

The Meaning of Hindu Patriotism

Mudrarakshas

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In order to gobble up the princely state of Oudh the East India Company made an alliance with the Nawab, on the pretext of establishing peace in the region. For the Nawab it was no alliance, it was an admission of slavery, and he knew it.

To prepare that “treaty” the English appointed Raja Pattanimal, an ancestor of Bharatendu Harishchandra. The Nawab was worried about just how enslaved he was going to become because of that document, which was being written in Persian, so he sent one of his close associates to Raja Pattanimal. That close associate was a maulvi who had been Raja Pattanimal’s Persian teacher.

A relative of Bharatendu Harishchandra, Babu Radhakrishna Das, describes the conversation between the Maulvi and Raja Pattanimal in these words. “Raja Saheb welcomed Maulvi Saheb with great respect and asked for his command. Maulvi Saheb placed a hundred thousand rupees worth of gold coins in front of Raja Saheb and said, ‘Please have some compassion for the Nawab. Hindus and Muslims are one. Who are these foreigners to us? While writing up that document, give some thought for the Nawab Saheb’s welfare. Or if that’s impossible, refuse to be a part of it.’ With much respect Raja Saheb replied, ‘You are my Ustad, but you are asking me to go against the sacred duty of a servant, against sevak dharm. There is no difference between Indians and foreigners, but for me, serving one foreigner is worth more than helping millions of Indians.’”

During the 1857 War for Independence some so-called Hindu traders helped the English in Delhi. The same occurred in Lucknow and Jhansi.

Later, from the former Mughal treasury in Agra Fort the English gave Raja Pattanimal an award. It was in the tens of millions of rupees.

Compare that to what happened to Cittu Pande, Mangal Pande, Raja Beni Madhav Singh, Nana Saheb Peshava and the Rani of Jhansi. They all were Hindus, too, and they sacrificed their lives for their country, and instead of treasure from Agra, they got the hangman's noose.

While Raja Pattanimal, for his own gain, felt that one Englishman was better than millions of Indians, Rana Beni Madhav felt that one Indian was worth more than millions of English. Obviously, one cannot maintain one is a patriot simply by calling oneself a Hindu. Only that person is a patriot who loves India, her people, her history and the pledge that that history demands of him.

To do that, however, one must understand India's people, her history and that history's demands. First, consider the first inhabitants of India, that is, the scheduled tribes, and their society. Their cultures, rituals and beliefs are quite different from Hindu society and its varnashram dharm, just as different, in fact, as are the beliefs and attitudes of those Hindus who oppose the varnashram dharm. Those advocating one common law for the entire country should realize that millions of tribals have their own traditional laws that cannot be changed.

Those same people go even further by proclaiming that not only should there be one common law for the entire country, but the Hindu community, too, should have a religious unity based on one and only one culture. That is, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and its allies are now claiming that all Hindus should become Ramanandis. Those who are Shaiva, Shakta, Vedika, Radhasoami, Lokayat, Devi Pujav, Bhairav Tantrik, Advait, Dvaitadvait, Shuddhadvait, Gorakhpanti, and those who are the followers of hundreds of other philosophical and devotional sects should all change their religion and become Ramanandis.

It is also worth keeping in mind that not all Vaishnavas are Ramanandis, and while Sant Kabir was a Ramanandi, he was neither a Vaishnava nor even a believer in saguna Brahman, Brahman that has certain distinct and knowable characteristics. He considered temples moral shams, but he was still a Ramanandi.

Sant Tulsidas was a Ramanandi, but all the Ramanandis of Ayodhya not only shunned him socially and economically, they also expelled him from Ayodhya. That incident raises this question. Was the real Hindu and the real Ramanandi Tulsidas or those who kicked him out of Ayodhya? Furthermore, while the Ghaznavid is believed to have destroyed a temple, Ramanandis tried to murder Tulsidas, and they stole the original

Rāmcāritmānas and burned it. Can it be said that the destruction of the foundation of our society is less a destructive act than the destruction of a temple?

And Adi Shankaracharya, who gave to the world its most profound philosophical system, is he, too, not a Hindu? Are only those people Hindu who are like those who maintained it was religiously forbidden for anyone to touch the bier on which Adi Shankaracharya's dead mother lay, and who forbade anyone to perform her final rites? So Adi Shankaracharya himself prepared the funeral pyre. Unable alone to lift his mother's body, he had to cut her into pieces in order to place her on the pyre.

Who were the Hindus and patriots, Adi Shankar and Tulsidas or those who went to great lengths to make their lives difficult?

For the sake of his own financial gain the trader Pattanimal considered one foreigner more important than millions of his own countrymen, and in 1857, considering the foreigner more important than Rani Lakshmibai, Nana Saheb, Mangal Pande and Bahadur Shah, he committed an outrageous barbarism even against Tulsidas and Adi Shankaracharya. Those lying in wait for Adi Shankar, Tulsi and Mangal Pande chant long, long rosaries of Hindutva, and in the name of religious devotion they commit horrific atrocities. Those same hypocrites, for their own personal gain, even go so far as to melt down and sell images of the gods and goddesses. Not just the Ghaznavids, even large numbers of such Hindu hypocrites can be found who with their own hands melted down and sold golden images that had been given as charity.

In works such as *Samskār Prakāsh*, *Nirṇaya Sindhu*, and *Samśār Kaustubh* a gang of such hypocrites formulated the *kubh* and *ashvatth* forms of marriage, in which it is necessary to give a golden image of a deity to the presiding brahman, and it was that brahman's right to smash it up, melt it down and sell it, which means that gold is gold, whether in the form of a deity or not, nor did the brahman hesitate to melt it down. Such hypocrites were enthusiastic not only about destroying images but about destroying books of philosophy, religion and literature, which are more valuable than diamonds.

It's amazing that nowadays those who ignore all the philosophical and sectarian diversity in India and want to make India's entire society Ramanandi, and a superficial Ramanandi society at that, those hypocrites themselves are completely illiterate about Hindu society. They aren't even aware that by greeting their associates with *jai shriram*, they are involving

themselves in a sinful activity.

In Hinduism we summon a god along with his consort, for example, Umapati, Radhekrishna, Sitaram, etc. Nowadays, the hypocrites of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad call out *shriram*. That is, they are committing the sin of referring to Ram as the husband of Lakshmi. Shri, after all, is Lakshmi. By ignorantly calling to Ram as the husband of Lakshmi rather than as the husband of Sita, I don't know which hell those so-called religious leaders are sending their followers to.

Sometimes the extent of their ignorance and the way they express their sin is hilarious. In his zeal one such hypocrite first challenges someone with *jay shriram*, and then he proceeds to curse him with words referring to his mother and sisters. Thus, without realizing it, he makes the phrase *jay shriram* just another link in his chain of curses. His leaders never taught him that by doing that he was cursing Ram first and his opponent later. In fact, though, it's not the poor man's fault at all because his leaders and the sadhviyans themselves do the same thing!

Just recently a farce was put on in Allahabad called Dharm Samsad. Only one good thing came out of it. The sadhus there (and to be a sadhu all you have to do is dress like one) sat together with dalits and with others considered untouchable and ate khicheri. After that, however, (not before) the majority of the sadhus voiced the opinion that by eating khicheri with "untouchables" they had all committed a grave sin.

Let's not forget, too, the shastric rules by which such gatherings are to be held. In *Manusmriti*, Baudhayan's *Dharmasutra* and Parashar's *Smriti* long, clear passages describe the procedures to be followed for a religious council.

Except for three, the religious hypocrites who gathered in Allahabad were the kind of brahmans about whom even Manu, whose ideas they themselves support, would declare to be *avrati*, of insufficient vows, and ignorant of the Vedas, brahmans who make a living simply by means of their caste, not their learning. Manu goes on to say that any gathering, even of thousands of such brahmans, cannot be called a religious council. Manu states further that any such brahman who makes a proclamation about dharm brings upon himself sins a hundredfold. How will the sadhus of that so-called Dharm Samsad, having proclaimed themselves to be avrati after eating khicheri, be able to endure all the sins that Manu himself says they have brought upon themselves?

Another interesting point is this. Baudhayan, Vashishth, Yajnavalkya

and others maintain that only brahmans who know the Vedas are allowed to sit in such a council, and sannyasis are expressly forbidden. The hypocrites of Allahabad broke both of those conditions!

Furthermore, just what kind of Hindu Dharm is being proselytized here? What sort of Hindutva is this that prohibits the reading and writing of anything that pertains to its own religion and is bent on making all Hindus obstinate Ramanandis? What sort of Hindu leaders are these who vow to put a saffron flag in every home and yet never say that what happened to Adi Shankar and Tulsidas was a mistake, and who won't say in every home that, unlike Islam and Christianity, Hinduism does not have one Book, one Ultimate Messenger, one God, one common church or mosque, and one Pilgrimage Place?

The various efforts being made today to change Hinduism into Christianity by the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad were tried two or three times in the past, but today, instead of being a country that stones Tulsidas, we “worship” him.