

Nationalism: An integral part of our tradition

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Abstract

The idea of Nationalism is not a new one but it had its deep roots a new Indian culture. It really marks the imprint of Hinduism over it and we cannot ignore this fact. Today it is a real challenge before us to maintain Nationalism in the hearts of we people but we can safely say that this challenge can be met out only after getting ray of hope from one of the most ancient religions i.e. Hinduism.

Keywords: Nationalism, Hinduism, tradition

1. Introduction

Indian Nationalism' is not regarded as a synonym of 'Hindu Nationalism, as some Hindu nationalists emphasized. Indeed, these two conceptions are different so that in Hindu nationalism apart from Hindu race as a common factor, Hinduism is seen as a part of 'Hinduness.' While the followers of other religions have also had a role in Indian nationalism, and also often Hindu Nationalism has had communal position. So, Hindu nationalism is different from Indian nationalism. However, apart from Hindu nationalism, Hinduism has also played an important role in Indian nationalism. As Sarkar mentions 'the enormous overlap in personnel, assumptions, and symbols between mainstream Indian nationalism and Hindu communalism is too obvious to need much elaboration. Once can think of the 'Bande Mataram' ("Hail to Thee, Mother") hymn cum-slogan, central to much anti-British patriotism and at the same time a Hindu rallying cry, at least in Bengal, during confrontations with Muslims.' Hindu nationalism has acted as an ideology against British that rejected non-violence. Some figures of Hinduism looked at British colonialism as posing a threat to Hindu civilization.

Unlike the notion of Nationalism as it appeared in Europe as a secular doctrine, in South Asia especially India religion has had imported role in nationalism so that this area evidenced the growth of religious nationalist movements.

Many of the leading political parties and social movements mobilize people around religious issues.

The 19th century was the time of emergence of first stages of Indian nationalism and beginning of mutual interaction between politics and religion, As a first mark of this we can mention the slogans of the Great Revolt in 1857 such as "Din, Din (Religion, Religion), "Khun, Khun" (Blood Blood), "Maro Feringhi Ko" (Kill the Europeans), Swadharm (Religion), "Swadesh" (My country), "Swarajya" (Freedom), "Har, Har, Mahadev" (Victory be to Lord Mahadev). In the next historical states, in the most political activities, especially use of religion in line of nationalism, this mode is seen. In the fact that every leading personality, from the first messenger of revolutionary nationalism B.G. Tilak to many political leaders including Mahatma Gandhi, feel it necessary

to write new commentary on the ancient and religious text in terms of the political and social life of modern India.

The Hindu leaders nurtured Nationalist movement by increasingly the use of more exciting emotional appeal through the works in the various fields of literature, music, drama, and other arts. While the evocative appeal of such cultural products tremendously aided the nationalist cause, they also raised some delicate religious issues. They used the popularity of Hindu devotional poets. For example, Brahma reformers in Bengal used the public forums provided by religious fairs and festivals to popularize patriotic themes and songs in large-scale gatherings of people, Despite their religious origin or regional source, the spirit and content of some of these songs were designed for wider appeal and transcended regional barriers The significant role of a song like 'Bande Mataram' with religious bias, in national mobilization across regions was hard to dispute. Besides, two dramatic songs were written in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore that eventually, one became the national anthem of India and the other, of Bangladesh. The references to historical events or religious symbols in literary works in regional languages often alienated members of particular religious communities. For instance, 'some historical novels in 19th century Bengal written by nationally prominent authors of Hindu origin were criticized for their bias against Muslim characters or episodes of history.'

Thus we can summaries that the idea of Nationalism is not a new one but it had its deep roots a new Indian culture. It really marks the imprint of Hinduism over it and we cannot ignore this fact. Today it is a real challenge before us to maintain Nationalism in the hearts of we people but we can safely say that this challenge can be met out only after getting ray of hope from one of the most ancient religions i.e. Hinduism.

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