as a spiritual and cultural rather than a material concept. It is obvious from elevation of the country as 'Mother' and 'Goddess' by them. Moreover, the acceptance of Bankim's *Vande Mataram* as a patriotic and inspiring song in the collective conscience of the people itself tells that nation has been given higher status than religions and community's identity. Mother India becomes the most inspiring and living deity irrespective of sects, philosophies, religions and regions. However, there has been a notable absence of Muslims from such debate. Their hostility to this concept is very remarkable in the trajectory of Indian nationalism. Yet it is also not untrue that there are scattered instances of Muslim thinkers and literary figures who reinforced the idea of cultural nationalism. However, the Islamic religious discourses precluded such thinkers to sustain their ideology or lead to synthesis between indigenous ancestral culture and Islamic faith. Consequently, this could not turn it into an ideology of Muslim masses and remained confined to their personal conviction. The Muslim discourse has not only been predominantly based on pan Islam but also on the hostility to indigenous culture as a rival ideology and tradition.

The Congress effort to end this predicament of Indian nationalism during freedom movement culminated in the partition of the country. We find resolution of many unanswered questions in the philosophy of Shri Guruji. His spiritual self and tireless social -activism, made his thought original and pragmatic. He deals with very fundamental issue of detachment of Muslims from the Hindu culture and nationalism. Unlike Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru there is no gap between his ideas and practice. Nehru's 'Discovery of India' and his politics of survival are two extremes of his personality. Guruji's Bunch of Thought is free from such hypocrisy. It reflects his spiritual mind, activist life and optimism of Indian tradition. The most noteworthy aspect of his articulation on Muslim question is that his pragmatism does not kill his optimism and idealism. I use the term 'original' for his thought on Muslim question because he discusses issues and events, past, present and future of Muslims in civilisational and cultural perspective unmindful of dominant political ideology on the one hand and populist approach to Muslim problem on the other. He applies practical wisdom to look into problems and their solutions rather than following either sheer conservative idealism or dogmatism. He rarely quotes philosophers and scriptures.

In spite of his open and liberal perspective on the question of nationalism and secularism, he has been treated most unfavourably by Islamic scholars and secularist social scientists. Selective and out of context citation of his views is unparalleled in Indian academic. They largely quoted a treatise "*We or Our Nationhood Defined*" which was published in 1939. A baffled and elusive domestic and international politics certainly influenced the contents of the book. Not much water has flown down the river of Ganges since Guruji was introduced in the ideological mission of the RSS. The fact is that the book 'We...' neither represents the views

of the grown Guruji nor of the RSS. He himself acceded this when he revealed that the book carried not his own views but was ‘an abridged version of G. D. Savarkar’s work *Rashtra Mimnsa*’ (Keer : 527). Yet secularist social scientists find great solace to quote “We” extensively. Infact the journey of his thought begins with his succession as the Sarsanghchalak of the RSS in 1940 and it continued till 1973 when he died. We find his absolute identification with the RSS. There is extraordinary consistency in his views. He created a parallel paradigm, which unequivocally pronounced that a

civilisation-nation, India, with innumerable diversities has been one nation and one people rather than multi-nations and many people. His 33 years long discourse on the subject and practical wisdom demonstrated by him have been largely excluded by the secularists. It is not an exaggeration to say that vilification of Shri Guruji is thicker than all the mud in the Indian rivers. Guruji himself pointed out the malicious campaign against the RSS, “(the) aim of the Sangh is the same re- establishing the integrated feeling of oneness of the nation which has been flowing down since time immemorial. Some suspicions have been roused with regard to this, because the government and certain important members of the ruling party (Congress), and some other political parties have maliciously described it as subversive.”(G2000: 172)*. However, his deliberate misrepresentation in predominantly leftist social scientists is an example of use of unethical academic tool to camouflage their extreme ideological predisposition. Concomitantly such discourses by established social scientists continually eluded academic generations to make an objective assessment of Shri Guruji who encapsulated his ideological mission as to “ “Worship the Nation”, “Worship the Ideal”.”(G 2000:483)¹ Calling him a communal is like calling cow a fox.

Shri Guruji represents the Hindutva which provides immense space and opportunity for sub- identities, sub- cultures, languages, personal laws, cults and philosophies to endure and flourish provided that the people accede that cultural interactions, assimilations, reconstructions, reforms and critical interpretations of traditions and rituals as necessary tools for human evolution and preserving civilisational –cultural identity of the nation. He does not formulate any separate ideological stream, which can be called as Golwalkarism. His ideas unfolded Dr Hedgewar’s vision of Hindu Nation in the contemporary perspectives. His thought on secularism and nationalism is not only inseparable from the ideology of the RSS but also tradition of Cultural Nationalism. You reject him then you would be left with no justification to appreciate philosophy of Swami Vivekanada, Aurovindo, Bankimchandra Chatterjee, B. C. Pal and others. As Haq wrote, “Nearly all the thinkers

¹ Guruji to All Swyamsevak brethren dated April 2 1973, it was his one of the last three letters written by him before his death.

*For Guruji (Golwalkar) reference G has been used

Beginning from Bankim Chandra to Bipinchandra Pal (and Aurovindo Ghosh) to Annie Besant conceived the cult of nationalism as the purest form of religion and “nation” as the supreme deity.”(1992:20) Guruji is integrally associated with this Hindu thought process. Students of social science can be immensely benefited by his philosophy. The present work is a modest attempt to explore his views on Muslim problems and Islamic identity in the domain of Hindu (cultural) nationalism.

Chapter - I

New Paradigm

History of Islamic aggressions and perpetual offences against indigenous culture, sects and way of life and Islamic separatism resulting into two nations theory had certainly not been primary reasons for founding of the RSS in 1925.

It was born amidst hordes of Hindu organisations including All India Hindu Mahasabha led by Hindu luminaries, like V. D. Savarkar, Dr. B. S. Moonje, Bhai Parmamnanda, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and others. Dr. Hedgewar founded the RSS with a positive note of reorganising and mentally reorienting the Hindus beyond sectarian and narrow barriers and feelings, like caste, sect, creed, language and above all rabid individualism. He aimed to resurrect progressive cultural identity in purely nationalistic terms. It was, therefore, also a disapproval of the contemporary Hindu Movement obsessed with terms of reference of Islamic aggression. The stories of grave atrocities and acts of barbarism committed by Islamists for centuries are certainly useful lessons of history to correct our approach to nationalism, strengthen inner resilience of the nation and to make categorical distinctions between a national and an alien. However, the history and ideology of Islam in India cannot be the foundational elements of the Hindu movement. Dr. Hedgewar underlined the importance of creating solidarity among Hindus as a national community. This would entail a transformation in the Muslim mind and pave the way for assimilation. Thus the RSS made a clear departure from the contemporary discourse of the Hindu Movement. For Dr. Hedgewar regeneration and rekindling of nationalism was a ceaseless process just like the motion of the earth. He prevented contemporary narrow discourses to become the central issue of the RSS ideology. For instance, he differed with Dr. B. S. Moonje, Hindu Mahasabha leader, on the question of British Imperialism vis-à-vis Muslim problem (Sinha, 2003: 118-119).²

Moreover, Colonel U. N. Mookerjee³ added an exciting issue in the contemporary discourse by his thesis that Hindus would be turned into minority and Muslims into majority if besides demographic trend, social schism among Hindus would remain unchanged. He summed up: 'they (Muslims) count their number, we calculate our losses. (Mookerjee: 1909) Swami Shradhnanda's influential work "Hindu Rashtra: Saviour of the Dying Race" came in 1926. By this time the idea of demographic decline had become entrenched as a core feature of Hindu Nationalism. (Zavos: 109) Dr. Hedgewar had not used it either to explain the concept and ideology of Hindu Nation or expand the organisation. In fact he was working on a civilisational vision to revive the confidence, sense of nationhood and intellectual potential and consolidation on social and national planes of the Hindus. It was a subtle and silent shift from the contemporary understanding of the Hindu organisations and their leadership. They had been showing concern only for numerical and political superiority of the Hindus vis a vis Muslims. The new paradigm was strengthened by ideological sharpness, and forthrightness of Shri Guruji. The distinction between the two provided consistency to the RSS ideology and its distinct identity. Guruji succinctly stated that any attempt to reorganise our society on the basis of hatred of the Muslims "would therefore be to court degeneration and disaster. For that would pollute our minds by constant remembering of their heinous crimes...it is true that sometimes Sangh workers too refer incidents involving Muslims ...but that is only to draw attention to the lessons we have to learn from history."(G2000: 231) He further noted that "Some extreme Hindu bodies came into existence in our country to counteract the growing violence and depredations of Muslims and to put a check to their appeasement in the political field, they recounted again and again the harrowing tales of the blood –curdling

² Dr. Moonje in his speech stated that the British government should continue till the Hindus could not feel to overtake Muslims and confident to dominate the polity of the country. Dr. Hedgewar showed his displeasure on his argument. Moonje' diary, B. S. Moonje, Private papers, NMML, New Delhi.

³ Mookerjee was a son in law of Shri Surendranath Banerjee.

Massacres, forcible conversions, raping of women, desecration of temples and all such atrocities perpetrated by the Muslims ever since they stepped on their soil. It is this atmosphere of reactionary mentality that makes people view the Sangh also in the same light." (G2000: 232) He cites an example of Muslimised perspective ensconced among average Hindus about their own organisations. When he visited a new place to start the work there a gentleman of the town confronted him with the question, "well, where is the need for the Sangh in our town? There are no Muslims here." He responded, "We have come here to organise Hindus and not Muslims. I hope you are all Hindus. How are we concerned whether Muslims reside here or not.?" (G2000: 232) Social divisions, lack of solidarity among Hindus allured the aggressors to fulfill their destructive desires from Ghazani to Jinnah. It is a fact that an unhealthy body cannot take the bull by the horns. So, for both Hedgewar and Guruji the primary task was to set right Hindus' home first.

Both set of people, firstly, 'political Hindu' and, secondly, 'Hindus out of reaction' can not provide leadership for the reconstruction of Hindu society. (G 2000:60) That's why while explaining the purpose behind the formation of the VHP he accentuated that their works should not be "reactionary in nature nor in content." G1979: 16) He proclaimed,

"It is not because Christians and Muslims are active against us, that we have to work for our society and dharma... for remember that even if there were not a single Christian mission or Muslims Majlis (congregation) to work against us, it would always be necessary to work for our religion, society and the nation. With this positive idea the VHP has come into being." (Ibid)

Such constructive approach to Hindu organisation, leadership, ideology and programmes provided the solid foundation and resilience to the RSS. Guruji views Muslim question from the cultural nationalist perspective rather than Semitic and non Semitic division, with the assimilative spirit and yearning than confrontationist and majoritarian position. He begins his reconstruction of national community by presuming the presence and perpetuation of alien mentality in the nation's body politic. He defines, what is called, 'national' as follow:

'People whose loyalty to the country and her traditions, to her heroes down the centuries, to her security and prosperity, is undivided and unadulterated, are national.' In a similar manner he traces the germs of separatism in the wrong notions of identity upheld by any community as a whole or majority of them,

"Groups who continue to believe themselves to be aliens, aggressors, victors and erstwhile masters and rulers of the country, are aliens evidently, and when there is desire to re-establish themselves as such rulers are also hostiles."(G2000: 173) Both the definitions explicate the difference of approaches of the Hindus and the Muslims to India's freedom movement.

Chapter - II

Aggressors and Converts

The advent of Islam in India was not only an addition of a new religion in the Hindu civilisation but also the beginning of ceaseless social and religious confrontations. It repudiated age-old convention of religious freedom. Aggressors were conscious of inclusive nature of Hindu civilisation. Assimilative character of Hindu cultural environment was, in the eyes of Muslim elites a serious threat to Muslim way of life and called for 'constant vigilance and effort' to thwart it. (Madan1997: 112)⁴

Guruji points out, "Many persons came to this country from various parts of the world. They have chosen to stay here. They have adapted themselves to the life here, the ideology and philosophy here. Some have made their own contribution towards enriching this mainstream. The Muslims unfortunately, stayed apart." (Guruji: 1974:48)

Thus a trail of two civilisations continued for more than thousand years. While one had the state power, organised force with a mission and a zeal to expand Islam, another had 'highly developed civilisation, religious traditions which were radically different' (Madan 1997:145) extremely disorganised polity and divided social structure. There is no parallel of the heroic tales of the people who resisted religious onslaught

⁴ Also see Qureshi, Ishtiaq Hussain, 'The Muslim Community of Indo Pakistan Subcontinent' 1962, (610-1947), P.103

From generations to generation and despite all the criminal and barbaric acts committed by the Muslims, Hindu civilisation stood the test of time. Numbers of Hindus, who surrendered to Islam or forcibly converted, were far less than number of people killed by the aggressors. Sikh gurus faced persecutions to save the indigenous culture and traditions.

Guruji draws a line between Muslim aggressors and the converts. Aggressors belonged to different race; nationality, civilisation and culture while the converted Muslims have commonality with Hindus. They have common ancestors, common culture and history. Guruji follows more comprehensive criteria to define a Hindu. He says, "We are not so mean as to say that with a mere change in the method of worship an individual ceases to be a son of the soil. We have no objection to God being called by any name whatever ...he can not be a Hindu at all who is intolerant of other faiths" (G 2000: 125)⁵

How can a body of converts claim separate culture or disassociate with their ancestors and delink themselves with the history and trajectory of the national life? Guruji feels that Indian Muslims have been trying to compartmentalise all aspects of their life whether it may be language, culture, uniforms and festivals or national heroes. He says, "Why should they (Muslims) behave as they are doing? As a matter of fact, in no other country in the world, where Islam has spread, the earlier dress, the language, the way of living etc., of those countries have changed. In Iran, Turkey and other countries their original dress, language, view of life etc., have remained the same. But in our country everything, even thinking also, is changed." (Guruji, 1974:46)

Shri Guruji begins with his theory that people of the land irrespective of their religious beliefs belong to the same cultural and ancestral origin and says, "Muslims must realise that we are all one people and it is the same blood that courses in our veins. They are not Arabs or Turks or

⁵ Chetan Bhatt interprets Guruji's views anarchically and presumably to prove the hypothesis of equivalence between the ideology of Hindutva and Nazi and other philosophies rejected by the RSS. See the point made by Bhatt, "Guruji proposed that all minorities had become Hindus not through a conscientious and voluntary choice that accompanies religious affiliation but against their will and conviction and under an explicit and palpable threat of violence" (Bhatt2001: 131)

Mongols. They are only Hindu converts...the problem can and must be solved by Indian Muslims owning the country and its ancient culture as theirs. Indian history did not begin with Mohammed Ghazni" (G: 1974:43-44)

Guruji's proposition is absolutely free from any ambiguity. He says that no race, community or nation can claim to be the custodian of all wisdom and discard rest of the humanity. Creative wisdom is not confined to some people. He says, "No people on the face of this earth are entirely without some abiding virtues, nor will they be endowed with all the necessary noble qualities...there are indeed very pious people worthy of emulation in all countries."(G 2000:346) K. S. Durrany wrote,

"The RSS does not preach that Hinduism is the only religion in the world. The concept of finality and paramountcy of a single shed of divine revelation has always been alien to Hinduism and it appears that the RSS wants to retain that religious diversity with a sense of cultural unity throughout the length and breadth of the country."⁶(Durrany: 86)

Guruji believes that philosophical and spiritual diversities need to be protected and encouraged. Cultural assimilation does not mean negation or rejection of freedom of religion. It does not "mean that anyone should give up his way of worship. We can never advocate this, or even think of it. We believe that one single way of worship is not suitable for the whole of humanity."(Jeelany; 48) His submission is that Hindu way of life is based on this very concept. It is originally inbuilt in the Hindu civilisation. So any sermon on secularism to Hindus is like using candle in daylight. Prof. Moazziz Ali Begh underpins Guruji's argument stating that; "I have found average Hindu ethically far more elevated than an average Muslim. A Hindu is definitely more humble and mild, and a Muslim (barring the truly God loving people) is definitely more arrogant and aggressive."(1992: 85) Guruji further elaborates the difference between tolerance and respect as follow, "The word 'tolerance' which is often used to express this idea (Truth is one, sages call it variously) is very meek, it is just another word for sufferance. It implies an element of ego, which just tolerates other viewpoints without

⁶ Dr. Durrany, KS, associated with Indian Institute of Islamic Studies.

any love or respect for them. But our training has been one of respecting and even accepting other faiths and viewpoints as so many paths to reach the same Truth."(G: 2000: 38) The Muslim mind does not accept this. As one of them writes,

"Positive respect breeds nothing but stagnancy...two diametrically opposed viewpoints can tolerate each other, but they can not be expected to respect each other."(Maualan Akhlaq Ahmed Qasimi, secularism: mazhabi rawadari (secularism: Religious Tolerance)(Urdu daily Al Jamiyat, Delhi July30, 1969)

This clearly shows Islamic mind is not prepared to rehearse its basic framework of religious philosophy.

Nehru's following bunch of self-introspective questions to Muslims is virtually repudiation of their attitude, mindset and philosophy of life and vindicates Guruji. Nehru spoke only a few months after the independence before the educated Muslim audience of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), which was considered a breeding ground for Two Nation (Pro-Pakistanis) during the colonial period. He observed,

"I have said that I am proud of our inheritance and our ancestors who gave an intellectual and cultural pre-eminence to India .How do you feel about this past? Do you feel that you are also sharers in it and inheritors of it and, therefore, proud of something that belongs to you as much as to me? Or do you feel alien to it and pass it by without understanding it or feeling that strange thrill which comes from the realisation that we are the trustees and inheritors of this vast treasure... You are Muslims and I am a Hindu ...but that does not take away from that cultural inheritance that is yours as well as mine."(Convocation address at the AMU, 24 January 1948).

Chapter - III

Green Peril

Guruji was a practising ideologue. He views that philosophy of cultural nationalism does not deny space to pluralism in social and religious life. In fact religion does not find pivotal position in the concept of cultural nationalism. Thus he withdraws the role of religion in the formulation of nationality. He also does not find any direct relationship between secularism and nationalism. It is a mistaken idea to correlate them. Sociology of religion reflects nature of the society and its civilisational roots. Nationalism is based on mental allegiance of the people to a their nation. It is not plausible that the change in religious composition would affect nationalist spirit. Nationality does not change with the change in religion in India. (G IX: 45)

Guruji uninhibitedly argues, **“ My feeling is that the nature abhors excessive uniformity. It is too early to say what these uniformities will do to western civilisation in times to come. Apart from the here and the now we must look back into distant past and also look forward to the remote future...we in this country have millennia of experience. We have the tested way of life. And our experience is that variety and unity can go together.”**⁷ He believes that there has not yet been any honest efforts to either remove their misgivings or to assimilate them. He wisely believes that hope for assimilation cannot be generated either by appeasing them or reviling their sentiment. One should not be artificial while interacting with them at any plane. Pleasantly responding to Id’s greeting by a Muslim he stated that, “All sacred religious festivals have one common objective to remind people about devotion to God.” (G VIII: 157).⁸ His social philosophy can be summed up as progressive harmonisation between religion and Sanatan *Dharma* or eternal culture of Bharat.

⁷ Motherland, 23 August 1972; Guruji’s expression of Indian pluralism militates the historical experiences of European civilisation. That’s why many of the European thinkers from James Mill to Valentin Chirol condemned the Indian pluralism. To chirol India was antithesis of word national empires, for the population of India cojusted of ‘variegated jumble of races and peoples, castes and creeds.’(Panikkar: 25)

⁸ Guruji to Muhammed Rafi, March 3, 1970,

Here there is no place for religious egoism or sense of superiority. Locked and aggressive Muslim mind could not shake his firm belief and confidence in his own ideological moorings of religious freedom. His dialogue with a Kashmiri Sufi Nazir Ahmed in Aligarh presents a contrast between the Hindu and Muslim perceptions of achieving harmony and peace. Ahmed suggested him that ‘the threat of godlessness and communism was overtaking all of us and we who believe in God should get together to meet the threat’. Showing his complete approval with his proposition Guruji tried to unravel his mind. Guruji said, “I perfectly agree with you but the difficulty is that we have, as it were, broken the image of God, and each one has got his own piece. So what is to be done? You think of God in one particular way, the Christians think in another, Buddhism says there is no God, there is, only Nirvana; the Jain will say it is nothing; then so many will say we worship God in the form of Rama, Krishna, Shiva etc. How to ask these people to believe in one common God? Have you any recipe for this? Now this Kashmiri man known to be Sufi, which I take to be thinker and God -minded man, you will be surprised at his answer. He said, *why not all of you come to Islam.*”(Emphasis added) Guruji was amazed by the answer because Sufis are known as liberal rather than fundamentalist. Then Guruji argued, “Don’t you think that people will say,

why not join Christianity? Suppose, I devote as I am to my religion, say why not become a Hindu. It comes to the same thing and the problem will never end.”Ahmed wanted to know whether Guruji had solution to this vexed question. Here Guruji showed his finest philosophical aptitude when he argued,

“There is no substantial philosophy which does not belong to the Hindus or to the Muslims. Call it Advaita or whatever you like. It says that there is one single existence, which is truth, which is bliss. It is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer. All our conceptions of God are only limited conception of that ultimate reality, so that the rock bottom of ultimate reality will join us together. It does not belong to any one religion. Everyone can accept it on this account. Religion is only way of worship. This is not such a way; it is a philosophy. It is the philosophical understanding of the world. It can be taken to be the rock bottom.”(Jeelany: 46)

Guruji advised Ahmed that as a Sufi he should accept it. His proposition, is in fact, a question before the Muslims of India whether they are prepared to respect the vision and wisdom of the Mother country which provided them opportunity to live, prosper, govern despite their antipathy to whatever belonged to Hindu civilisation before and after their advent to Indian soil.

Chapter – IV

RSS and Islam

Guruji's ideological conviction is in a complete countenance with the Vedic philosophy, "Truth is One, Sages call it variously" (*Ekam Sat, Viprah bahudha wadanti*). He describes it as a 'Himalayan vision' (G2000: 38). At another place he says that he does not consider anybody whether Muslim or Christian as alien if one demonstrates his unqualified loyalty for the Bharat. (Banka: Vol.II: 142)⁹

Expectedly, the Muslim thinkers and theologians take such proposition as all religions are equal and deserve respect as an insult of Islam. As Shaz says that considering Islam at par with Hinduism is a 'mischievous idea'. (Shaz: 69) Another Muslim mind makes the thing clearer. Kettani wrote, "The process of assimilation is particularly effective when the Muslim community has no special schools for its children and does not have adequate number of mosques for its adults...Muslims should continue to believe that Islam is the only true religion and that all other religions, as stated in the Holy Quran will be rejected by the Creator. Believing that all religions are equally valid is the first sign of religious assimilation." (Kettani: 10-11)

Muslims are not to be solely blamed for their alienation from Hindus and the indigenous culture. The process of their integration with the national life, which was in vogue, however intermittently, says Guruji was disrupted by the British colonialism by applying divide and rule. (G IX: 47) After independence this process has been blocked by vote hungry politicians. He also blames 'extremely narrow minded religious leaders' for creating schism and not viewing the problem of integration

⁹ Memoir of Shri Madhavrao Mule

from the 'whole national concept in their mind.' (Jeelany, 46-47). He genuinely feels that the responsibility to create inter communal harmony lies on both Hindus and Muslims and adds that there is an odd which discourages such constructive approach, "our leaders are prone to put blame on Hindus and absolve the Muslims. This has given the minority community, that is, the Muslims, encouragement to continue to indulge in their own communal activities." (Jeelany. 47)¹⁰

Guruji does not use the term Hindu as a classical religious concept. His idea is similar to B. C. Pal who points out that Hindu Culture is the very soul and essence of what we now understand as nationalism. He too does not equate Hinduism with a religious concept. (Pal: p81) It is a mistaken idea that Hinduism is parallel to Islam. Heinrich Von Stietencorn rightly says, "Why is "Hinduism" so difficult to define? It is because we always try to see it as one "religion". Our problems would vanish if we took "Hinduism" to denote a socio-cultural unit or civilisation which contains a plurality of distinct religions." (G2001: 38) He says, "Hinduism is a civilisation formed and enriched by a group of religions which developed a particularly liberal way of coexistence and interactions between themselves." (Ibid: 40)

Hindu Rashtra and Muslims:

Guruji's prescription that India is a Hindu Rashtra becomes confounded when it is superficially perceived from the western philosophical and terminological parameters. Its semblance to theocratic nation can then be superficially created. Guruji says that the fear that Hindu Rashtra "will imperil the existence of other religious groups arises by applying

Semitic yardstick to it and imagining that the concept of Hindu Rashtra is analogous to that of the Semitic states notorious for their religious bigotry and persecutions.”(G 2000:160)¹¹

¹⁰ The demand for reservations on communal line is reinvented by Hindu leaders who have little or no corrective memory or study of our history of fermentation of separatism in the midst of secular, democratic and anti –imperialist struggle led by the Congress and Gandhi. If one leader says that the precondition of any alliance should be the Muslim Chief Minister of a state, what does it mean? The state of Andhra Pradesh provided five percent reservations to Muslims. Urdu has been declared second official language in many states.

¹¹ In Burma publishing of Quran needs official permission they are forbidden from performing hajj. (Kettani: 142) in Canada Islam is not recognised on equal footing with Christianity. (Kettani: 207)

He firmly rejects the communal state and says non-communal state has always been a feature of Indian culture except two occasions, during Buddhist and Muslims rule. (G IX: 67)

He defines the non-communal state as follow, “if the state does not meddle into religious issues then the state would be called non-communal. Even if a Muslim would be the Prime minister of India then too the state would be non communal. If he would try to metamorphose the culture of the country then he would be democratically defeated because his action would be against the interests of the people.”(G IX: 68) Thus he argues that exclusive Hindu state that denies citizenship to minorities or treats them unequally is “a phantasm created by overstrained nerves and too lively an imagination, deserving only to be ignored as not worthy of consideration.”

Unlike the western model of secularism, he does not take into account numerical value of any religious community. He believes there are one people in a nation with diverse approaches of their lives. There is no religious pre condition for patriotism or nationality.

Partition

During colonial period, the RSS maintained that unity of anti-imperialist struggle should not be disrupted on the basis of respective ideologies of contemporary social, cultural, caste, religious and political organisations on the one hand and personal ambitions, caste or community’s interests on the other. Despite its serious ideological differences with the Congress, particularly on minority issue, the RSS, in the given circumstances and limitations, unflinchingly supported the Congress programmes. Most remarkably, it has not raised any issue or led campaign, which could weaken the national movement. The Muslims attitude to the national movement was one of self-exclusion and divisive. In 1905 at Benaras session of the Congress number of Muslim delegates fell to 17 out of total delegates 756. (Rajput: 18)

Guruji draws a parallel between their role in the medieval and modern period of Indian history. He sensibly says, “The Muslim desire, growing ever since they stepped on this land some twelve Hundreds years ago, to convert and enslave the entire country could not bear fruit, in spite of their political domination for several centuries. In the coming of the British they found an opportunity to fulfill their desire. They played their card shrewdly... and ultimately succeeded in browbeating our leadership into panicky surrender before their sinful demand of Partition.”(G2000: 178-179).

Guruji says that had the Congress leadership taken the right and rational approach things would have been different. When the Muslim question came before them they showed the lack of conviction, clarity and confidence. They were not prepared to contemplate alternative method. Cultural nationalism propounded and successfully practised by Lokmanya B. G. Tilak and his contemporary was rejected by them. Guruji says the remedy of the Muslim separatism and non-cooperation lay in the firmness of the Congress leadership.

Guruji says, “There was a very rational and patriotic way of approach. That was to tell them frankly: “Dear friends, the days of old Moghual Badshahi have passed. Now both of us will have to live ultimately as brothers here, as co-sharers in this national life. After all you also belong to the same race as ours, to the same blood as ours, but converted to Islam at the point of sword by those Moghul, Turk and other foreign races. Now, there is no point in continuing to associate yourself mentally with those foreign aggressors and trying to follow in their footsteps. Forget all such separatist memories; merge yourself in the life of this soil. Hereafter try to respect and follow the examples of the great sons of this land who fought for the freedom and honour of the motherland and our culture.”(G2000: 142)

There has been misgiving created by secularists that the RSS had also advocated inferior position to Muslims in Hindu dominated India. How this allegation is baseless is obvious from Guruji’s position on this issue, “ What would happen of non Hindus (Muslims) in independent India? Would they be treated as second rank citizens? Undoubtedly these questions emanate from the inner self. The extremist organisation would say ‘yes’ to the second question since non Hindus (clearly Muslims) have committed heinous crimes against the Hindus in the past. It has created ill feelings among the Hindus against them (Muslims). Even now they are demanding separate and privileged status against the interests of the nation. They are virtually behaving like enemy of the nation! Irrespective of their such hostile and intemperate behaviour for which they deserve to be condemned, the Hindu Nation in accordance to its liberal temperament and tradition is bound to forgive them if they are prepared to fulfill minimum expectation not to be dishonest to the nation and refrain from creating hurdles in its progress (which he then meant freedom Movement).”¹²

Guruji persistently campaigned against the communal politics of the Muslim League. In his speech on 12 August 1946 he attacked ‘the forces trying to poison the atmosphere by raising communal issues.’(Indukar: 65). Jinnha’s sole object was “to destroy Indian nationalism by undermining the faith in India as Motherland on which it is founded.” (Tara Singh: 152) His slogan and programme of ‘Direct Action’ in August 1946 changed the social psychology of the country. Guruji equated Direct Action with direct aggression. (G2000: 178) The Tribune wrote, “ The happenings in Calcutta are reminiscent of the happenings of the days of Mahmud Ghazanavi and Muhammad Ghorri and those of Nadir Shah.” The city of Calcutta was turned into ‘bloody slaughterhouse’. * Guruji pointed out, “The relationship between the Hindus and Muslims was never so bitter and estranged as in those years of 1946 and 1947. Millions of families were uprooted from their ancestral homes; provinces after provinces turned crimson by the flow of the rivers of blood; and death, destruction and disgrace, scarce the faces of crores of innocent human beings. Even the normal social intercourse which had existed between the two was shattered during that period.”(G 2000: 148).

Guruji traces the seeds of the partition in the Congress’ policy of appeasement. The leadership lacked confidence and courage to ‘face Muslim intransigencies squarely, from the standpoint of undiluted nationalism’ (G 2000:143) Jaykar too endorsed Guruji when he writes, “we have no Benjamin Franklin who could tell the Muslims we will not allow you to secede and if you wish to fight, we shall meet you on our own ground.’ From the very beginning the process of giving concessions went on and on and a year ago the appeasement took the form of concessions surrendered at the sight of violence.”¹³ Guruji observes that if there was any basis for the formation and perpetuation of Pakistan it is hatred for Hindus. He says, “Naked fact remains that an aggressive Muslim state has been carved out of our Motherland.”(G: 2000:178) He describes even the division of countries like Germany, Korea Vietnam

¹² Rashtra Mimansa, Foreword, P24

* August 23, 1946

¹³ M R Jayakar to Sapru, 21 May 1947, Sapru papers, S-1, NMML, New Delhi.

on the basis of any particular contentious idea or event as most unfortunate. (Guruji IX: 45) He strongly pleads the unification of the Pakistan with India. Its existence perpetually inspire the Muslims for anti –national activities and separatist mentality and give them ample strength for such activities.¹⁴ The reason behind communal riot has been that Indian Muslims could not identify themselves with people and culture. There is a need to change their psychology. (8:69) Partition had not resolved the Muslim problem at all. (Guruji VIII: 43) The feeling should be created in Muslim consciousness that the concept of two nationalisms was a sinful concept, that the partition was a grave mistake. (Guruji IX: 44) The logical conclusion and correct resolution is, says Guruji, unification of both the parts of the historically one nation, Bharat. The only way, he believes, is the change of heart. (Guruji IX: 46) This may seem impractical but one day it would be a reality. He further says that the unification would not mean slavery of one or another set of people but ‘equal responsibility in carrying on country’s administration and business and sharing one another’s sentiments in the hour of joy and sorrow.’(Guruji IX: 46-47)

The self-introspective and poignant debate in the Constituent Assembly of India demonstrated that the Congress leadership was largely disillusioned with their own tryst with minorities during the freedom movement. Neither Guruji was a member of the Assembly nor the RSS had any direct or indirect organisational or ideological communication with the Congress. Yet after the partition, the language, ideology, sociological intentions and nationalist objectives of the RSS largely reflected in the debates of the Constituent Assembly. Dr Hedgewar’s vision was inexorably creating impact on the people of all layers. This was not a sudden overture but re-emergence of the seeds of cultural nationalism ingrained in the sub-consciousness of every Hindu. However, this opportunity was destroyed by the tragic assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by Nathu Ram Godse.

Cow

Indian Muslims conscientiously continued their practice of cow slaughter. Their obsession with it unravels their uncompromising and

¹⁴ Qamuruddin Khan, spokesman of the AMU wrote in *Light of Lahore*, “Pakistan’s presence in the neighbourhood would embolden the Muslims.... The Indian Muslims should maintain close relations with Pakistan...”(Dixit: 100)

non-accommodative mentality for the last hundreds of years. For them there is more pleasure than benefit when they slaughter cows, which have been respected as mother and worshipped also. Guruji conclusively observes that cow slaughter was ‘a sort of a way of spiting on the Hindus in the old days’, and wonders on its continuation even after independence. (Jeelany: 46) He further says, “Whenever the Muslims slaughtered cows to insult Hindu feelings, the Hindus were told that it was the religious right of Muslims and that, being tolerant to other religions, they should not object it. Although there is not a word of sanction in Quran for cow slaughter.”(G 2000:144)

The Congress had never stood firmly against Muslims demand to perform freely cow slaughter in the public gaze as their ‘cultural’ and ‘traditional’ right and community’s

sentiment. Whosoever did not support and advocate this proposition or campaigned to protect cows faced the music of being ridiculed as anti- Muslim or Hindu communal.

Chapter - V

Two Nation mentality

The country's politics and socio-religious reality vindicates Guruji's prescription. The Indian polity has been facing challenges from within: whether secular judiciary of Islamic court; whether secular education in Madarsa; whether competition-based admission in educational institutions and jobs whether the Vande Mataram is a national song for all Indians. These are the same old questions with similar arguments once used by the Muslim League and now being replayed by the 'Muslim India'. The Muslim vote bank tactically and shrewdly has been used to affect the secular politics of the country. It has been increasingly revolving round the decrees of Mosques rather than the spirit of the Indian constitution.

Says Guruji, "the Indian Muslims have yet to converge into Indian culture and its people. The problem would cease to exist once they will feel and speak that this is their motherland and the people are their own people. It is a matter to entrench such desirable changes in their psychology."(Samadhan: 60)¹⁵

¹⁵ With Editors of national dailies in Delhi on 11 June 1970

When he uses the term danger of 'internal subversion' he also means the Muslims' defiance to the state. Guruji has been vindicated by events, which took place after his death. In 1985, the Supreme Court favoured the formulation and implementation of the Uniform Civil Code in the Shah Bano case. It evoked protest among the Muslims. Minister of State for environment in Rajiv Gandhi government Z. R. Ansari proved that the separatism was a creed of the Indian Muslims. He lambasted the SC on December 20, 1985 for trying to interpret the Muslim Personal Law. Speaking in the Lok Sabha he ridiculed Chief Justice Y. V. Chandrachud and said that the Chief Justice was incompetent to interpret the Islamic law.¹⁶ Another Muslim member Saifuddin Soz said that the Muslim felt terribly insecure because of the presence of article 44 in the Constitution, which speaks of the UCC.¹⁷

Indirect Aggression

After independence, Muslims have replaced their old strategy of direct action, says Guruji. By indirect aggression, he means infiltration¹⁸ in border districts of Assam, Bengal, Bihar and other parts of the country to turn them into Muslim majority area so that they would "automatically fall into the lap of Pakistan in course of time."(G2000: 179) His farsighted warning was as usual ignored by the state thinking it as an anti-Muslim propaganda. After his death, the problem became more acute.¹⁹ He had warned, "It would be

¹⁶ Indian Express 21 December 1985 Ansari Attacks Supreme Court

¹⁷ Indian Express 23 December 1985

¹⁸ Infiltration of Muslims in India has assumed a serious menace in Assam. Guruji found symptomatic trend and had warned unless the danger was perceived by the national leadership it would like repeating the history. He said, "there are sure signs that an explosive situation similar to that of 1946-47 is fast brewing and there is no knowledge when it will blow up. Not that our leaders do not know it. The secret intelligence reports reach them all right. But it seems they have in view only elections. Elections mean vote catching, which means appeasing certain section offs of people having a solid bloc of votes. And Muslims are one such solid block therein lies the root of all this appeasement and consequent disastrous effects." (G: 2000: 182)

¹⁹ According to 1991 census Muslim presence in the border areas of eastern states increased substantially. In 1991 Muslims presence was: Up: 20.47%, Bihar: 21%, West Bengal 47.14%, Assam 37.15%. For details see Religious Demography of India by A. P. Joshi, M. D. Srinivas and J. K. Bajaj, Centre for Policy Studies Chennai, 2003.

suicidal on our part to dismiss their plan of realising the dream of Jinnah as mere wishful thinking. And so did we, at one time, dismiss Jinnah's demand for Pakistan as 'fantastic'."(G2000: 180)²⁰

Vande Mataram

The one indicator of change in the Muslim mind after independence could be their attitude towards the national song Vande Mataram. Surendra Nath Banerjee compared this song with those of Garibaldi and Mazzini:

"Bankimchandra Chatterjee could hardly have anticipated the part it was destined to play in the Swadeshi Movement ...Dante, when he sang the Italian unity, had no conception of the practical use to which his song would be put by Mazzini and Garibaldi, or the part it would play in the political evolution of the Italian population. (quoted by Bandopadhyay : 221)

Similarly Sri Aurovindo said, "the *Mantra (Vande Mataram)* had been given and in a single day a whole people had been converted to the religion of patriotism. The Mother had revealed herself. Once that vision comes to the people, there can be no rest, no peace, no further slumber till the temple has been made ready, the image installed and the sacrifice offered. A great nation which has had that vision can never again be placed under the feet of the conqueror." (Bandopadhyay: 221). Both of them called it a song of patriotism. It has nothing to do with one or other religion. Bankim takes the metaphors and examples from the historical journey of the nation since times immemorial. The fact is that the Muslims detest this song even after India's independence. Guruji remarked that it was just a repetition of 'unpatriotic attitude' and ingratitude of the Muslims. (G2000: 263-264).

²⁰ Nehru called Pakistan's demand as a 'mad scheme', Gandhi declared it as 'Patent Untruth', Rajagoplahari 'Mischievous concept' (Anita Inder Singh origin of Partition; pp 58-59); behind his warning there are many factors. One such is Two Nationalists dream to divide India again. Qamruddin Khan, wrote in *Light of Lahore*, "The five crores Muslims who were compelled to stay back in India would have to fight for another freedom struggle. The fight would be mainly fought on Eastern end and the western areas of bordering Pakistan...The Indian Muslims have won half the battle and for total victory they will have to scheme out another plan."

Urdu

Guruji rejects the Muslim's claim for Urdu and believes that their advocacy is not concerned to their love for a language but it is aimed at to consolidate their political role in the country. He says that it cannot be a religious language of the Muslims. Holy Quran is in Arabic. If at all there is a 'religious language' for Muslims, it is Arabic. There is hardly any difference in the Muslim psyche before and after independence. In the pre independent days, the issue of Urdu was projected as a part and parcel of Muslim identity. For instance the Muslim League of the Orissa province raised in addition to other grievances, the arrangements for the teaching of Urdu where the people speaking Urdu are almost negligible.

Guruji is not opposed to Urdu or any other language. Variety of languages, dialects and scripts, says he, is a beauty of our national and cultural life. All of them contribute in our cultural progress. He only cautions against the use of a language as a weapon to construct a nationality.

Change of heart

Guruji raised a fundamental question regarding the post-partition Muslim mind when he asked, "Is it true that all pro Pakistani elements have gone away to Pakistan? It was the

Muslims in Hindu majority provinces led by UP who provided the spearhead for the movement for Pakistan right from the beginning. And they have remained solidly here even after partition. In fact, the Muslims of Punjab, Bengal, Sind and NWFP which went over to Pakistan had totally rejected Muslim League in 1937 elections.” (G2000: 177)²¹.

Sardar Patel debunked the Muslims claim of fraternity with Hindus and their demand for privileges and protection on the pretext of their status as minority community. Patel, like Guruji, perceived it as a symptom of the same old disease. He on the floor of the Constituent Assembly warned the Muslims, “If the process that was adopted, which resulted in the separation of the country, is to be repeated then I say:

²¹ In 1936-37 elections the Muslim league’s performance was dismal in Bengal, Punjab Sind. Out of 117 seats in Bengal it secured only 38, in Punjab it secured only 2 out of 84 seats and in Sind it secured 3 out of 33 seats. (Anita Inder Singh: 130)

Those who want that kind of thing have a place in Pakistan not here (Applause) Here we are building a nation and we are laying the foundations of One nation, and those who choose to divide again and sow the seeds of disruption will have no place, no quarter, here, and I must say that plainly enough.”(Emphasis added)

Guruji reiterated his advise to the Indian Muslims to identify themselves with culture and people of this country. He said, “It is obvious that Indian history does not begin with Mohammad Ghazani.”(Guruji 9:107). The same sentiment was expressed on the floor of the Assembly. Patel said, “My friends you must change your attitude, adapt yourself to the changed conditions. And don’t pretend to say ‘Oh, our affection is very great for you.’ We have seen your affection. Why talk of it? Let us forget the affection. Let us face the realities. Ask yourself whether you really want to stand here and cooperate with us or want again to play disruptive tactics. Therefore when I appeal to you, I appeal to you to have a change in your heart, not a change in the tongue, because that won’t pay here... Why go on saying “Oh, Muslims were not heard;” Further like Guruji he reminded the nation, “ You have got what you wanted. You have got a separate state and remember, you **are the people who were responsible for it, and not those who remain in Pakistan. You led the agitation. You got it. What is that you want now? I don’t understand. In the majority Hindu provinces you, the minorities, you led the agitation. You got the partition and now again you tell me and ask me to say for the purpose of securing the affection of the younger brother that I must agree to the same thing again, to divide the country again in the divided part. For God’s sake, understand that we have also got some sense.”(Emphasis added)(28 August 1947, CAD*, Vol. V, pp 271-272)**

Guruji does not find any substantial change in the Muslim mind and says that the perpetuation of the same old demands and politics would be like recycling the history without any lesson from it.

Exchange of Population

Guruji’s faith in the cultural nationalism remained unshaken at the hour of the greatest tragedy of the country. He was not a populist or the man blown by the incidents and circumstances. He always had

*Constituent Assembly Debate official report printed by Lok Sabha Secretariat

long-term vision. He and the RSS acted accordingly. At this juncture of history when the demand for exchange of population was supported by a large number of people Guruji did

not stand for such demand. He did not consider it as a proper (judicious) solution. (GurujiVIII: 41) He believed that the cultural foundation of the country would one day overpower religion-based separatism. He rightly says, “no body is happy with the partition of the country”(Guruji: 9:41). The existence of Pakistan in itself is a factor for some anti-national feelings and actions among the Indian Muslims.

Chapter - VI

Concept of minority

The biggest absurdity of Indian secularism is legitimacy to the concept of minority. The classification of the people on the basis of mode of worship and its application in the principle of governance militates against our own historical experiences. Guruji says, 'History bears testimony to the fact that Bharat, the cradle land of religious generosity has always welcomed and assured all religious groups a free, honourable and secure life.'(G2000: 321) He further argues that in India there is 'no question of majority and minority.'(Guruji: 1986:12) His submission has again and again been attacked by the secularists (Red-Green club) as anti Muslim tirade. For decades both Guruji and his critics ceaselessly made their respective proposition. And the Indian judiciary finally endorsed Guruji. The Supreme Court of India in a landmark

Judgement on August 10, 2005 said that the National Commission for Minority (NCM) "should suggest ways and means to help create social conditions where the list of notified minorities is gradually reduced and done away altogether."²² Moreover three-member bench of the Court consisting of Justice R. C. Lahoti, Justice D. M. Dharmadhikari and Justice P. K. Balasubramanyam gave their equally important observation, "The objective of a democratic society ought to be to eliminate majority and minority..."²³

Shri Guruji's perception and articulation had many votaries in the

²² Indian Express, August 11, 2005

²³ Indian Express, August 11,2005

Constituent Assembly. Dr. H. C. Mookerjee, vice chairman of the Assembly and Christian by faith on May 25, 1947, raised two fundamental questions before the Assembly, 'the first is, are we really honest when we say that we are seeking to establish a secular state? And the second is, whether we intend to have one nation? If our idea is to have a secular state it follows inevitably that we can not afford to recognise minorities based upon religion.'(CA Debates, Vol. VIII, P298)

Guruji rightly pointed out that " while bringing about integration with the nation in its practical life, destruction of distinct ways of worship is not aimed at, only putting an end to undesirable tendencies of exclusiveness and intolerance is aimed at;"(G 2000:168)

Concept of Mother India

Guruji treats the nationality above religious and all other identities and consistent to Indian tradition he elevates the nation as a Mother and above all goddess to be worshipped. The concept of Motherland is a common point of assimilation of Muslims with the culture. It is the supreme religion. However, it is not idolatry in a religious sense or merely ritual to worship the symbol of the Mother India but it is identification with the nation. Such dedication is not meant to create any totalitarian state or expansionist mission. It establishes an organic link between the people and the land and its culture and history. He defines the nation as "a practical and physical manifestation of the culture and a set of values, samskars, inherited by the people inhabiting in a geographical boundary."(Guruji: 1997:21) He further underlines the importance of the motherland in the Hindu tradition. He observes, "In our concept of nationality some elements have been emphasised. Abounding reverence for the Motherland is placed at the top. Then comes in order the respect for our history, which of

course does not mean of a few centuries but entire gamut of Hindu civilisation. Its natural corollary is regard for our ancestors. (Guruji IX: 105)

The emotional cry of *Bharat Mata ki Jai* is absent among the Muslims. The Muslims' position has not changed even after the partition. For them the land of birth does not make any deeper sense, "boundary of a nation merely reflects administrative arrangement" and "does not enjoy permanent sanctity." (Radiance, 2-8 October 2005)

"They call themselves as "Sheiks" and "Syeds." Sheiks and Syeds are certain clans in Arabia. How then did these people come to feel that they are their descendents? That is because they have cut off all their ancestral moorings of this land and mentally merged themselves with aggressors. They still think that they have come here only to conquer and establish their kingdoms." (G 2000: 128)

Guruji observes that the reclaiming back to home all those people who were converted by other religions is legitimate, morally and historically justified. The concept of reconversion is the latest addition to the creed of Hinduism and credit goes to Swami Dayananda for it. Guruji says: "it used to be said that a person who has left the Hindu *dharma once*, is gone for ever. But this cannot be. He has to be brought home again. If somebody tries to take away our own people, it is our first duty to be careful that hereafter nothing of that kind will happen and if it does, we must take every step to reclaim him and bring him home.'*

Indianisation

The secularism adopted by the Congress as a creed of the nation is not only 'because it was moral, relevant and appropriate' (Chandoke: 41)²⁴ but the fact is that the tradition of the land and temperament of the Hindus adhere to the concept of equal respect for religions & philosophies. However, politics prevented the assimilation of Muslims, which should have been a natural course of history. This historical tradition of evolution is defined as Indianisation. Guruji says it does not mean converting other religionists into Hindus. He unambiguously and succinctly defined the concept as follow

"Let us realise and believe that we are all children of this soil coming from the same stock, that our great forefathers were one, and that our aspirations are also one. This is all, I believe, the meaning of 'Indiannisation.'" (G2000: 495)

*(speech delivered at Assam VHP conference held on 2 October 1966 at Gauhati)
extract in world Hindu conference, 1979, p16)

²⁴ Muslim mind perceives that the adoption of secularism was mainly due to three reasons: firstly absence of the idea of Hindu Dom and a well defined social life in Hindu religion, secondly, Hinduism needed for its survival to project religion as a mere cultural heritage and thirdly, the Hindu faith and culture that were a collection of outdated customs and meaningless rites, were a need of a reformer and the 'new state which took up the reformation task, became in the process protector and propagator of Hindu ideas.' (Shaz: 65)

The opposition to the very connotation and concept is astonishing. He says, "It seems that this sacred country, immortal nation is a victim of some curse otherwise instead of showing repugnance to this very word it would have been welcomed and appreciated." (Guruji VII: 356) The problem arises because Indian Muslims show affinity with aggressors and identify with them. Guruji makes a distinction between aggressors and Indian Muslims, "the aggressors were foreigners and have nothing in common with the Muslims here. Let our

Muslims here say that they are of this land and the past aggressors and their aggressions are not part of their heritage.”(G2000: 493) He is not demeaning Muslims but it is a demand for cultural regeneration of Muslims.

Indianisation means owning India’s past beyond religious history and profile. Guruji presents Indonesian model before the Indian Muslims. Indonesia where majority professes Islam and controls society and politics have Hindu names (like Sukarna, Kartikeya,) They worship Ganesh and Saraswati , read with reverence Ramayana. However the Indian Muslims adopt Arabian instead of Indianised names. He says, “After all Indonesia is a big Muslim country. Yet Muslims have not been cut off from the tradition, culture and language. They have adopted names, like Sukarna, Ratnadevi. Does it mean they cease to be Muslims?”²⁵ But in India the first thing for a convert is to adopt the Arabic name. This is substantiated by the following example. In Perayur in Mudarai district (Tamilnadu) some villagers embraced Islam in 1984 and 1994. Mathu Karuppiyah became Saddam Hussain in 1984.²⁶

Indianisation is not at all dilution of one’s faith. It is a creation of motivating force for cultural unity and loyalty to the Motherland. To consider it as superimposition of Hinduism on Muslims shows lamentable lack of understanding the cultural assimilation and its consequences in Indian history. Guruji says, “ I have no quarrel with any class, community or sect wanting to maintain its identity so long as that identity does not detract from its patriotic feeling.”²⁷. His views

²⁵ Women too bear the proud names of Sita, Savitri, Dayamanti etc. Garuda, the mount of Vishnu, adorns the name of their airways. Their constitution begins with the declaration “*Dharmo rakshati rakshitah*”. (BT: 159)

²⁶ The Indian Express, January 22, 2001. on the personal law substantiate his claim.²⁸

Chapter – VII

Personal law

He assertively presents the essence of our socio-cultural paradigm, “I think uniformity is the death knell of nations. Nature abhors uniformity. I am all for the protection of various ways of life. However all the variety must supplement the unity of the nation and not range itself against it”²⁹. Guruji’s views on Muslim Personal Law may be surprising for those who do not try to understand his paradigm or his philosophy in terms of endurance of civilisational progress, evolution and who hold myopic view on minority problem. When Guruji was asked, “does he not think that the common civil code is necessary for promoting the feeling of nationalism” he gave a straight answer in a very unambiguous term “ I don’t”. He was aware of the superficial debate on this issue. He did not forget to add, “this may surprise you or many others. But this is my opinion .I must speak the truth as I see it”³⁰. Merely presence of various customs and traditional laws does not pose any danger as long the men practicing them consider their root in the soil of their birth, own its culture and paradigm.

Mutual Goodwill & Respect

Guruji’s objective is to restore an atmosphere of mutual goodwill and respect between Hindus and Muslims. He says, “Harmonious pattern of mutual goodwill and respect is precondition for cultural nationalism. (G 2000:39). Muslims are secured in India if they earn the goodwill of Hindus whose philosophy of life is based on secularism. It is pertinent. To quote GB Pant’s reply to Ismail Khan, a League member,

²⁷ Motherland 23 August 1972

²⁸ There is interesting Islamic response to the ideology of Indianisation. Radiance an Islamic journal, wrote, “While the RSS can promise 150 million Indian Muslims a more ‘honourable’ status by linking organically with the rest of 850 millions within the boundaries of sub-continental Bharat, Indian Muslims can offer them a international brotherhood of over a billion fellow Muslims in 50 countries of Asia, Africa and Europe.. India’s real genius fits more with the religious civilisation in the ‘Middle West.’”(Radiance March 11-17, 2000, P8)

²⁹(Motherland, 23 August 1972)

³⁰(Motherland 23 August 1972)

October 1937.

“The security of their interests will depend on the extent to which they continue to retain the confidence of general mass of the people, and the attitude of the general mass towards them will be determined by their attitude towards the large vast mass of the people in the country...No artificial guarantee can secure for them what their real conduct and their practical behaviour will deprive them of.”³¹

Guruji says “it is only a strong and resurgent Hindu Rashtra that can stand guarantee to the free and prosperous life of the so-called minorities here, sharing equal opportunities as the proud children of the Motherland.”(G2000: 161) The goodwill theory of Guruji found support in the Constituent Assembly.

V. V. John, who happens to be a Christian, prefers the protection of human rights rather than minority rights. According to him leaders of minority communities practice ‘selective secularism’ and demand from Hindus what they themselves do not practice. (Quoted by Madan, 1997:255)

When Gururji was asked by a Muslim about his attitude towards Muslims, he aptly responded, 'we are the children of the same forefathers and must always bear this in mind. Follow your religion honestly, but in the national context we all have to be one. There can be no claiming of rights and privileges at the cost of the nation.' At the same time he says that the majority can also not be a privileged community. He further says, " We do not say to anybody that because we are Hindus, we alone are entitled to this and that. Not at all." (Jeelany: 44) He out rightly denounces the feeling of Muslims to reinforce the separate identity and warns "there can not be a state within a state...when people look at things from the point of view of political aggrandisement, dangerous difficulties crop up. But once this aggrandisement is left out, our country becomes one and we can meet the challenge of the whole world." (ibid)

Gururji unequivocally stated, "so far as the work of the country is concerned, I do not distinguish between Hindus and Muslims."

(G2000: 489) Muslims should be given their due share but their demand for special rights and privileges go against the principles of secularism.

³¹ Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of the United provinces, official Report, Vol. II, pp1661-70

(G2000: 89) His vision on Muslim problem is philosophically sound and pragmatically consistent with our history. The political culture and the Muslim politics together is a challenge to secular democracy. The sociology and politics of Indian Muslims is based not on idealism once shown by the Congress or cultural tradition of the country but is based on India does not consist of One but two peoples. That's why Gururji says, '**the Muslims look upon partition only as a springboard of further aggression.**' (Spotlights, p45)

Post independent India has been facing a challenge of old habits of minorities. So Gururji rightly raises the question "Do the Muslims accept India as Bharat Mata? and "How many of them shout 'Bharat Mata ki Jay'?" Still the Indian Muslim psyche has come to the terms to these core questions raised by Shri Gururji decades back. His philosophy is a call for Indianisation and assimilation, evolution and progress of national outlook.



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