

## ACHCHE VICHAAR/WISDOM IN GUJARAT: RSS IDEOLOGUE GOLWALKAR TO SUPREME COURT JUDGE AR DAVE

There must be something special and fanciful in the land of Gujarat to attract Hindutva intellectuals to come out with their bizarre theories once they land there. The latest being Supreme Court judge A.R. Dave. Dave while addressing a distinguished gathering which included Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, Mohit Shah at Gujarat University, Ahmedabad on August 2, 2014 said that the Bhagwad Gita and the Mahabharata should be introduced to students from Class I. He wanted to be a dictator to decree the enforcement of these two epics. To quote him, “Somebody who is very secular...so-called secular will not agree...Had I been the dictator of India, I would have introduced the Gita and the Mahabharata in Class I. That is the way you learn how to live life. I am sorry if somebody says I am secular or I am not secular. But if there is something good, we have to get it from anywhere”.

Presently not going into the merit or demerit of having these as school curriculum, his above quoted utterances are in direct violation to the oath which he must have taken as judge for upholding a democratic-secular Constitution of India. How could a member of the highest court of justice of the country express wish to be a dictator, denigrate secularism? Should the President of India remain a mute spectator to these totalitarian ideas of a sitting judge of the Supreme Court?

So far as Justice Dave’s love for Mahabharata is concerned he needs to know that there are serious issues about its historicity within the ‘Hindu discourse’. Not going into the debate whether these epics preach Untouchability (Eklavya episode), Casteism, violence and Racism the questions about the historicity of these epics have been raised not by secular historians but by historians and scholars contributing to *The Cultural Heritage of India* series brought out by Rama Krishna Mission founded by Vivekananda (whose faith in Sanatan Hinduism should be beyond doubt). According to A. D. Pusalker, an authority on Sanskrit epics and a contributor to the above series, “Bhargavas who were responsible for incorporating dharma, niti, and other material in the Mahabharata added many episodes to Ramayana. There is a close resemblance not only in style, expression, and description, as exemplified by parallel passages and identical similes, but also in the mythology and philosophy of the two epics. Neither the Ramayana nor Mahabharata was recognized as an epic before the late Grhya-Sutra period, and neither was developed quite independently of the other. The Utarakanda (of Mahabharata) contains many tales of the Gangetic plains, and later didactic portions of the Mahabharata are generally laid in Kosala and Magadha; so on their later development the two epics grew in the same locality.” [D. Pusalker, ‘Ramayana: Its history and character’ in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. 2, Rama Krishna Mission, Calcutta, 1993, p. 29]

It is generally believed that the Ramayana preceded the Mahabharata. However, Pusalker goes on to emphasize that the peculiar character and development of “the Ramayana and the Mahabharata preclude any categorical answer to the question whether the Ramayana is the source, or the Mahabharata or whether both the epics independently borrowed from a third source.” [Ibid. p. 30]

Another authority on Pali and Sanskrit literature, P. L. Vaidya, while throwing light on the origin of the Mahabharata, admits in the same series that “the bulk of the present text is a work of centuries, and additions were being made even after the fourth century AD.” [Ibid. p. 53] While agreeing with Winternitz, an authority on ancient Indian literature that one date of the composition of Mahabharata did not exist at all, he went on to underline that “the form of epic, referred to as the Bharata or the Mahabharata, did not exist in the Vedic period, and it was little known in the land of Buddhism. It therefore must have been composed during the period, say, from the fourth century B. C. to fourth century A. D. The larger bulk found in the later stages of the development of the epic must have been due to the additions of narratives about some prominent members of the race with a view to magnify their greatness. [Ibid, pp. 53-54]

R. N. Dandekar, another prominent Indologist, corroborated the fact that the transmission of Mahabharata was characterized by a truly bewildering mass of versions and sub-versions. The luxuriant growth and indiscriminate fusion of Mahabharata could only be explained by the fact that after its composition, in the course of all these centuries, it had been handed down in different forms and sizes from bard to bard through oral tradition, and that, therefore, no special care had been taken to guard its text against partial corruption and elaboration or against arbitrary emendation and normalisation. Even in its early phases, the Mahabharata text- tradition seems to have been not uniform and singular but multiple and polygenous.” [RN Dandekar in the Foreword of MR Yardi, *The Mahabharata: Its Genesis and Growth*, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 11986, p. v]

The Hindutva intellectuals like Yellapragada Sudershan Rao, chairperson of ICHR and Justice AR Dave need to do some basic reading on Indian epics. The Hindutva intellectuals should not be allowed to bulldoze the discourse over the historicity of these epics in the name of fighting secularism.

Justice AR Dave is not the first person to lay down fantastic scheme while present on the lands of Gujarat. It was in Gujarat that M. S. Golwalkar, the second *Sarsanghchhalak* of the RSS and its most prominent ideologue till date, laid down his shameful theory of cross-breeding among Keralite Hindus. He was invited to address the students of the School of Social Science of Gujarat University on December 17, 1960. In this address,

while underlying his firm belief in the Race Theory, he touched upon the issue of cross-breeding in Kerala. He said:

“Today experiments in cross-breeding are made only on animals. But the courage to make such experiments on human beings is not shown even by the so-called modern scientist of today. If some human cross-breeding is seen today it is the result not of scientific experiments but of carnal lust. Now let us see the experiments our ancestors made in this sphere. In an effort to better the human species through cross-breeding the Namboodri Brahamanas of the North were settled in Kerala and a rule was laid down that the eldest son of a Namboodri family could marry only the daughter of Vaishya, Kashtriya or Shudra communities of Kerala. Another still more courageous rule was that the first offspring of a married woman of any class must be fathered by a Namboodri Brahman and then she could beget children by her husband. Today this experiment will be called adultery but it was not so, as it was limited to the first child.”

[M. S. Golwalkar cited in *Organizer*, January 2, 1961, p. 5.]

The above statement of Golwalkar is highly worrying in many respects. Firstly, it proves that Golwalkar believed that India had a superior Race or breed and also an inferior Race which needed to be improved through cross-breeding. Secondly, a more worrying aspect was his belief that Brahmans of the North (India) and specially Namboodri Brahamnas, belonged to a superior Race. Due to this quality, Namboodri Brahamanas were sent from the North to Kerala to improve the breed of inferior Hindus there. These details about Namboodri Brahmnas may be shocking to many of us but this was what Golwalkar believed. Interestingly, this was being argued by a person who claimed to uphold the unity of Hindus world over. Thirdly, Golwalkar as a male chauvinist believed that a Namboodri Brahman male belonging to a superior Race from the North only could improve the inferior human Race from South. For him wombs of Kerala's Hindu women enjoyed no sanctity and were simply objects of improving breed through intercourse with Namboodri Brahamanas who in no way were related to them. Thus, Golwalkar was, in fact, confirming the allegation that in the past male dominated high caste society forced newly-wedded women of other castes to pass their first nights by sleeping with superior caste males.

Astonishingly, Golwalkar expressed these Racist, anti-women and anti-egalitarian views not in the presence of some uneducated or lumpenized crowd but before a noble gathering consisting of the faculty and students of a prime university in Gujarat as was done by Justice Dave. In fact, Golwalkar was welcomed by Dr. B. R. Shenoy, Director of

the School while he arrived at the auditorium. The press reports make it clear that there was no murmur of protest against such fascist and ridiculous ideas. It shows the degree of respectability which high caste oratory enjoyed in Gujarat and explains why Hindutva could make inroads in this region.

It is surprising that despite holding such ideas which openly denigrated women and society of Kerala, RSS has been able to create pockets of influence in Kerala. There is no denying the fact that after Gujarat and Orissa, it is Kerala where RSS finds itself well-entrenched. It is due to the RSS' old habit of lying and expertise in hiding its evil designs. How the RSS attempts to do it can be understood by the way it tried to hide the above views of Golwalkar. When it published the collected works of Golwalkar in Hindi in 2004 under the title—*Shri Guruji Samagr*—in 12 volumes it simply omitted the above degenerated ideas. The volume 5 in the above series carries (as item number 10) the above speech of Golwalkar (pages 28-32), minus two paragraphs which contained the above thesis of Golwalkar. It is their bad luck that they have not been able to remove old copies of *Organizer* from the libraries. It seems that RSS continues to believe that it can fool all the people all the times! It is high time that people in Kerala should seek answers from RSS leaders about these obnoxious ideas not about Muslims and Christians but about Hindus themselves.

Gujarat which played a great role in the Indian freedom struggle and developing trade union movement in the country must challenge with rest of the country these fascist and anti-national ideas.

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