
UNIT 7 HINDUTVA: V. D. SAVARKAR AND M. S. GOLWALKAR

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7.1 INTRODUCTION

The ideology of 'Hindutva' was essentially the ideology of Hindu nationalism. The first prominent exponent of Hindu nationalist ideology was Mr. V. D. Savarkar. He wrote a book called 'Hindutva' in 1924 to explain the basic principles of Hindu nationalism. In 1925, the R.S.S. or the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh was formed to protect the Hindus from the Muslim 'aggression'. The R.S.S. was established by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. In the subsequent period, Savarkar and the R.S.S. propagated the Hindu nationalist ideology against the ideology of the composite Indian nationalism expounded by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress. Mr. M. S. Golwalkar, who succeeded Hedgewar expounded the Hindu nationalist ideology of the R.S.S.

The basic difference between Hinduism and Hindutva is that Hinduism stands for Hindu religion, but Hindutva is a political ideology that wants to establish Hindu nation in India. Hinduism does not have any political agenda, but Hindutva has a specific political agenda.

7.2 BACKGROUND OF THE RISE OF HINDU NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY

After the failure of Non-cooperation movement, there was growth of communal and separatist ideas both among Hindus and Muslims. Both of them claimed that their ideology was not a communal ideology but it was a true nationalist ideology which took into consideration the culture and religion of the people. After 1922-23, the followers of Lokmanya Tilak started supporting the Hindutva movement. Along with them the newly educated Hindu middle class also supported it. The Mopala revolt in Kerala created a lot of unrest in the Hindu community.

The main arguments of the Hindutva supporters were as follows:

- i) In the past, the Hindus suffered many a defeat and lost their independence to the foreign invaders because of lack of unity. They had numbers, valour and resources at their command but they faced defeat due to lack of unity.
- ii) The Hindus had been losing their numbers due to the aggressive proselitisation by the Christian missionaries and the Muslims. As a result, in a long time they would be reduced to a minority in their land of birth. Hence, in order to maintain the level of Hindu population, the Shuddhi and Samghatana movements should be launched. Shuddhi stands for reconversion of Hindus.
- iii) There was a need to protect the political interests of Hindus because the British government was hostile to them; the Muslims aggressively pursued their separatist agenda and the Congress under the false notion of secularism was betraying the cause of Hindus.

In India, we could see the emergence of two traditions of Hindutva, the first tradition was led by V. D. Savarkar and the second tradition was led by M. S. Golwalkar. Though both the traditions professed their allegiance to the ideology of Hindutva, their emphasis and methods differed.

7.2.1 Political Career of V. D. Savarkar

V. D. Savarkar (1883-1966) was a charismatic leader, who played a significant role in the freedom struggle of India. For his revolutionary activities he was sent to Andamans in 1911 and was brought back to India in 1922. Subsequently, he was kept confined to Ratnagiri town from 1923-1937. During this period, he suffered great hardships and made countless sacrifices in the cause of freedom of the country. There were two phases in the ideological development of Savarkar. In the first phase of his life, he was influenced by the philosophy of the Italian nationalist Joseph Mazzini and supported the concept of the composite Indian nationalism, which was not different from the nationalism of Aurobindo and Tilak. During this period, religion played an important role in his concept of nationalism, but it did not exclude any religious community from it. But in the second phase of his career after 1922-23, Savarkar became the supporter of Hindu nationalism. After his release from the confinement in 1937, he joined the Hindu Mahasabha and became its President from 1938 to 1945.

7.2.2 Savarkar's Views on Social Change

V. D. Savarkar was a product of renaissance in the Western India and in his early days he was influenced by the philosophy of Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, a rationalist philosopher. Agarkar was deeply influenced by the ideas of Herbert Spencer, J. Bentham and J.S.Mill. Savarkar was not a religious man and throughout his life, he eschewed all religious practices. From the European philosophical tradition, he borrowed three important ideas:

- i) In nature and in all human societies, the principle of life struggle determined the course of action because in this life struggle, the fittest survived and those who could not stand the struggle got eliminated.
- ii) Violence was in-built in the creation of nature and the nature abhorred absolute non-violence. But due to gradual development of human beings, both violence and non-violence got intertwined. Hence, in this difficult life, man should acquire strength and power to overcome the problems he faced.
- iii) There was no absolute morality in the world. Morality or immorality of a particular action was ultimately determined by the factors such as time, space and object. The use of all weapons was desirable provided it was directed against slavery and imperialism. Thus it was relativistic ethics.

Savarkar was a supporter of positivist epistemology and accepted the direct evidence of the senses as the only valid source of knowledge. He rejected the sanctity of religious scriptures and maintained that all religious scriptures were man-made and their teaching could not be applied to all societies in all times. He rejected otherworldly philosophy of Shankara and Ramanuja and discounted otherworldly pursuits of man. He held that to secure the progress of the country, to acquire more power and strength and to live good and prosperous life, we must pursue these worldly goals. For that purpose, we must use science and technology. He favoured the pursuit of science and reason and criticised 'irrational and superstitious practices of Hindus.

Thus, in Savarkar's theory of social change, the principle of life struggle played an important role. For him, reason, science and technology were important to bring about the change in the society.

7.3 V. D. SAVARKAR ON SOCIAL REFORMS

Savarkar was a great supporter of social reforms and he exhorted the Hindus to accept modern practices based on science and reason and reject the religious superstitions and customs which were standing hindrance to the social progress. All the religious scriptures were man-made and they were subject to scrutiny of reason. Due to blind faith in the scriptural authority, the Hindus became superstitious, fatalist and credulous. This weakened their desire to know more. They neglected science and technology.

Savarkar was a critic of caste system. He held that both 'Chaturvarna' and caste system proved very disastrous for the unity of Hindu society. The 'Chaturvarna' was based not on

any scientific criterion, but was a creation of scriptures and age old beliefs. It gave birth to inhuman practice of untouchability. The caste encouraged and institutionalised inequality, divided Hindu society into numerous compartments and sowed the seeds of hostility and hatred among the Hindus. Historically, Hindus constantly faced defeats at the hands of invaders because of the caste system. The untouchability was a distortion and it was wrong to consider any human being as untouchable. It militated against the spirit of human brotherhood. Hindus had developed several shackles that had been keeping them in chains which were based on the principles of purity and impurity. Hindus enslaved women due to these wrong customs.

Savarkar wanted the Hindus to reject blind faith in the Vedas and customs and tried to acquire material strength. They should accept the supremacy of machines and technology and break all bonds of blind faith and customs. It was incumbent upon Hindus to weed out all the defects in their society so that they could emerge as a strong nation in the world.

For Savarkar, social reforms, rationalism and science were needed for the development of a Hindu society which would enable it to acquire the necessary strength. He said that in modern times, nation was accepted as a viable unit for human beings. In the international politics, conflict and competition was raging between different nations of the world. In the international politics, language of strength was understood. Hence, Hindus should acquire strength through the pursuit of science and technology, so that they could protect their national interest as well as self-interest.

7.4 HINDU NATIONALISM OF V. D. SAVARKAR

Savarkar was the first systematic exponent of the Hindu nationalism. He elaborately described his theory of Hindutva in his book 'Hindutva' published in 1924. By that time, he had abandoned his concept of Indian nationalism that he borrowed from Joseph Mazzini in favour of Hindu nationalism. In the process of developing his concept of Hindu nationalism, he rejected some of the arguments of territorial nationalism. He held that the existence of a mere territory did not make nation but nation was made by the people who constituted themselves as a political community, bound together by cultural affinities and traditions.

7.4.1 Hindutva as Cultural Nationalism

Savarkar was a supporter of cultural nationalism. He was of the opinion that identity formation was the essence of nationalism. India had received such identity from the Hindu religion. This identity was evolved over a long period of time. Despite having outward differences, the Hindus were internally bound together by cultural, religious, social, linguistic and historical affinities. These affinities were developed through the process of assimilation and association of countless centuries. It moulded the Hindus into a homogeneous and organic nation and above all induced a will to a common national life. This homogeneity was important because other sections in the society had divergent cultural traditions.

Savarkar argued that it was cultural, racial and religious unity that counted more in the formation of the nation. While defining nation, Savarkar wrote that nation meant a political community which had occupied a contiguous and adequate territory and developed independent

national identity. This community was internally organised and was bound together by cultural and racial affinities. He held that the Hindus had become nation because they possessed all these characteristics.

Savarkar was of the opinion that Hindus constituted nation because they had developed close affinities with the land bound by Himalayas to the Indian Ocean and the Indus River. Hindus considered India as their fatherland and holy land. Savarkar tried to show that those people constituted nation who considered India as fatherland and holy land. In this definition, Savarkar effectively excluded those people who did not consider India as their holy land – because their sacred religious places were not situated in India. For him, Hindu nationalism stood for the unity of all Hindus. For him, Hindu society and not Hindu religion came first; Hindus were a nation because they were a self-enclosed community which was internally organised on the basis of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. The Hindus shared a common historical past. Savarkar knew that ultimately, nationalism was a psychological feeling and it was necessary to cultivate national consciousness among the Hindus. The common affinities should be used to strengthen the national consciousness. He wanted Hindus to cultivate the affinities that encouraged national consciousness and undermine the tendencies that divided the Hindu society.

7.4.2 Hindu Nation and Indian State

Savarkar wanted the Hindu nation to be strong and powerful so that India could survive as an independent strong nation in the ferocious life struggle that was going on between different countries of the world. He held that in the modern times, nation had been recognised as the only viable political entity and all the societies of the world had been organised on the basis of nation. Hence, everybody had to think about his national policies in the context of nation only. There was nothing parochial or sectarian about it.

For Savarkar, Hindus as a community, formed nation. Hence, he laid stress on the principle of exclusion. He excluded Muslims and Christians from the Indian nation because they did not consider India as a holy land because their sacred religious places were situated outside India. Hence, he laid emphasis on the difference between Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, he wrote that everything that was common among us weakened our resolve to oppose them; Hindus were constantly fighting against Non-Hindus to save their community. Hence, he launched the Shuddhi movement to reconvert the converted Hindus to Hinduism and to purge Marathi language of Arabic and Persian words. The Muslims were not assimilated in India, in fact, they tried to absorb Hinduism but they failed in their efforts. The prolonged resistance of the Hindus to Muslim invasions moulded them into a strong and resolute nation. *

What were the rights and positions of minorities in such a Hindu nation? Savarkar held that nation was a cultural category but state was a political category. All Hindus were the members of the nation. Non-Hindus might not become members of the nation but they were members of the Indian state. He maintained that Hindus did not advance any claims, privileges and rights over and above non-Hindu sections. He wrote, "Let Indian state be purely Indian, and let there be no distinction as far as franchise, public services, offices and taxation on the ground of religion was concerned. Let all citizens of the Indian state be treated equally according to their individual worth irrespective of their racial and religious percentage in the general population." He was ready to concede all rights to the minorities but did not think

it necessary to concede the demands of special interests advanced by Muslims.

Thus, Savarkar made a distinction between the Indian state and Hindu nation and considered the Hindu nation as a part of the Indian state.

7.4.3 Hindu Nationalism of V. D. Savarkar – A Critical Study

Savarkar was the first Indian thinker who declared that Hindus formed separate nation in India. He stood for a strong Hindu nation which would withstand and survive ferocious life struggle among the nations. He sought to popularise the Hindu nationalism throughout his life with the help of the Hindu Mahasabha.

There are obvious tensions and logical inconsistencies in the Hindu nationalism of V. D. Savarkar. He could not properly define the concept of nationalism because Hindus, Muslims and Christians shared common traditions and affinities in India even in the religious field. His advocacy of reason, science and technology was instrumental in the sense that for him they were useful because they helped him forge strong Hindu nation. Reason and science in the West were the culmination of the development of social philosophy which fought against religious prejudices and superstitions. The same could not be used to strengthen the cause of religious nationalism. From that point of view, the use of the word 'reason' was deplorable because rationally speaking the whole of communities could not be excluded from the definition of the nation on the grounds of loyalty and patriotism because the betrayers of the national interest could come from any community. Also, his distinction between the nation and the state was not convincing because both of them (nation and state) could not be separated and they came together as nation state. He conceded all the citizenship rights to non-Hindus except the membership of the nation. This would definitely create distinctions among the people and destroy national unity. A large section of the society would feel that they were excluded from the national mainstream for no fault of theirs. Savarkar's advocacy of the relativist ethics did not resolve these tensions because reason, science and relativist ethics did not recognise ascriptive loyalties. They had to be applied to all human beings across the board.

7.4.4. The Growth of Hindutva and the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS)

The second school of Hindutva or Hindu nationalism was expounded by the leaders of the RSS. The RSS was established by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar in 1925 to protect the interests of the Hindus. Dr. Hedgewar was a follower of Lokmanya Tilak and in his young days, he had contacts with some armed revolutionaries of Calcutta. Hedgewar was close to Dr. B. S. Munje. In 1920-21, Dr. Hedgewar took part in the non-cooperation movement. After the suspension of the movement, the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims got deteriorated. Hedgewar thought that due to the disorganised nature of Hindu society, the Hindus were suffering losses in the communal riots. Hence, he decided to establish a strong organisation of the Hindus to protect their interests.

In 1925, he established the RSS. It was a cultural organisation in the sense that it did not directly participate in politics. Dr. Hedgewar set three objectives before the RSS and they were as follows:

- 1) Mobilisation of the Hindus to protect their interests and to bring about unity and coherence in all their activities.
- 2) Opposition to British militant and communal Muslim politics and the Congress which had been following the policy of appeasement of Muslims.
- 3) Increasing the influence of the R.S.S. in all walks of life by patiently undertaking organisational work and by inculcating the spirit of patriotism. According to Dr. Hedgewar, the basic purpose of the RSS was not to capture political power but to increase the influence of Hindus in the public life of the country.

During Dr. Hedgewar's time, the R.S.S. became popular among the white collar middle classes. It did not take part in the civil disobedience movement of 1930 and did not directly get involved in the political activities of the Hindu Mahasabha. In 1940, Dr. Hedgewar nominated a young university Professor Mr. Madhav Golwalkar as the chief of the R.S.S. The RSS did not join the tumultuous Quit India Movement of 1942. Golwalkar continued to occupy the position of the chief of the RSS upto 1973. It was M. S. Golwalkar who expounded the RSS' concept of Hindu nationalism. He was an impressive personality. He had studied ancient Indian philosophical texts. Throughout his life – Guruji-as he was called, was a great teacher and commanded unique respect and following. His enunciation of the Hindu nationalism became popular among the youth.

7.5 HINDU NATIONALISM OF M. S. GOLWALKAR

The Hindu nationalism of M. S. Golwalkar was different from that of V. D. Savarkar in the sense that Golwalkar's theory of nationalism was based on Indian spiritualism. Savarkar was a modernist and he did not oppose westernisation. But Golwalkar was a supporter of Hindu culture and opposed the Western way of life. He held that the Indian spiritualism was superior to the Western materialism. He believed that India was a holy land and it was the divine will that India should lead the world.

7.5.1 Nation as Motherland

Golwalkar was an exponent of cultural nationalism and he identified nationalism with love for our motherland. He held that the Hindus considered India as their motherland because, since thousands of years they had been identified with this holy land. In this holy land only, Hindus registered all their great achievements. Hindus were children of this ancient land as they were nurtured by water flowing from her rivers and food produced by her rich soil. It was wrong to believe that India became a nation in the recent past. In fact, she had been existing as a nation since thousands of years. There might be some outward differences, but there existed basic unity in India. All Hindus were bound together by same religion, same language and same culture. The Great Sage Sankara realised this principle and established his religious centres at four different corners of India. He held that all Hindus were permeated by the spirit of unity and solidarity.

While discussing different elements of Hindu nationality, Golwalkar pointed out that existence of contiguous territory was the first element of nationality. The second element of nationality was the characteristics of the people who inhabited that territory. The people should consider

this land as a holy land and motherland. They should be united by common culture, common traditions, and common historical past and common ideals. This **commonality** brought them together and helped them evolve their own way of life. Third element of nationality was common economic interests of the people living in that particular territory. All these **elements** contributed in making the national character of our country. Thus, in Hindu nationalism of M. S. Golwalkar cultural factors played a very important role. Thus he laid emphasis on developing the right type of attitude in the minds of the people by giving them proper training and education. He was of the opinion that the Hindu method of imparting right type of values and practices to the people was useful. It is only through this that the Hindu **nation** could evolve into national organism pulsating with the spirit of unity and oneness.

7.5.2 Territorial Nationalism Rejected

We have seen in our previous discussion that M. S. Golwalkar was a supporter of the cultural nationalism and he defined his nationalism in the light of cultural traditions of the Hindus. He rejected the concept of territorial nationalism as humbug. He held that an assortment of people having different cultures and languages could not become nation simply because they resided in a particular territory. This group of divergent people could not be called nation because it could not function as a coherent whole. It was not permeated by the living spirit of unity and oneness. It lacked the life, blood and the living **spring** of culture. According to Golwalkar, it was the cultural affinity and common historical traditions that bound the people together and made them of one mind and one body.

Golwalkar was of the opinion that territorial nationalism was lifeless, unscientific and unnatural. If we accepted the principle of territorial nationalism, then the country would get converted into 'Dharmashala'. Anybody could become a member of one nation. But this theory of nationalism was wrong because a nation was normally formed of the people who had developed common cultural affinities and who considered India as their motherland. He was of the opinion that the concept of territorial nationalism was responsible for the partition of the country and disunity in the country. It had sapped our national energy and destroyed the life spring of nationalism that nourished the national spirit of the Indian people. Territorial nationalism was unnatural and unscientific because Muslims did not consider themselves as a part of the nation. He maintained that it was this **divisive** and anti-national agenda that resulted in the partition of the country. The Partition of India was a standing example of the failure of the concept of territorial nationalism. As against this, Golwalkar's cultural nationalism was based on five principles: common religion, common race, common language, common culture and country. These five principles generated the national consciousness in the minds of the people and made them of one mind and of one resolve.

7.5.3 Hindu Nationalism and Minorities

Golwalkar rejected the concept of the Indian or territorial nationalism as reality. He claimed that due to certain historical and cultural factors, Hindus in India constituted a **nation** and they considered India as their motherland. But as far as other religious communities in India were concerned, they did not consider India as their motherland or holy land. They took pride in the fact that they were heirs of the invaders of India. They were invaders who waged **wars** against Hindus to keep them in subjection. They had developed extra territorial loyalties. Though most of the converted Muslims and Christians were originally Hindus, because of

their conversion, they lost their devotion and affection for motherland. They started claiming the foreign racial genealogies as their own. Therefore, Golwalkar was of the opinion that these minorities could not be considered as a part of the Hindu nation.

Golwalkar was of the opinion that the non-Hindu minorities could also become a part of the Indian nation, if they abandoned their separatist tendencies and accepted all the traditions as their own. He exhorted the Muslims and the Christians to join the mainstream and be a part of the Hindu national tradition. He held that these communities should Indianise themselves by accepting and imbibing the Hindu cultural and historical traditions. They should consider themselves as inheritors of the great Hindu heroes described in the epics and take part in the celebration of Hindu festivals. They should imbibe the Hindu way of life. He pointed out that it was not necessary for them to leave their religion. They should practice their religion as they wanted because they had freedom of religion and worship. Also, by accepting the Hindu way of life, they could remain Muslims and Christians. It was high time that they should return back to home and be a part of the great national tradition. Golwalkar said that he did not want to do this with the help of coercion or force, but through love and persuasion. He held that the minorities would enjoy all social and political rights but they would not be given any privileges.

Arguing further, Golwalkar pointed out that since long, Hindus had developed unique method of assimilation and absorption which enabled the foreign elements that entered into society to get integrated into Indian society without losing their identity. The best example of this assimilation was that of Parsis who came to India from Iran to escape the religious persecution and became a part of the great Indian tradition without losing their religion and identity.

Golwalkar was highly critical of the so called progressive and secular Hindus for encouraging the process of identity formation among the minorities and backward castes. They justified these divisive tendencies on the grounds of secularism and democracy. Instead of promoting the process of integration in different parts of Hindu community, they were encouraging the divisive tendencies to grow. He was of the opinion that these westernised and denationalised Hindus would not be able to forge unity of the Indian nation on the grounds of pluralism and secularism. These processes were developed as a reaction and thus they would not be in a position to develop a positive content in their activities.

7.6 GOLWALKAR ON SOCIAL ORGANISATION

M. S. Golwalkar was a supporter of Hindu way of life and looking from that perspective, he found that most of the criticisms levelled against the ancient Indian Varna system were baseless. It was his contention that the present caste system was a degenerated form of the Varna system, and the practice of untouchability was inhuman and wrong. It was wrong to blame India's caste system for the defeats the Indians suffered at the hands of foreign invaders.

It was his contention that originally, the Varna system was based on the functional specialisation. Chaturvarna was considered to be the form of God as the four Varnas constituted his limbs. All Varnas were considered equal and the system was based on mutual help and mutual assistance. All the varnas contributed equally to the growth and prosperity of the society.

Varna and caste system were not responsible for the defeat of the Hindus. Historically speaking, Hindus were the only people in the world who fought bravely and incessantly against the Muslims and saved their religion in the most trying circumstances. The only areas which succumbed to Islam were parts of Punjab and Bengal and North West province. One of the major reasons for that collapse was the existence of a weak caste system in these areas.

Golwalkar was of the opinion that in the Varna system, due to functional specialisation, the people could perfect their skills as a family tradition, avoided competition between the people which was a bane of present capitalist system and ensured sources of livelihood for each and every member of the family. Hence, it was a scheme of employment insurance without the state intervention. Satisfaction of the individual self-discipline and elasticity were the characteristics of the Varna system. Though occasionally, Golwalkar attributed the lack of unity among the Hindus to caste distinctions, he did not undertake any programme to reform caste system. His justification of the Varna system was a part of the ideological tradition that was developed in modern India in the 19th Century.

7.7 POLITICAL IDEAS OF M. S. GOLWALKAR

Galwalkar was of the view that the Indian perspective of nationalism and politics was essentially spiritual, hence, Indians stood for peace and non-violence. But in the changed conditions, Hindus should acquire strength of arms including atom bombs to safeguard their national interests. Hindus faced defeats in the past because they did not acquire latest weapons and militarily they did not prepare themselves well. He agreed with Savarkar that there was a struggle for dominance among different countries of the world; therefore, India should try to become a strong nation. He argued that non-violence was the method of cowards and the strength was necessary to protect the good and to eradicate the evil in the world. Therefore, the Vedas say that 'Veer bhogya Vasundhara' -the 'earth is enjoyed by the brave.

7.7.1 Three World Views of Change

Golwalkar maintained that capitalism, communism and Hindu spiritualism were three world views of change. He was of the opinion that the Hindu perspective of change was superior to the other two perspectives.

While criticising capitalism, Golwalkar pointed out that capitalism was based on greed and exploitation. In the name of equality of opportunity and individual freedom, the more powerful and intelligent among the people had exploited the weaker and poorer sections of society and established their own monopoly over people. The rights of individuals became useless and right to vote was exploited by the capitalist classes to win political power. The capitalist system caused untold miseries to the working classes and it reduced millions of people to poverty and penury.

The second system of change was that of Communist system which emerged as a reaction to the capitalist system. It offered materialist interpretation of history. But the materialist interpretation of Marx proved wrong because his prediction of inevitability of revolution did

not materialise. The Communists captured political power in the name of working classes and promised them that they would be given freedom, peace and prosperity. But instead of fulfilling these promises, they imposed a worst type of dictatorship on the people. They had not been in a position to solve the basic problems of bread and shelter both in Russia and China. Both the systems failed to solve the basic problems of the people because they were the fruits of the same seed and shared many things in common. Their attitude was materialistic because they tried to measure pleasure in satisfying basic physical needs and wants of the body.

According to Golwalkar, the Hindu spiritualism was the third perspective of change which was superior to both capitalism and communism. Hindus did not approve of the materialistic perspective of life and thought that the satisfaction of material needs and physical wants was not the goal of life. Hindus believed that human life was homogeneous which was permeated by the supreme spirit. A man lived not to maximise his pleasures and powers but to help and assist others. Hindus did not see duality of relations between man and man but saw harmony, mutual help and accord in their relations. Every human being was a part of society and their mutual interests were not contradictory. The ultimate goal of life, according to the Hindu perspective was the establishment of a society where there would not be any punishment, or any punisher, and people would protect each other by the principles of Dharma, which is the highest stage of society.

According to Golwalkar, the Western models of social organisation and change failed because they laid more stress on the system than on the individual. **Infact**, Individual was the **bàsis** of the society and hence, development of the individual was the goal of Hindu social life.

7.7.2 Negative and Positive Hindutva

According to Golwalkar, there prevailed two types of Hindutva in India. The first type of Hindutva was called negative **Hindutva** and the second type of Hindutva was called positive Hindutva. The negative Hindutva was developed as a reaction to ~~the~~ Muslim communalism or the Congress secularism. The negative Hindutva was **basec** on hatred. It constantly thought negatively about others and vice versa. Therefore, we should not develop our social system in contrast to the Muslims and the British, because there would not be any positive content in it. Those leaders who followed negative Hindutva remained firm supporters of Hindutva, but because of their fierce opposition to Muslims in their minds culturally they became Muslims. The work of organisation and development of Hindus had nothing to do with Muslims because it was not undertaken to oppose Muslims as such. He said that negative Hindutva was a means to capture political power.

Golwalkar was of the opinion that his Hindutva was positive Hindutva **in** the sense that it was not developed as a reaction to any adversary. It was his contention that the essence of positive Hindutva was the organisation of Hindus as a social force in the society, which would continue to remain steadfast and resolute in the most trying circumstances. **The** seizure of political power was not the objective of positive Hindutva because it believed that all our problems could not be solved with the help of political power. There were many historical evidences in the past that showed that great empires established with the help of political power were destroyed by the savage invaders. For example, the Roman Empire was reduced to dust by the Huns. They were destroyed because they were raised on the weak

foundation of political power. But the Hindus never thought that the acquisition of political power was the ultimate goal of life. The secret of resilience of Hindu community could be found in their attitude towards life. They built their social and political organisations not on the basis of force but on the basis of Dharma. The King was not as respected as the great sages who were the experts in Dharma. The national regeneration of Hindus was not brought about by great Kings but by great sages, like Sankaracharya, Chaitanya and Nanak. In modern times, the same role was played by Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Dayanand and Ramteertha. Golwalkar maintained that the great goals in life were not achieved with the help of political power; history had shown that great religions such as Islam and Christianity got corrupted because of political power. The lust for political power destroyed great religious movements; the Communist experiment of establishing the socialist society in Russia with the help of political power had failed. If the state decided to undertake the task of rejuvenation of cultural values and social organisations, it had not achieved success but in the process, it corrupted other cultures and societies as well.

Golwalkar argued that it was the goal of positive Hindutva to remain outside the seat of political power but control it from outside so that it would work in the interest of the society. The greatness of a nation lies not in political power but outside it. Therefore, he pleaded for developing a strong and well organised society which could work as bedrock. He had compared the society to the sun which gave light, energy and strength to the different organs of society. The goal of the RSS was to develop individual as well as society so that it could become strong, united and powerful. The vision of Golwalkar was a political vision and it was based on the programme of an organised and conscious effort to change the social, cultural and political life of the society. Though he rejected political power, the state power as sovereignty and national strength were crucial to his vision of a Hindu nation.

7.7.3 Hindu Nationalism of M. S. Golwalkar – A Critical Study

Along with Savarkar, Golwalkar can be considered as a philosopher of Hindutva. Golwalkar sought to develop his Hindutva on the basis of the Indian spiritualism or non-dualistic monism of Sankaracharya. But there were some tensions in his position because in the "Vedanta", there was unity between the individual soul and the supreme soul. This unity pervaded all human beings including the Hindus and Muslims. The Indian spiritualism did not make distinction between Hindu and non-Hindu souls. Secondly, he tried to reject the concept of territorial nationalism but his own concept of cultural nationalism was based on territoriality of motherland! His concept of cultural nationalism also faced some problems because his exclusion of Muslims and Christian communities from nation on the grounds of extra-territorial loyalties was questionable. We can give several examples to prove that both Hindu and Muslim communities had produced traitors to nation. The entire community cannot be blamed for the betrayal of a few. Golwalkar's concept of positive Hindutva, which did not pursue political power, was not convincing because he was a supporter of strong natives and strong nation state. The RSS was not disinterested in political power; perhaps he wanted the RSS to remain outside political power while organisations of the Sangha Parivar could pursue it. The RSS would stand above political power but control it from without. Therefore, Golwalkar's critique of political power was interesting but difficult to fit into his overall orientation of the militant nationalism.

There were basic differences in the political ideas of Savarkar and Golwalkar. Savarkar's

agenda was a modernist agenda and he wanted to establish modern Hindu society in India. He was opposed to both Varna and caste system. He was worshipper of political power and for him state power was crucial in the protection of the country. Golwalkar was opposed to the process of Westernisation and he was of the opinion that negative Hindutva would not be in a position to solve our basic problems. He did not want to abandon the basic principles of the Hindu civilisation; therefore, he supported Varna and caste system. The basic contradiction in Golwalkar's political ideas was that he wanted to develop a very strong nation state in India, but at the same time, he wanted to stay away from political power! Both the ideas could not go together.

7.8 SUMMARY

In this unit, the Hindu nationalist ideas of V. D. Savarkar and M. S. Golwalkar have been studied. Both of them gave new political interpretation of the renaissance Hinduism. In the Hindu nationalism of V. D. Savarkar, it was argued that those people who considered India as their fatherland and holy land were members of the Hindu nation and those people whose holy land was outside of India were excluded from Hindu nation. In order to strengthen the Hindu nation, Savarkar advocated total social reforms and abolition of the caste system. He supported a modernist agenda of social change which relied on the use of science, rationalism and technology. He made distinction between the nation and the state.

M. S. Golwalkar's Hindu nationalism was based on the spiritualism and he was of the opinion that the Hindu community in India constituted nation because it considered India as its motherland. Common religion, race, language, culture and history were instrumental in creating a nationality and due to their consolidation into a national community on these lines, Hindus had become nation. In order to be a part of this national community, the minorities should Indianise themselves, accept the traditions and cultures of the country as their own, and get integrated into a national community. He also discussed the essential characteristics of the negative Hindutva and positive Hindutva. He held that the RSS stood for positive Hindutva which would lay stress upon internally strengthening the social organisation of the Hindus. The negative Hindutva was a means to secure political power. But he was of the opinion that political power was an inadequate means to achieve social progress.

7.9 EXERCISES

1. Describe briefly causes of emergence of politics of Hindutva in India.
2. Write a short note on Savarkar's theory of social change.
3. What, according to Savarkar, is the role of social reforms in strengthening the Hindu nation?
4. Discuss the main features of Hindu nationalism of V. D. Savarkar.
5. Bring out Savarkar's views on nation and state.
6. Examine briefly Golwalkar's ideas on Hindu nationalism.

- 7. Why does Golwalkar support the Hindu social organisation? Give reasons.**
- 8. Write a short note on the rise of the RSS in Indian politics.**
- 9. Briefly examine Golwalkar's ideas on Hindu nationalism.**
- 10. What advice did Golwalkar give to the religious minorities in India?**
- 11. Discuss Golwalkar's views on positive Hindutva.**