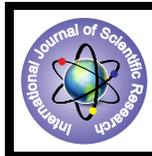


Cultural Thought of Shri M. S. Golwalkar



History

KEYWORDS :

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From the ancient time India has remained a nation of thinkers. The history bear witness that from time to time various thinkers have played an important role in awakening the nation. Shri Madhav Sadashivrao Golwalkar was an eminent 20th century nationalist thinker of India. He was instrumental in giving shape to many organizations and by his thoughts he had provided the ideological underpinning for those organizations to work for the cultural upliftment. He was the embodiment of Indian culture.

Shri M. S. Golwalkar was born on the 19th February, 1906 in a middle class family at Ramtek near Nagpur¹. He acquired B.sc degree from the Zoology Department in Hislop College at Nagpur while M.sc degree from the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in 1926, latter on he completed his law degree from Nagpur college. During his study in Banaras Hindu University (BHU), he came in the contact of RSS Work. Inspired by the ideology of RSS and his Founder Dr. Hegdewar , he joined the Sangh and in 1940 he became second Sar Sangh Sanchalak (head), of the RSS². He play important role in expanding the work of RSS in many part of the India. Under his guidance so many braches of RSS like Vishav Hindu Parishad(VHP), Bharatiya Kishan Sangh(BKS), , Bharatiya Majdoor Sangh(BMS), , Akhil Bharatiya Vidhayathi Parishad (ABVP) were established and expanded in many part of the country. All these organization got intellectual input from him³.

During his stay in Nagpur he had become spiritually inclined and he had taken up the study of Hindu scriptures, same thing continue at BHU, most of his time was spent in reading. He made most out of the huge collection of books in the BHU library. His reading was not confined to his area of study. He had deep and abiding interest in the Hindu scriptures and other spiritual texts⁴.

Shri Golwalkar had closely studied the literary and philosophical works of both India and the Western world. He had closely followed and observed the developments which took place in World. He was hard core critic of western model of development, In his opinion all the philosophies coming out of the West were concerned with the materialistic aspects of the human life's. According to him, the perspective of the West was not pro-life. It never thought of a world where not only the human beings but all living things got a safe and secure place on this earth. Materialism itself does not guarantee the full development of an individual⁵. Shri Golwalkar has said that the conception of the materialists about happiness is completely focused on the satisfaction of primal desires. Therefore, when they talk about improving the standards of living, they focus on collecting more and more things for material happiness The Hindu philosophy steps in here to offer a cogent solution. It says, the real source of happiness lies within oneself and not without. Even a little introspection will bear this out. Take the instance of a man who is absorbed in enjoyment of music. Just then if he receives a wire conveying the death of a near and dear one, he immediately loses all interest in the music and goes away. If really music had the inherent power to give happiness, then it should have made the man overcome his sorrow and made him continue to listen to music. But the very opposite was the effect. Music, which was a source of enjoyment till a moment before had now become a point of repulsion to him.

Shri Golwalkar always redefines the term "culture". He was against the western concept of culture. He believed that many of our problems are due to our trying to understand many of our words through their translation in English language, e.g. we

try to translate the word 'samskriti' into English. Some translate it as 'culture', some as 'civilization'. Civilization generally means to include various amenities like electricity, machines, means of communication, way of living etc. In short there is no place for religion in this understanding of the word "samskriti", simply because the customs are shaped according to the environment. But this is only a physical hypothesis. In the Indian context the meaning of the word 'samskriti' has much to do with the internal inspiration of the mind. What is derived out of this collective conscience is manifested as 'samskaras'. Life is channelized and flows in the stream formed by the 'samskaras'. That stream of life becomes the 'samskriti' of a society. 'Samskaras' are born out of the actions and reactions experienced in this worldly, mundane life. Culture cannot only be identified with attire, hairstyle and amenities of life. From the emotive standpoint, our culture has got certain special characteristics like the spirit of renouncement, to treat the life as a 'yajna', to look at the world as the expression of the Supreme Universal Being, power of endurance etc⁶.

While analyzing the Indian culture Shri Golwalkar has said that the first and the most fundamental aspect is the urge for realization of the Supreme Reality⁷ permeating the entire Universe whatever the name given to it. The description that He is nirankar (without form), nirguna (without attributes) and all that, leads us nowhere. Various ways of worship are also evolved. People go to temples and try to concentrate on the idols taking them to be the emblems of the Almighty. But all these does not satisfy us who are full of activity⁸. Our forefathers, therefore, said, "Our people are our God." Sri Ramkrishna Paramhansa, one of the greatest teachers of mankind said, "Serve Man." At the heart of our conception of nation are people. It has permeated our thinking. And it has given birth to several unique concepts. To serve humanity is to serve God. True devotion to God manifests in serving the humanity. When an individual inculcates these feelings in his heart then he will never talk about his rights, he will always be concerned about his duties.

Shri Golwalkar has drawn our attention to one more characteristic of our culture. One more our Himalayan peak of our culture which none else in the world has so far aspired to climb, is the spirit of, "सत वपिराः बहुधा वदन्ति" (truth is one, sages call it variously). There is no equivalent expression in English to convey this beautiful sentiment. The word 'tolerance' which is often used to express this idea is very meek, it is just another word for sufferance. It implies an element of ego which tolerates other viewpoints without any love or respect for them. But our training has been of respecting and even accepting other things and viewpoints as so many paths to reach the same truth. When we speak of our sublime cultural values, persons steeped in the modern western civilization think that it is something mysterious, something other-worldly. That only shows the present depths of our mental slavery which has deprived us of even the capacity to grasp those principles which were once the glory of our national life⁹.

He also criticizes today's misconception of culture. He said it is extreme that we witness today is to identify singing and dancing, cinemas and dramas with culture. Culture has verily become another name for cheap entertainment. This has gone to such a ludicrous and humiliating extent, that notorious film stars wallowing in depths of moral depravity are included in our cultural delegations to foreign countries! Such persons going about as the cultural representatives of a land that has produced Rama and Sita, and has sent as its cultural ambassadors,

great seers and philosophers in the past is a lurid reflection on our present degradation¹⁰. The work of rejuvenating this ancient and life giving features of our culture has assumed a new urgency and paramourty not only in our present national context but in the international context as well. Our cultural vision which furnishes the true basis for love and harmony between man and man and embodies a complete philosophy of life needs to be effectively presented to the present war-torn world. If we have to succeed in this great world mission, we have to first set our own standards. We should shake ourselves free from the mental shackles of foreign 'isms' and foreign ways and fleeting fashions of modern life. There can be no greater national humiliation than to be a mere carbon copy of others. Let us remember that blind imitation is not progress. It only leads us to spiritual subjection¹¹. Describing an important characteristic of Indian culture Shri Golwalkar has said that we have an ideal before us and that is to realize the Ultimate Truth. In keeping with that ideal we have a *dharma* which is incomparable for its breadth of vision and encompasses all grades and aspects of human life.

We have a current of life, our *sanskriti* (culture) which instills sublime qualities of purity, character, fortitude and self-sacrifice in the individual, enabling him to attain the highest goal of human existence. That stamp of culture is manifest in our day to day sublimating the mundane into the transcendent. For example, it is common custom with us to call every woman, even a little girl, by the word *Ma* i.e. Mother¹². There was a revealing instance during the holocaust after the assassination of Gandhiji. An orgy of murder, loot and arson had been let loose on innocent people by anti-national and subversive elements. One such murderous mob attacked a house. Only the lady of the house was in. Out of terror she opened the door. On seeing her alone, the mob paused for a while. Notorious ruffians were leading the mob but even then the ancient call of our culture 'मातृवत् परदारेषु' (look upon women as mother) which was in their blood, made them treat her with utmost courtesy. They told her that they were out to burn and loot but would arrange for her conduct to a place of safety. Two of them were even deputed for her escort! In spite of the past thousand years long corroding influence of foreigners and the all-round immorality raging among our top class at present such glowing instances of character are still to be found

in our common people. This gives us an idea of the distinctively pure and sublime culture, which has reared in our hearts. It has given us a complexion all our own¹³.

Also down all these thousands of years, we have produced a whole galaxy of seers and sages, savants and heroes who have lead us in our march in search of God and attainment of material affluence and honour. They built up a social order to meet the needs of various kinds of individuals, developed economic systems for the proper production and distribution of wealth and formed political institutions for the protection and up-keep of the orderly evolution of society. As a result, during all these centuries of our existence here, we have had similar experiences of prosperity and adversity, of friendship and hostility, all our interests having been inextricably joined together.¹⁴

Shri Golwalkar has stated that these days rejuvenation of culture is often dubbed as revivalist and reactionary. Revival of old prejudices, superstitions or anti social customs may be called reactionary, as that would result in fossilization of the society. But rejuvenation of eternal and ennobling values of life can never be reactionary. To dub it as reactionary merely because it is old only betrays intellectual bankruptcy and nothing else. By the term 'rejuvenation of our culture' we mean the re-animating in our lives of those eternal life ideals that have nourished and immortalized our national life all these millennia

Conclusion -

He rejected western definition of culture based on the materialism. He said materialism cannot bring true happiness to the mankind but true happiness can be had with true spiritual growth. Therefore, while wealth and property can give happiness, they are not capable of providing mental peace. Our sages had shown us the path towards everlasting happiness by hundreds of years of deep contemplation. He has shown the way towards true development and has offered suggestions for adopting a balanced view of life by adopting the *Chaturvedha Purusharthas* of *Dharma--Artha--Kama* which ultimately aim at attaining the *Purushartha* of *Moksha*.

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