

SHRI GURUJI
&

MATRUSHAKTI



Shri Guruji and Matrushakti

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Introduction

The life of Shri Guruji is a perennial source of Inspiration for all who have the ideal of Motherland in front of them. When one reads his life, one is struck by the tireless energy of Shri Guruji. One gets caught in the force of his character which was at once simple and profound, with ill will to none and yet focused for Hindu society, possessed with the vision of the Rishis and yet applying the modern techniques of organization for building one of the biggest organizations in the world, seeing the whole universe as the expression of One and yet very practical and impeccable in behaviour, having discrimination of what is to be ultimately achieved and what is to be done immediately. Thus the organizing of strong Hindu society meant for him character building, moulding of man. A person with great faith in God and yet not leaving even one stone unturned for achieving the goal, a person tirelessly working, moving to build Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a person who was a devotee of Mother all along his life expressing this devotion in three ways- to his own mother, the motherland and Mother of the Universe. Naturally he saw only the expression of Mother in the women all around. Three expressions of 'Motherhood' – the mother who gave birth, the motherland and Mother of the Universe- got ultimately balanced on Motherland in him. So his own mother became the supporter in his work. And the call of the Divine Mother was expressed again as the call for the service of the suffering descendants of the Rishis of this land. Therefore his life was fully dedicated to the service of Motherland, to establish her again as powerful as before. For that the need was to organize the Hindu society, to awaken their dormant spirit and therefore the Bharatamata- Her children became his chosen deity, and Her pooja became building of the organization of Hindus.

Chapter I

Understanding the World View of Shri Guruji

To know and also to understand properly the viewpoints of any person on any subject, the worldview of that person, the philosophy of life which inspired him/her is to be understood first, only then we can properly place the views of the person on the specific subject. The life of Shri Guruji was continuation of the great Rishi tradition of this land. His life was moulded in the thought flow of Shri Ramakrishna – Vivekananda. His life was dedicated to actualize the dream of one of the greatest thinkers, organizers and patriots of our country Dr. Hedgewar, Naturally his world-view, his philosophy of life was per the ethos of Sanatana Dharma.

Through the prisms of various 'ism's women is viewed differently. In 'modern' i.e. really the western thinking, she is atomized as an individual and therefore is expected to assert for her own rights. In the West she was considered inferior to man, therefore she tries to prove that she is equal to man. In trying to prove that, she imitates man and thus unfortunately by her very imitation of man,

she grants unconsciously the superiority to man. The Communism which views everything as a class struggle, also views woman as being oppressed by men and therefore it also urges women to break the shackles of culture, family and religion and become free. We see the result of these various exhortations to women in the West. Though she appears to be enjoying the social and economic freedom, there are increasingly broken homes, insecure social systems and juvenile delinquency, with the result the women has become more insecure and so is exploited more. For example in America 32% of the children are born to unwed mother. Only 52% of the children are with their original parents, the divorce rate has doubled from 1960 to 1996. Today the proponents of women liberation movements like Betty Freidan etc have realized that there could not be any liberation for women alone. They realize that the movement has gone in the wrong direction. They do not know how to bring it back. The Asura of self-indulgence, permissiveness, self-centeredness, once let loose from the bottle is too difficult to contain again back in the bottle.

The Vision of oneness

As per Indian ethos, the God manifested itself as the creation '*Ekoham bahusyam.*' One as many is the reality of life. Therefore we are not unconnected but are interconnected and therefore interdependent.

In India, the mission of the Rishis has been to express that Oneness in our life. Shri Guruji always insisted on Advaita view of life. Even in this last address at Thane he had stressed that the national life in all its dimensions would have to be built on Advaita Darshan. Thus to understand his guidance to women, first his world-view would have to be understood which he was propounding all along.

Shri Guruji said, "*There is one common Living Reality in all of us which furnishes the common inner bond. Our philosophy calls it Atma. We love and serve one another not because of the external relations, but because of the community of that Atma-*

Yagnavalkya tells Maitreyi:

न वा अरे मैत्रेयि पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति
आत्मनस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति ।

'O Maitreyi! Man is not loved (by wife) because he is the husband, but because of the Atma in him.'

"Disparity" – an indivisible part of nature

"It is this sense, i.e., the same spirit being immanent in all, that all men are equal. Equality is applicable only on the plane of the Supreme Spirit. But on the physical plane the same Spirit manifests itself in a wondrous variety of diversities and disparities.

According to our philosophy, the very projection of the Universe is due to a disturbance in the equilibrium of its three attributes-sattva, rajas and tamas and if there is a

'gunasaamya', perfect balance of the three attributes, then the Universe will dissolve back to the Unmanifest State. Thus, disparity is an indivisible part of nature and we have to live with it. Our efforts should be only to keep it in limits and take away the sting born out of it.' (BOT –p30-31)

With French Revolution the 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' became the hallmarks of the West. The French Revolution had the haughtiness to think that it would wipe of all differences among men with blood. But it produced the very opposite results. In Europe, the rulers and the ruled, the wealthy and the common people, all the repositories of power, gradually became fiercely antagonistic to each other. The search for equality led to many revolutions, political upheavals and 'ism's. During French Revolution, though the talk was of equality, the equality was not thought of for women at all. It was just the equality of all men. But as decades passed, this equality was demanded by all. The depressed whether racially, sexually or otherwise demanded equal rights. In West, since biblical times women were considered as inferior to men, so naturally the movements started for equal rights for women. But the pursuit of equality became illusive in West. In nature, no two things are exactly the same. There is no equality in the nature so the pursuit of equality becomes mirage, it becomes superficial. To explain this Shri Guruji further says, "So any arrangement that tries to remove the inherent disparities altogether on the basis of superficial equality is bound to fail. Democracy, even at this advanced stage in the Western countries, is after all the rule by a few who are well versed in the art of politics and capable of winning the masses to their line. The concept of Democracy as being 'by the people' and 'of the people', meaning that all are equal shares in the political administration, is, to a very large extent, only a myth in practice.

Communism, too, has completely failed to realize any of its declared concepts of equality. It had envisaged that after the establishment of the dictatorship of proletariat all would have food and other necessities of life satisfied. Then there will be no room for mutual conflict thus obviating the necessity for a central authority. Thus the State would wither away and a government-less 'anarchic' society would come into being. According to Communism, this is the highest state of equality that man can conceive of.

But Communism, based as it is on materialism, cannot explain how that ideal state can come to life. If men are mere animals, i.e., mere material beings, they do not devour each other only because of the fear of the powers that be. But when this power or authority is no more, then why will they live without strife? Man as an animal is a victim of passions and passions get more intense when gratified. How then will such a dissatisfied man live in peace and harmony with others? And what guarantee is there that even after the satisfaction of his personal needs, man, who is more ingenious than other animals, will not follow the 'dog-in-the-manger' policy? So even if we suppose that equality is established, it will again lead to inequality. Thus another bloody revolution will be necessitated, which means, violent upheavals and strife's are the cornerstones of this theory. To raise always the slogan of revolution is to encourage and invite armed strife's, anarchy and murder of peace.

The picture which is thus visualized neither contains any signs of the withering away of the central power nor any possibility of the emergence of peace after the dis-appearance of the authority even if by chance it takes place."

Harmonize the disparities by co-operation

Our philosophy, on the other hand, has pictured the highest state of society and offered for it a cogent explanation too. It is described as:

**न वै राज्यं न राजासीत् न दण्ड्यो न च दाण्डिकः ।
धर्मैव प्रजास्सर्वा रक्षन्ति स्म परस्परम् ॥**

'There existed no state, no king, and no criminal. All protected one another by virtue of dharma'. Dharma is the universal code of right conduct that awakens the Common Inner Bond, restrains selfishness, and keeps the people together in that harmonious state even without external authority. There will be no selfishness, no hoarding and all men will live and work for the whole.

And it is dharma that is the distinguishing feature of human life.

आहारनिद्राभयमैथुनं च सामान्यमेतत्पशुभिर्नराणाम् ।
धर्मो हि तेषामधिको विशेषो धर्मेण हीनाः पशुभिः समानाः ॥

'Food, sleep, fear and lust are common to both-animal and man. The special attribute of man is dharma; without it he is no better than an animal'.

It is through the full manifestation of dharma in human life that human beings will be able to live in that state of highest harmony in spite of the inherent disparities in nature. It is like the co-operation of blind man with a lame man. The lame man gets a leg and the blind man an eye. The spirit of co-operation takes away the sting of disparity.

Our view of the relation between individual and society has always been not one of conflict but of harmony and co-operation born out of the consciousness of a single Reality running through all the individuals. The individual is a living limb of the corporate social personality. The individual and the society supplement and complement each other with the result that both get strengthened and benefited." (BOT-p 31-33)

For Practice of Dharma, mould character

Our national life was always in the search of harmony and not in search of an illusive equality. In a body there can be no equality of all organs, but the harmonious functioning of the body is important. If an organ is affected then the other organs take the load of keeping the body functional and at the same time repair the affected organ. Therefore, in India always stress was on moulding the man so that he adds to the harmony around. With such men any system of governance is successful. Thus Samskars were very important in our national life and not the system of governance. Shri Guruji said, *"The essential point, therefore, is the moulding of individuals after the real image of man imbued with the sublime principle of innate oneness and harmony, i.e. of dharma. Indeed, a system works ill or well according as the men who work it out are bad or good. That is why, in the absence of men inspired with the right spirit, Democracy deteriorates into 'mediocracy' and is often reduced to 'mobocracy'. The tragedy of the various theories and 'isms' propounded by the West is that they were taken to be the ends in themselves to the utter neglect of building the quality of man. They ignored the simple yet fundamental truth that systems and 'isms' are at best only means for the fulfillment of man's life. It is mistaking the means for the ends that has landed these attempts in results diametrically opposite to what they had prophesied or expected.*

Even to this day, democratic countries are plagued by grave social problems arising out of this basic confusion of placing system above man. The system of Democracy that they have evolved breeds two evils-self-praise and vilification of others-which poison the peace and tranquility of the human mind and disrupt the mutual harmony of individuals in society. In the present set-up both these are freely indulged in during elections.

This is the reason why in our national tradition, we did not bother much about the external form of the government but concentrated upon the moulding of man as the chief guiding factor in all our systems. Many form were tried here right from republic to monarchy. And we find that the monarchy, which bred such tyranny and gave rise to bloody revolution in the West, was found to be a highly beneficial institution continuing for thousands of years showering peace and prosperity on the whole of our people, with the spirit of freedom alive in every sphere of life."(BOT-p 33-34)

Society is divine

Thus we even had various systems of governance, of worship, of living and yet all peacefully co-existed, because the importance was given to the behavior of man. The man was expected to perform actions as worship of Virat – The Janatajanardan – the God, manifested as society. Shri Guruji explains this very beautifully; *"This supreme vision of Godhead in society is the very core of our concept of 'nation' and has permeated our thinking and given rise to various unique concepts of our cultural heritage.*

That vision inspires us to look upon every individual of our society as a part of that Divine Whole. All individuals are therefore equally sacred and worthy of our service. Therefore any sense of discrimination amongst them is reprehensible. Thus, in our culture, the spirit of social service has been sublimated into worship of God.

There are millions of human beings all around us who live in hunger and destitution, deprived of even the barest necessities of life, and whose stories of misery will move the stoniest of hearts. It is verily God who has taken those forms of the poor, the destitute and the suffering. What for? Does He want anything? He is the very embodiment of all power, all knowledge, and is the Master of all. Then what is it that He wants? He comes in those forms to give us an opportunity to serve Him. Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa called them Daridra Narayana (destitute God).

Life an offering in the service of society

Once our life becomes soaked with this true spirit of service, we will feel that all our individual and family possessions, however abundant they may be, do not really belong to us. These are only the means to worship God in the form of society. Our whole life will then be an offering in the service of society. The Upanishads say:

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत् ।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद् धनम् ॥

‘God permeates all Creation. Whatever is left over by Him, after offering Him, enjoy only that much. Do not rob what belongs to others.’

Let us therefore acquire maximum of material wealth so that we can serve God in the form of society in the best possible manner. And out of all that wealth, only that minimum should be used for our sake the denial of which will hamper our capacity for service. To claim or to make a personal use of more than that, is verily an act of theft against society.”

As components of society-Not rights but duties

It is only in the materialistic, reductionist view of life that stress is on ‘rights’. But in the world view based on Advaita – everything is expression of Divine. One has manifested as many. The parts of a Whole are interconnected and interdependent. And therefore in such world-view there is no talk of rights but of duty. The duty of one person naturally takes care of rights of the other. If the strong and the privileged is cultured enough to perform the duties then the needs of the disadvantageous is taken care of. Though compared to protests and demands of rights, the culturing of a person is a slow process, it is the only basic, sure and durable way. The talks of rights fragment the society whereas training the mind of the constituents of a collectivity like family, community, industry and educational institution etc. integrates the society. Shri Guruji expressed his concern when he said, “Today we hear everywhere the clamour for ‘rights’. All our political parties too are rousing the ego in our people by constantly speaking of their ‘rights’. Nowhere is there any stress on ‘duties’ and the spirit of selfless service. The spirit of co-operation, which is the soul of society, can hardly survive in a climate of assertion of egocentric rights. That is why we are finding conflicts among the various component parts in our national life today, between the teacher and the taught, the labourer and the industrialist, and so on. It is only by an assimilation of our cultural vision that the true spirit of co-operation and consciousness of duty can be revived in our national life.”(BOT –p50-51)

Dharma for harmonious corporate existence

The comprehensive word, which encompasses the meaning of duty, training of mind, divinity of the society, one’s innate nature, contributing to the harmony around etc. is Dharma. Dharma is the mainstay of Hindu life. Our family tradition whether matrilineal or patriarchal, it is Dharma based. Many community systems are also based on Dharma. Similarly even in a monarchy, it was not the king who was supreme but Dharma was supreme most. What is Dharma? Shri Guruji explains very lucidly. He said, “Our definition of dharma is two fold. The first is proper rehabilitation of man’s mind; and the second is

adjustment of various individuals for a harmonious corporate existence, i.e., a good social order to hold the people together.

Let us take the first aspect. What is meant by the rehabilitation of mind? We know that the personality of man is only a projection of his mind. But the mind is like an animal, which runs after so many things, and it is so constituted as to be one with all the desired things. Ordinarily, Man's mind does not stop to consider what is right and what is wrong. It stoops to any level in order to fulfill its desires. With such a mind, man is not likely to rise higher than the level of an ordinary animal. Therefore the mind is to be cultivated in self-restraint and certain other great qualities. Those attributes of good conduct are mentioned in various contexts in the Bhagavadgita and our other holy scriptures. They have described five yamas for the body and five niyamas for the mind.

The other is the social aspect. Man's life has to be attuned to the wider interests of the people as a whole. Both these aspects are complementary to each other. The first aspect is defined as-

यतोऽभ्युदयनिःश्रेयससिद्धिः स धर्मः ।

Which means that the arrangement, which enables and encourages man to control his desires and create within himself the competence to realize the Divine Essence or the Eternal Reality even while enjoying a rich material life, is dharma. The second aspect is –

धारणात् धर्ममित्याहुः धर्मो धारयति प्रजाः ।।

Which means that the power, which brings individuals together and sustains them as a society is called dharma. A combination of these two definitions shows that the establishment of dharma means the building of an organized social life wherein each individual has realized his oneness with others in society and is imbued with a spirit of sacrifice to make others' material life richer and happier, and develops spiritual strength, which leads to the realization of the Ultimate Truth.”(BOT – 59-60)

Dharma the life center of India

Thus the practice of Dharma is very important for the happiness and also stable and peaceful social order. India has been expressing Dharma in all walks of her life. Therefore Swami Vivekananda had said that ‘Sanatana Dharma’ is the life center of our country. Shri Aurbindo had said that, “When, therefore, it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatan Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Sanatan Dharma that shall be great. When it is said that India shall expand and extend itself over the world. It is for the Dharma and by the Dharma that India exists.”

For national regeneration “mould” man

For us national regeneration is thus nothing but establishment of Dharma. And establishment of Dharma means moulding of man. Shri Guruji said, “Our real national regeneration should therefore start with moulding of ‘man’, by instilling, in him the strength to overcome human frailties and to stand up as a shining symbol of Hindu manhood embodying within himself our traditional virtues of love, self-restraints, sacrifice, service and character. We should unfailingly keep this vision, this real essence of our glorious nationhood, before our eyes so that we can again rise to our original pedestal of the world preceptor.” (BOT –p 63)

He wanted we – the Hindus to be awakened, organized and assertive and not the Hindus by birth or by accident. We are the inheritors of such a great culture. He expected us to be Hindus who exerted to reflect the virtues in our life. He said, “Let us introspect on these lines and gradually assimilate all those distinctive Hindu traits so that we can stand before the world as positive, dynamic Hindus. Let us live up to our philosophy, our Dharma, and all those great qualities, which have moulded our lives for countless generations.

Therefore, though the idea of organizing the Hindu Society may appear to be very simple, it really means that first of all we should be keenly conscious in our day-to-day life of our Hindu heritage and should mould every little aspect of our life in keeping with those great traditional values. In all that we do, in our dress, in our behaviour and in all walks of our life,

that stamp of positive conviction should vividly manifest. This is the prime responsibility that rests upon us. (BOT –p 78-79)

In short this was the philosophy of life of Shri Guruji. He was not an armchair philosopher to speculate without having any practical significance in life. Neither he was a tape-recorder philosopher to repeat just what others have told. But he lived every word of it. His life, his words and even his look created galaxies of men with capital 'M' whose lives became offerings in the service of the society. Shri Guruji was a person who saw the One in many. But he also saw the many as essential parts of one. Thus each had a purpose, a function to contribute to the harmony in the disparate world. His mission in life was to organize Hindu society and his method was molding of man. Shri Guruji did not make any differentiation in men or women when it came to performing one's duty to Man-making, for establishment of Dharma. Each one had a role to play in molding man.



Chapter II

The contribution of women

The raising of oneself is always possible if one becomes contributing factor for others around. Thus empowerment of women is not in how much they indulge themselves in selfish ends but in how much with self-confidence and self-respect they too contribute for the 'whole' i.e. for the society and nation. Shri Guruji acknowledged the contribution of women in three ways as Matrushakti in family, extending that matrushakti for the society in individual capacity and ultimately working in an organization for the progress of the society.

I) As Matrushakti in family

When everything ultimately comes to 'moulding of man' then the importance of home and naturally mother cannot be stressed enough. Shri Guruji too considered home as moulding centers. The whole life of Guruji was to mould men who would serve society. Naturally he expected this from mothers too. The message of Shri Guruji in this regard is very practical. It was not a big talk or a flowery language but very simple and practical hints for the mothers to mould their children.

Let children wake up to the devotional chanting

In one of the Sammelans for mothers he told, "Our mothers have a special responsibility of rearing up the budding generations of our society. Now, what does "rearing up" really imply? Is feeding and clothing the children and sending them to schools, the only thing to be done? On the contrary, the essential aspect is to inculcate in them the right type of samskars such as devotion to duty, spirit of personal endeavour, love of the motherland and readiness for service to society. Our mothers have to attend to this aspect of character formation as their first duty. And for this purpose, they have to be mindful of the many little things, which go to fashion the young minds.

When I remember my childhood days I am enveloped in very tender and sweet memories. When I used to be woken up in the mornings, I used to listen to the sweet melody of some stotras and chantings of god's names being sung by my mother even as she was engaged in her morning chores. What deep and holy imprints those melodies must have left on my young mind, coming as they did in those calm and serene mornings! Just contrast this with the so-called modern homes. The mothers neither wake up their children in the early mornings nor do they sing divine chantings. Not un-often, the children start their day listening to some obscene cinema songs and humming those tunes. I know of an instance where a young mother, not an uneducated girl, was singing third-rate songs, while working in the kitchen and rocking the child to sleep. If children find this behaviour in their parents, they have every reason to copy the same. And in such homes, where children grow without a cultural background, they fall an easy prey to Christian propaganda also.

There was a case of a child aged 8 or 9 who came in holidays to the house. On being told to observe vrata on Krishna Janmashtami Day, the child asked the parents, "Why do you celebrate the birthday of such an adulterous fellow? Why not celebrate the birthday of Christ?" Can you imagine a child of 8 or 9 confronting its parents with such obnoxious questions? Let our mothers make the children wake up early in the morning, make them salute the elders in the family and offer worship to the family deity. The sacred responsibility of instilling Matrushakti, Deshabhakti and Daivabhakti in every Hindu boy and girl is upon our mothers. (BOT-p 485-486).

One of our ancient customs is to get up early in the morning before sunrise. Once a sadhu described to me his early childhood, how his mother used to get up early in the morning and, while doing the normal household duties, would be reciting in her melodious voice various hymns describing the glory of the Divine Mother of the Universe, and how she would awaken him with words invoking Her holy blessings. The sadhu said, "Those holy

words which I used to hear immediately after I woke up from my sleep went deep into my being, purified me, gave me faith and strength to resist all worldly temptations and devote myself to the service of the Mother.” This is Hindu Samskar. Let us thus mould our life with an attitude of discipline throughout the day, from morning till night. A Hindu is born to be trained in a life-long course of discipline and self-restraint, which purify and strengthen him to reach the Supreme Goal in life.

Let us not say that these are small things about which we need not worry. It is only such little things that go to discipline our life and give shape and strength to our character.

But, unfortunately, what do we see at present? All such benevolent customs and codes of conduct are ridiculed as superstition. A revealing incident took place recently. A student had gone to America from our country. He stayed as a paying guest in one of the ordinary families there. On the first day, when he sat for meals at the table along with the members of the family, he immediately started servicing himself. Then the lady of the house gently requested him to wait for a minute and explained that it was their custom to pray to God before taking food. Remember, that young man had gone from a land, which is considered to be a land of spirituality, a land of God, to a land, which is supposed to be a land of Mammon worship, a land of gross materialism!” (BOT-p 81-82)

Even dress mould the mind

“Then about the dress. It must be borne in mind that the dress and decorative items also leave their imprints on the young minds. Mothers should see to it that the children acquire traits of our culture through these things also.

I am again reminded of my early childhood. I had long, thick and curly hairs. My mother would often do my hair and stick a peacock feather over it in such a fashion as to make me appear as Bala Krishna. She would put on a garland round my neck and tell others. “See, how our Madhu appears, exactly like the child Krishna.” Such things apparently though small, help to mould the child’s psychology in tune with our cultural standards. If, on the other hand, the children are brought up in the European style the impressions carried by them will also be coloured similarly. Seeds of intense devotion to the motherland and its cherished values would not sprout on such a mental background.

Sometimes, people have no idea as to what a decisive influence the garments would have on the mind. There is an interesting incident during the days of First World War. The English, who were ruling here, promulgated an emergency order recalling all the old and retired soldiers to join the army at once. There was a soldier who had no desire to go back to the army. He remained in his village. The police came with a search warrant to take him away. When the soldier came to know of this he put on a woman’s clothes and hid himself in the house. When the police came, his wife told them that he was not in the house and that she and her sister alone were in the house. But the police suspected deception. They called out that “sister”, found out the truth and took him away. The soldier was sent to his old platoon. He was then given the army dress and made to join the ranks. When he stood there with the soldier’s dress on, he was asked whether he would like to return home. He replied with a new resolve in his voice that he was now a soldier, that there was no question of his going to the house; he would now only go to battlefield. Indeed, the dress had made all that world of difference!” (BOT – p 486-488)

Westernization in the garb of modernization

Leaving our practices, we are falling prey to the so called modernism. This is what has happened to many non-western societies. Samuel Huntington in his scholarly thesis “Clash of the Civilization” says that the non-western societies in the first phase of modernization tend to give up their cultural practices. But as their economical condition improves and the confidence is built up, then in the second phase of modernization these societies become culturally assertive. Hindu society as it is improving economically; it would become culturally vibrant too. But cultural vibrancy is not in clichés or in exhibitions. In this regard Shri Guruji’s guidance that culture is in restraint of mind and not in exhibitionism is very important. He said, “And then about our family traditions and devotional practices. Whatever be our

personal or family deities, we have to conduct its worship with great devotion and keep aglow our holy family traditions. How tragic it is to see these things disappearing nowadays! In the South, at least, we often see the Tulasi Brindavan in front of our houses. As dusk sets in, our mothers light a lamp in front of it. Often we listen to the sweet sounds of bells in the pooja-griha and witness the devotional worship going on there. But in the North, this has become a rare sight to see, "Modernism" has verily banished God from our homes.

"Modernism" is taking the toll of many more of our cherished values of life. A couplet in Jhaneshwari says, "A pious man spreads a cover of modesty over his good actions just as a virtuous lady covers her body. "It describes the nature of virtuous womanhood. But "Modern" women think that "modernism" lies in exposing their body more and more to the public gaze. What a fall! (BOT –p488)

We also see many of our leading 'cultural men' associating themselves as judges in the 'Miss India' beauty contests. It seems, in their concept of our culture, of the ideal of our womanhood, a Sita or a Savitri, a Padmini or a Nivedita has no place. In that contest, indeed we miss the real beauty of India! (BOT –p54)

It appears modernism has come to mean, in our country, only blind aping of the West and nothing else. In many of the modern families the children address their mothers as 'mummy'. Do we know what the word originally conveyed? In Egypt, there are massive cemeteries entombing their old kings. They are called pyramids. The corpses placed inside are called 'mummies'! And here we address our living, loving mothers as mummies! (BOT – p488)

Use Swadeshi for right Samskar

"Further let there be the impress of national pride in all that is ours. Make a vow of Swadeshi in all the daily household uses. That will make for unsullied national character. Aping of the glare of Western civilization would spell ruin to the matchless traditions of nobility and chastity set up by the daughters of this soil.

The Hindu was known for his unflinching devotion to truth and sterling character. But these days even our big leaders have become notorious for their corruption and moral decay. It is up to our mothers to save our younger generation from such corrosive influences. They should so cultivate the atmosphere in home as would make one gladly prefer to forego a meal, rather than accept immoral gratification. The family as a whole should pledge themselves not to partake of the sinful food procured by corruption.

If our mothers were to inculcate such wholesome and heroic traits in their children, surely the coming generation would be able to successfully meet the various challenges being faced by our country." (BOT –p490)

If today our mothers do not know by heart the Bhajans, devotional songs etc., then there are many cassettes, morning at least for an hour at the time when the children are waking up, these cassettes can be played. We also have to make the differentiation in modern dress and western dress. Western dresses should be avoided. And at least on the days of festivals, pooja days, special days like birthday etc our mothers can dress their little ones like gods as Lakshmi, Saraswati, Krishna, Rama etc. This would have great impact on the minds of the children. There should be a very beautiful pooja place if not room in the home. The mothers should insist that there are regular prayers in the morning and evening and also touching of the feet of the elders by the children in the house. The language used in the homes, should reflect the Hindu ethos. The children should be told the significance of our festivals, and the celebration also should be expressing the spirit of the festival. Whatever is produced in our country we should use in the house. Many say that the foreign goods are much better and the Indian goods cannot compete with these. May be it was true before but we know that today there are good Swadeshi alternatives available. If we are conscious, then it is easily possible to use Swadeshi. But again it is not the question of only the quality but also our mental attitude and convictions. Would we give up our mother only because she is not beautiful as some one else is on the road? Would we discard our child just because it is not as brilliant as someone else's child? If we have a feeling for our society, our people

then we should be loyal to the products produced by them. Swadeshi is not just the material produced in our country but also the attitude and values which belong to our land given to us by the Rishis of this land. These are very simple things, would not put any exertion on the parents and yet it would make very deep impressions on the young ones.

Let children be confident constituents of society

Samskar of devotion are very important. The mothers also have to mould children to be the functioning parts of the society. The children should become society oriented; they should contribute to the strength of the society and also feel that strength of the society is with them. The organized society alone can face the challenges; protect the individuals, nurture the culture and also can contribute for the betterment of the humanity. Shri Guruji said, "Then, there is the question of our attitude towards the society. It is clear that the security and happiness of personal and family life depend very much upon the well being of the society. Indeed without social peace and security even the moral and spiritual advancement of individuals become beset with obstacles. It becomes difficult even for the spiritually great to survive if society disintegrates. As such, it is a duty of first importance for us to see that social life is made healthy.

In the past, we ignored these aspects of keeping our social life intact, free and self-respecting. We forgot that we have to live as one integrated entity. Notwithstanding our tremendous manpower we succumbed to the feeling of being 'alone'. Once there was a mammoth meeting of 20 thousand people in Nagpur. All of the sudden someone raised the cry 'Oh, they have come!' Immediately the huge crowd began to disperse in the frantic hurry. People fled leaving behind their chappals. Someone asked a fleeing person what happened. He said, 'I do not know. All were scared and I too ran.' 'But why did you not stop and inquire what it was all about?' To that he replied: 'what could I do? I was all alone!'

That is the result of the absence of the feeling of oneness, of our being the children of one single society who have to share the joys and sorrows of each other. Our love and adoration for society must be expressed in a concrete shape. For instance, there are so many in our society who go without their daily food. Do we feel for them? Do we strive to do something for them? In the past there used to be Balivaishwadeva Yajna where the poor and the hungry used to be fed first, then the rest. Today, we can, and we should, at least keep apart a handful of grains every day to feed the hungry in society and then only take our food. That would be the real Balvaishwadeva sacrifice."(BOT –p490-491)

Mould children to stand for nation:

The mothers have also to be 'mothers of heroes'. And that is possible only when they inculcate such samskars in their children. They have to mould their young ones not as crying babies or the soft dolls or the chicken-hearted grown up babies but the ones who are proud of their motherland and her culture and are ready to stand for her, work further and if required even to sacrifice for her. Shri Guruji explained this as, "As we are well aware, our nation is beset with ever so many perils. Attempts to undermine the integrity of our motherland and our society are on. Challenges to the time-honoured values of our spiritual heritage are mounting. Conflicts and confrontations are thick in the air. Under such conditions, what is the type of training that we have to impart to our children? Shall we teach them to seek safety in their homes and not to stir out? Should we harp upon things pertaining to their own happiness and future and ask them not to "dabble in other things?" What shall we teach?

There is a beautiful anecdote narrated in Mahabharata. There was a queen by name Vidula. She sent her son Sanjay to the war-field but the fellow became nervous and terror-stricken. He turned his back to the enemies and galloped to his capital. When Vidula saw her son in that crestfallen state she closed the entrance to the fort and severely chastised him. That conversation between the mother and the son has become famous as Vidula-Sanjay-Samvad, wherein Vidula instructs her son as to how a brave warrior should conduct himself on the battle-field. She then orders him to go back to war and return as a victorious hero. As

the story goes, Sanjay sallied forth into the battle-field, displayed exemplary valour and came back to be received by his mother with honour.

The words of Kunti when the five Pandavas came to seek her blessings before proceeding to fight-battle are remarkable for their heroic tone. She says:

यदर्थं क्षत्रिया सूते तस्य कालोऽयमागतः ।
नहि वैरं समासाद्य सीदन्ति पुरुषर्षभाः ॥

‘The moment has arrived for which Kshatriya mothers give birth to sons. Lion-hearted men are not cowed down in the face of enemies.’

There is one more couplet in Mahabharata which says: May no woman give birth to one who would mutely suffer insults, who is devoid of vigour and manly prowess and one who would bring joy to the enemies.” (BOT –p488-490)

ii) As Matrushakti of society

Of course, Shri Guruji did not limit the role of a woman only to her home but extended it to the service of the society and the nation through her rightly moulded progeny. The Indian ethos has been to consider the whole world as a family – ओम् नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय A woman is expected to shower her motherly affection not only on her own family within the four walls but also on the society around. Shri Guruji expected them to take care of the needy in the society. He said, “There is a special burden upon our mothers of serving our needy sisters in society. True, a majority of our mothers will not be in a position to go to far-off places to carry on social work among the distressed and the destitute. However, this does not mean that they should sit back in their homes all the while. They could establish useful contacts among the womenfolk in their own neighbourhood and carry out programmes, which would inculcate our cherished ideas among them and their children. The spirit of mutual help and service would also have to be made popular through our day-to-day social intercourse. Our womenfolk should not be allowed to develop inferiority complex or a feeling of helplessness. They should be taught that they are the living emblems of Parashakti.

There are quite a few of our educated mothers who have spare time and energy, which is often wasted in gossip of fashionable clubs. Here is one useful hint for them. There will be many small boys and girls in their neighbourhood who do not go to schools. They can make such children gather either in their own house or in some other convenient place and engage them in games, stories, songs, etc.

We see scattered all around us a number of our sisters who are either engaged in physical labour or are totally helpless and handicapped. When we see such a sight our hearts should melt and well up with deep compassion and motherly affection. We have to chalk out suitable projects, which would give them some useful employment and enable them to earn a livelihood. It is our sacred duty to see that none of our sisters and mothers will be left on the streets uncared for.

Literacy campaign among women is one more important programme, which our educated mothers alone can successfully tackle. But here also, inculcating noble samskars in them should be given the priority; teaching of alphabets should come second. In order to do this, instill in them a spirit of pure devotion to our motherland, faith in our Dharma and pride in our history. Show them the map of our sacred motherland, the holy streams and mountains, the Tirthas and temples stretching right from the Himalayas to the Kanyakumari. Introduce them to the rich variety of our national life in language, literature, art and social traditions. Thus make them become intimate with the true spirit of our national being.” (BOT – p 491 –493)

iii) Matrushakti to organize society

In the service of motherland Shri Guruji saw and revered all women as mothers. He viewed women as manifestation of Shakti and capable of solving their own problems. There was no male ego of meddling in their affairs or preaching them as if only he understood what is good for them. In the life of Swami Vivekananda also once when he was asked about the problems of the women, he said, “Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world.”

As an instrument in nation-building Shri Guruji did not differentiate between men and women. He did not expect women to limit their role only to their family. He was also confident like Swami Vivekananda that not only women can solve their own problems but they can also contribute in solving the problems of the society. Only a person who has no feeling of discrimination in mind, no 'lingbheda' and has complete confidence about them could say it.

Thus, Shri Guruji envisaged the role of women in nation building as

- i. A mother who can mould the children as heroes, cultivate in them devotion to God and love for country, and an inclination to serve the society.
- ii. Mother in the house should not limit her role to her home only but in her individual capacity should care for the less fortunate women and the children in the vicinity.
- iii. Women can and should also work in an organized way. Organized work alone can increase the pace of work in the society. He did not interfere or offer advices. Even when asked for advices he only shared his views without any insistence that he should be listened to.

Some of his letters in that respect are worth mentioning. When one Rajlakshmidēvi as an individual asked his advice he wrote on 18-11-50, *"As for the advice, which you wish me to give you, I need say a little. All of us have to strive to lead an ideal life as an individual and as a part of our people. As individual, spotless character is our most valuable ornament – I should rather say it is the one thing to imbibe and attain. As one of the people, the spirit of service, selfless service is essential. This is what great men have said and I have only repeated their words as it were. (Page 159 – Patraroop Guruji – Hindi)*

When Kala and Sheela from Hyderabad (Sindh) who had started work in an organized way, sought his guidance he wrote in his reply to them in a letter dated 22.11.43, *"I received a letter from Mr. Rajpal Puri informing me of the establishment of the branch of the "Rashtra Sewika Samiti" at Hyderabad. I got your letter giving me almost complete details regarding the same. It gave me great pleasure to note that you have not allowed the thought to melt into thin air but have taken pains to realize it in actual work. I do not know if the elderly ladies, who also attended our discourse, evince the same interest. It is really difficult to bring people to the correct way of thought & deed. But my reliance is more on the young generation, which I am sure will understand, appreciate and take up the work with devotion and sincerity and accomplish the end. I congratulate you upon your success. But let us not be in a hurry about expanding the work and adding to the numbers. Let a small band of devoted young workers, such as you are, be the first concern and when this is prepared and we are confident of holding together in the right spirit larger numbers let us expand – intensity & expanse going hand in hand. I am forwarding your letter to your head office at Wardha. You may write directly to the Chief Worker Mrs. Laxmi Bai Kelkar, Main Road, Wardha. Meanwhile accept my best wishes. (Akshar Pratima I – p 18 translated from Hindi)*

We can see from this letter the concern that Shri Guruji had as a nationalist for the work started by these two sisters who were trying to work in an organized way in a difficult region and in difficult times. At the same time he also wrote them that 'your headquarters is at Wardha'. One can very clearly see his foresight and confidence about women of India. Just to put in the perspective of time frame, Shri Guruji was writing this letter when the women of United States of America had no voting rights.

His letter to Smt. Lakshmibai Kelkar, the founder Sanchalika of Rashtra Sevika Samiti-an organization for women – also shows his deep respect to women who were nation-builders. *"Received your letter and Rakhi sent on the Rakshabandhan day. For Sangh Swayamsevaks to get Rakhi from you is like getting the victorious blessings of the Matrushakti. For that I am very thankful and express my gratitude with my Namaskar to you."* (Akshar Pratima I – p 56 translated from Hindi)

In a reply dated 4.9.66 to Sindhutai Phatak an adhikari of Rashtra Sevika Samiti, he wrote, "Felt very nice to receive Rakhi from you on Rakshabandhan day. Shradheya Maushi also sent letter along with Rakhi from Wardha."

Work is difficult. The experiments are going on regarding its nature. It would be fruitful to follow that method which gives success. But it is true that now the work is in experimental stage.

Those who have taken modern education or are taking such education can understand the Nation, organization etc. But this education directs and motivates one's life away from one's Dharma and culture and generates curious ideas about entertainment and social work. Therefore it becomes difficult to plant the seeds of our work in their mind. Those who are away from modern education do not comprehend our work. Their all strength and intelligence are exhausted only in somehow taking care of the family. Taking all this into account the work would have to be evolved. Unless the men and children in the family understand the value of this work and give full-hearted support, no one can continue to work. Taking all this into consideration the way has to be found out.

You can think about it. While working through trial and tribulations it is essential that you and your colleagues give a deep thought to this. I do not think I am of any use in it. (Patrarup Guruji p184 translated from Marathi) In this letter Shri Guruji makes it clear that for organizing women a purposeful and fruitful method would have to be found out. He also understood the problems the women might be facing in working for the organization, as she has to take care of the family, secure full-hearted support of family members and then work in the society. Women cannot apply the western methods of solving the problems like coming out of the family. In India our worldview is organic. As we are organic parts of the society, we cannot break the family and come out for work. Thus the Indian women would have to find out their own methods for solving the problems of women as well as that of organizing them for nation building. This is the challenge of the time Shri Guruji was confident that women would take it up successfully and would evolve gradually the effective methods with Indian perspective. In the later years when Shri Eknathji Ranade ventured on a very difficult experiment in those days, to start Vivekananda Kendra – an organization where there would be a cadre consisting of men and women, Shri Guruji gave his blessings for that too.

When a Karyakarta whether man or woman became despondent while working in the society due to the lack of proper response, his encouragement to him was similar. There was no discrimination in advice to a Swayamsevak or to any woman-Karyakarta.

In one of his letters to Mukta Sardesai he wrote, *“All Karyakartas have to go through such experiences which you are getting after starting work in Pandharpur. The society is indifferent, skeptic and without initiative, therefore it is essential to exert to put life in it. It is not useful to get depressed or irritated by seeing the condition of the society, or even at times, to disrespect or dislike it. Never entertain such emotions and thoughts even for a moment. The proper way is to keep working for it selflessly with boundless affection, respect and genuine love. By God's grace we would be successful. We should not care even if it takes more time than expected. Such robust mental make up is expected of Karyakarta. This is an experience of all.”* (Patrarup Guruji p177 translated from Marathi)



Chapter III

‘Mother’ in the life of Shri Guruji

The life of Shri Guruji so to say moved in three dimensions of Motherhood; the **mother** who gave birth, the motherland that nurtured his mind and soul and the **Mother of the Universe** the very source of our being. In the initial stages the pull of all three mothers is seen in his life. At one stage in search of the Mother of the Universe, he even ignored his own mother and the call of the motherland. On 4 Oct 1969, at Pune, while speaking at a function of release of a book “Matrupoojan”, he gives a very graphic description of how he had gone away to Sargachi Ashram without even informing his mother. But as his contemplation deepened, insight perfected, then by the grace of the two great personalities: Swami Akhandananda, President of Ramakrishna Mission and Dr.Hedgewar the founder of Rashtrya Swayamsevak Sangh he could see the harmonious blending of all the three mothers in Motherland. The pull of both the mothers; the mother who gave birth and the Mother of the universe got balanced in the service of the Motherland. He secured the blessings of the other two manifestations of Mother in the service of the Motherland.

He secured the support of his mother in this task. He was the only surviving son of his mother among the nine children. We can imagine how much she must have been attached to him and having expectations from him! Only after he had come back from Sargachi he realized what a shock it had been for his mother that her only surviving son had disappeared. Later he always saw to it that he would not go anywhere without her permission. But he also saw to it that his mother became his great supporter in the service of the motherland and so gave him permission whenever and wherever he had to go.

Once Shri Guruji had to go on his planned tour. But when he went home he found that his mother was sick. The doctor accompanying Shri Guruji told that it was an attack of paralysis. At such time, he, leaving his ailing mother had to go on tour. The incident is worth knowing in his own words, which he narrated in the same function mentioned above. “I asked mother, ‘shall I go? She said ‘no’. So I told ‘Alright’. And I thought, to cancel the planned programmes, telegrams would have to be sent to all the places. But, then I thought, I should take decision after some time. Around 11 – 11.30, I again asked mother. And she said ‘Go’. It is to be pondered over how she must have felt at that time. Would she have thought, that, her only son need not be with her even in such serious illness? No, it is not like that. The point is that she did not want in any way a break in the work that I had undertaken. So she gave me permission. She also told “The life and death of a person is not dependent on anyone staying or not staying near that person.” Listening to this no one should think that she was a great yogini etc. Yes, surely she was a devotee. And because of that she had great courage in the heart. I shared these reminiscences not because I am great Matrubhakta. But, yes, my mother was a real mother. She did not allow even her sickness to become an obstacle in my duty.” (Shri Guruji Samagra Darshan (H)Vol 5 p 101)

The commitment of Shri Guruji to Motherland was so great and motivating that his own mother became his great supporter. She not only got reconciled to the fact that her son had dedicated himself to the service of the motherland and so was not going to marry; she even supported his cause of service to motherland. Shri Guruji narrated one more incident in that very lecture. “Once a mother of a Swayamsevak went to my mother with a complaint that her second son was refusing to get married. My mother listened to all her woes calmly and then pacifying her she told, “Your second son is not getting married, but the first one is already married. See, my only son is not getting married and yet I am not unhappy. Why should you get upset?” I thought, “Good! One more Pracharak for service of the motherland!” Like this my mother helped me in the Sangha-Karya.... My mother was a real Mother. She had all those characteristics what we call as duties of mother or qualities of motherhood. But I

cannot be called a devoted son of my mother. I am not worthy of it. But yes, if as a son of such great mother if you have called me, then it is befitting.” (Shri Guruji Samagra Darshan (H)Vol 5 p 102)

Each one has to face the loss of one’s mother. While narrating about the demise of his mother Shri Guruji further told, “The Janmadatri mother nurtures the child’s body before birth by her own blood, after the birth she nurtures it with her own milk and later for the whole of her life by her love. But as per the rule of nature, one time or other a person has to suffer the pain of loss of one’s mother. I too had to face that situation. Then as per my nature I informed through letters about this to some persons for whom I have a very deep sense of respect and whom I remembered in such moments also. One among such persons was revered Srimat Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamkoti Peetham. He replied to me by the return post. He had written a letter of condolence in the form of two Shlokas. The meaning of the two Shlokas was, “Your mother is no more in the human form of flesh and blood, but that Bharatmata who is the mother of innumerable sons like you, the one who is mother not only today but since thousands of years of innumerable sons and would also continue to be mother of such sons even in future is ever present as the nurturing sacred mother full of chaitanya. You who are dedicated to the service of such motherland can never have separation from her. Do not grieve. There is no reason for grief.” (Shri Guruji Samagra Darshan (H)Vol 5 p 102-103)

While writing a letter of condolence to Shri Sadashivarao Barve minister of Maharashtra when he lost his mother, Shri Guruji wrote, “...There is no pain like loss of mother. Where is the time for one to grieve who has taken the vow of service to nation and worship of motherland? A mother who gave birth is lost but she is still there showering her abundant affection and accepting contentedly our little bit of service, she is ever ready to bless us always in the form of our dear motherland. This awareness would enable us to calm down our grieving heart and urge us to be engaged in performing our duty. By your good fortune you are the recipient of the strengthening affection of Motherland so my inadequate words are too superfluous to console you.” (Patraroop Shri Guruji (M) p139)

He explained how this attitude of seeing and perceiving Mother in all that which nurtures, denotes a more and more evolved state of living beings. He said, “Now, how did this concept of ‘mother’ blossom from out of ‘stones and clay’? We know that as living species evolve and progress, they begin to invoke the sentiments of mother in those things animate or inanimate, which feed and nourish them. Take a frog or a snake for example. They have no idea of mother at all. They are also not aware as to what happens to their offsprings. Neither the offspring nor the mother looks upon each other in that relationship. Gradually, as life evolves, we come to mammals where the mother feeds her young ones in their childhood. Birds take care of their eggs and the small ones until they become strong enough to fly about. When the usefulness of the mother is no more felt, the offsprings forget their mother and thereafter they are entire strangers to one another. Man is supposed to be at the top in the scale of evolution. If he is cultured, his love and adoration for his mother continues even after she ceases to be physically useful to him. In fact, he will serve and revere her all the more, if she becomes very old, blind and bodily out of use.

As human life evolves, the concept of mother also takes a wider and more sublime form. When man looks around with his discerning intellect, he sees so many other things to which he owes a debt of gratitude. He begins to look upon them also as mother. He sees the rivers, which give him food and water. He calls them mother. Once he outgrows the use of his mother’s milk, he sees the cow, which feeds him with her milk throughout his life. He calls her mother-cow. And then he reaches the state of understanding that it the mother soil which nourishes him, protects him and takes him in her bosom after he breathes his last. He becomes conscious that she is his great mother. Thus to look upon one’s land of birth as mother is a sign of a high state of human evolution. The Vedas declare:

माता भूमिः पुत्रोऽहम् पृथिव्याः

‘The Earth is my mother, I am her child.’

Dynamic Devotion to Motherland

Therefore it is up to us to keep aglow that highly evolved concept of divine motherhood towards our land. Now, how are we to express our devotion to her? There are two ways. The one is the formal method of worshipping with flowers, lights, chanting of hymns etc. Our people have been doing this even today in a spirit of religious devotion. They go round the country on pilgrimage, follow the religious injunctions, recite hymns, worship and offer flowers and take bath in the various holy rivers. They do all this with the sole purpose of acquiring personal religious merit. This is in a way the passive aspect of devotion.

The dynamic aspect of devotion is to manifest in practical life a spirit of readiness to sacrifice our all for the protection of the freedom and honour of every speck of this motherland. It is this active manifestation that counts in this hard matter-of-fact world. A heart fired with such devotion can never tolerate the slightest affront to the object of its devotion, i.e., the motherland. It takes on a committed form and rests not till the aggressive elements responsible for the insult no more remain in a position to commit the sacrilege a second time. A divine discontent to undo all the past insults and humiliations burns in such a heart.

Without this dynamic, conquering spirit, even devotion to a divine cause will be of little avail. In this hard world, which is an arena for trial of strength with brute force, mere goodness or noble virtues, i.e., the passive aspect of sattva, will not hold the field even for a single moment. That is why we find that in spite of all the piety, goodness and devotion to God all through the past thousand years, we were trampled under the feet by foreign aggressors who, though total strangers to goodness and virtue, had a passion for heroic action and organized effort, i.e., full of rajas. Our history also bears witness to the fact that whenever our people became charged with the conquering spirit – charged with the dynamic aspect of sattva – then all those demonic empires of the enemy were reduced to shambles.

That is also the lesson of our puranas which depict the stories of the struggle between devas (gods) and rakshasas (demons). We often see devas, in spite of their divinity, being beaten down by the organized and aggressive rakshasas. And it was only when devas roused themselves to heroic action that they could triumph over the rakshasas. It is activity, dynamism and heroism that rule the world. Indeed, “veerabhogya vasundhara” (This Earth is for the valiant) sums up the philosophy of a successful life in this world.”(BOT –p120-122)

Thus for him the devotion to Jagatjanani was worship of motherland. The worship of motherland was not to be with just flowers but with heroic deeds coupled with sterling character. His whole life thus became a great offering to develop an organization of men of sterling character who undertook heroic efforts to rebuild the nation in various fields.

See Mother in all

When he was moulding Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh – a cadre based organization of men, who dedicated their life for nation, it would have been natural if woman had been viewed as an obstacle, as temptress. No one would have blamed him if he had advised the Pracharak not to look at women or to consider them as evils. But when one realizes ‘Mother’ he sees only Her in all. So to the young Pracharak he advised to do the Sadhana of seeing Mother everywhere. He wrote, “Everyone cannot be Swami Vivekananda or Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Many drawbacks are there in any ordinary person. If we strive to pray regularly to Parameshwar in a form dear to us then our life gets purified gradually. Even if we do not see the desired result immediately, even then we should keep praying everyday regularly in the morning and before going to bed. Whenever it is felt that the unwanted thoughts are tainting the mind, remember God and pray for removal of those thoughts.

Moreover, our Sangh-Karya itself is a pure Sadhana. To keep brotherly attitude about all is natural in this Sangh-Karya. When brotherly feeling is widened then it is experienced that the mothers and sisters in the homes of all become our mothers and sisters too. This is the easiest way. But with commitment, and feeling from the heart the mind should be engaged in the Sangh-Karya.” (Patrarup Guruji p 83 translated from Marathi)

Though, in principle, it is true that Mother is manifest in all women, still at behavioral level he always took care that the limits were not crossed. In one of his letters he wrote to a lady

working in the field of child education, "Read your letter. Tried to think over it. I do not understand why you think that I am angry. Any work can sustain only when it stands on its own strength. If we plan things on the expectations that some others will come to our help the effort will come to naught. With this thought and after observing that, the Swayamsevaks had crossed the legitimate limits in helping you, I had said that you should carry on your work, without the assistance of the Swayamsevak. And I had also said that instructions would be given that no Swayamsevak should participate in your activities. It will be advisable to understand the motive behind it." (Patra Roop Guruji p.188)

Shri Guruji was a source of inspiration to all men and women engaged in the service of motherland. Many householder Swayamsevak also gave their time for Sangh-Karya. Naturally, family members of some Swayamsevaks did not like it, as they did not understand the importance of it. Shri Guruji must have had to face the wrath of many mothers and wives of such Swayamsevaks. When a wife of one swayamsevak wrote a letter giving an ultimatum, this is how Shri Guruji replied, "Mataji, received your letter of blessings. After discussing with your husband you have informed me about his thoughts. But no mediator is required between him and me. He can directly write a letter to me or meet me to tell unhesitatingly what is in his mind. There is no such power with Sangh that it can force someone to work against his mind.

You have written that husband and wife are complimentary to each other. It is totally true. May be you have not thought over this fact deeply. Otherwise with respect to your husband you would not be upset and given the ultimatum in your letter that either you would be there or the Sangh Karya.

Therefore, you please tell your husband that out of the two alternatives you have kept before him, he can choose either and inform me accordingly. In my view, it is wrong to say that these two are the exclusive alternatives. We desire to make these two things complimentary in life. But this desire remains unfulfilled in certain cases due to the typical nature of some persons. The person caught in this dilemma has to think from all sides and take the decision.

Ahuti of all in the Rashtra Yagna

We see very few references to women in his writings. It is not because he considered them inferior or less important or insignificant but because the life mission of Shri Guruji was to organize Hindu Society. For that he was building a cadre-based organization of men. Naturally his lectures, his letters were all for this purpose. His was really 'one life-one mission'. His whole life was dedicated for the service of the motherland; there were neither diversions nor pretensions of high spiritual claims in his life.

For example in a letter-dated 23.11.49 to Vatsala Modak he wrote, "What is Mukti and what are its characteristics etc I do not know anything apart from some available written words. I am an ordinary person in the practical life and in that I experience that man moulds his character by staying in Sangh-Karya and to a large extent he rises above narrow mindedness. That is adequate for me. ...It is true that Sangh is working only for the Hindus. The Sangh's work is only to awaken the sense of their culture in their hearts, and make their life higher, nobler and stronger. At least today it is not on the agenda of Sangh to work for the whole humanity." (Patrarup Guruji p163 translated from Marathi)

Tirelessly he kept working, touring, writing and building an organization. There was no rest or respite. Once he wrote to one Indu at Madras on 19.2.51, " ...As long as this great motherland of ours, this dear Bharatmata-does not come up with all her glory and as long as all the people in the world do not adore her till then not even a mention of rest." (Patrarup Guruji p166 Translated from Marathi)

His concern was only motherland and her regeneration. But one more subtle reason is also there for not finding many references to the problems of women in his writings. He never differentiated between men and women. Generally only a gender-conscious person would specifically talk of the gender problems. As once said by Swami Vivekananda, "Do you remember how Yajnavalkya was questioned at the Court of King Janaka? His principal

examiner was Vachaknavi, the Brahmavadine. 'Like two shining arrows in the hand of the skilled archer,' she says, 'are my questions.' Her sex is not even commented upon!"

Shri Guruji never viewed women as problem nor did he compartmentalize the problems of the society into the problems of the women, men etc. According to him the problem was only due to the degradation of the character of the man and the lack of organization of the Hindus. When we read him, we do not feel anywhere that for women he had a lesser place in his mind or that he considered them of less importance in the task of nation building.

Shri Aurbindo has said, "Not only is nature directing the sentient and the insentient towards perfection, she is also inducing them to self-fulfillment through self-dedication. A thing that has become perfect does not go to waste; nor does it rest isolated. It presents itself in its completeness to be made use of by other entities that are wending their way towards fulfillment. Things and beings are all inter-related, inter-dependent and inter-acting. The flowers and the fruits may be cited as examples of this august cosmic plan. ...The perfection seeker, when he entertains an individualistic outlook, becomes small. Parts perish, while the whole persists. The glory of the parts lies in its giving itself over to the whole for self-fulfillment. The leaves fulfill themselves by contributing to the growth of the tree. Good citizens are they that have dedicated themselves for the good and the continuity of the community." Whether men or women, Shri Guruji wanted them to offer themselves in the service of Bharatmata as he himself – the only son of his parents- had done.

Shri Guruji said, "I am sure if our mothers make a resolve to uplift the society, then there is no power, either in this world or the other, which can defeat them. The ideal of Savitri, before whom even the Lord of Death accepted defeat, is before them. May they all invoke within themselves such single-minded devotion to the ideal, such purity of character and such peerless heroism!

Once we do this, I am sure, the long night will pass and a new dawn will spread its golden hue over the horizon of not only Bharat but over the entire world with the renewed effulgence of our Dharma." (BOT – p493)

Swami Vivekananda too observed "Why, to the women of this country, I would say exactly what I say to the men. Believe in India and in our Indian faith. Be strong and hopeful and unashamed, and remember that with something to take, Hindus have immeasurably more to give than any other people in the world." (Rousing Call to Hindu Nation p 100)

In the tradition of all the great Rishis of this land, the life and message of Shri Guruji – a great Tapasvi – is also a beckoning call for all of us to dedicate our time, our life for the service of our great motherland.



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