



Gandhian Political Philosophy Vs Aggressive and Emotional feelings of Godse

Dr.T.V.Ramana, Faculty Member, Dept. of Economics, Andhra University Campus, Kakinada

Abstract: *In the last years, for several weeks, a small Hindu fringe group in India has been attracting attention around the world because of its plans to erect a bust in honor of Nathuram Godse, the man who assassinated Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi in 1948. In assassinating Gandhi, Nathuram gave his otherwise ordinary life a new meaning. This was perhaps the reason why he pleaded with the government not to show him mercy and send him to the gallows. His masculinity had been asserted. He had sacrificed himself for promoting the idea of militant Hinduism. He had killed the man who was sacrilegiously turning Hindus effeminate.*

Key words: *socialism, Marxism, division of pakisthan, RSS, Hindu and Muslim policy*

Introduction

In the last years, for several weeks, a small Hindu fringe group in India has been attracting attention around the world because of its plans to erect a bust in honor of Nathuram Godse, the man who assassinated Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi in 1948. Organizers had chosen Friday, the 67th anniversary of the freedom fighter's death, as the big day. They had a bust of assassin Godse ready to go — and had even conducted a special purification ritual at the temple spot in the northern city of Meerut, 43 miles northeast of New Delhi. They demanded that Friday be declared as a "day of courage" across India, to mark what they regard was Godse's brave act. Yet this is not the first time the group has vented its desire to celebrate Godse.

After his arrest, he spotted Gandhi's son Devdas who was editor of *Hindustan Times*. The encounter was described by Nathuram's brother and co-conspirator and fellow convict (though he was only jailed and not hanged) Gopal Godse, in his book *Gandhiji's Murder and after*. The younger Gandhi has come to

the police station in Parliament Street to see his father's killer. Gopal Godse writes that Devdas "had perhaps come there expecting to find some horrid-looking, blood-thirsty monster, without a trace of politeness; Nathuram's gentle and clear words and his self-composure were quite inconsistent with what he had expected to see."

Of course we do not know if this was the case. Nathuram tells Devdas: "I am Nathuram Vinayak Godse, the editor of a daily, *Hindu Rashtra*. I too was present there (at Gandhi's murder). Today you have lost your father and I am the cause of that tragedy. I am very much grieved at the bereavement that has befallen you and the rest of your family. Kindly believe me; I was not prompted to do this with any personal hatred, or any grudge or any evil intention towards you."

Devdas replies: "Then why did you do it?"

Nathuram says "the reason is purely political and political alone!" He asks for time to explain his case but the police do not allow this. In court, Nathuram explained himself in a



statement, but the court banned it. Gopal Godse reprints Nathuran's will in an annexure to his book. The last line reads: "If and when the government lifts the ban on my statement made in the court, I authorize you to publish it."

Aggressive and emotional feelings of Godse -Cause of killed Gandhi: On 8 November 1948, Nathuram Godse (19 May 1910-15 November 1949) rose to make his statement in court. Reading quietly from a typed manuscript, he sought to explain why he had killed Gandhi.

"May it please Your Honour"

Nathuram Godse

"Born in a devotional Brahmin family, I instinctively came to revere Hindu religion, Hindu history and Hindu culture. I had, therefore, been intensely proud of Hinduism as a whole. As I grew up I developed a tendency to free thinking unfettered by any superstitious allegiance to any isms, political or religious. That is why I worked actively for the eradication of untouchability and the caste system based on birth alone. I openly joined anti-caste movements and maintained that all Hindus are of equal status as to rights, social and religious, and should be considered high or low on merit alone and not through the accident of birth in a particular caste or profession.

I used publicly to take part in organized anti-caste dinners which thousands of Hindus, Brahmins, Vaishyas, Kshatriyas, Chamars and B-----s participated. We broke the caste rules and dined in the company of each other. I have read the speeches and writings of Dadabhai Naoroji, Vivekanand, Gokhale, Tilak, along with the books of ancient

and modern history of India and some prominent countries like England, France, America and Russia. Moreover I studied the tenets of socialism and Marxism. But above all I studied very closely what Veer (brave) Savarkar and Gandhiji had written and spoken, as to my mind these two ideologies have contributed more to the moulding of the thought and action of the Indian people during the last thirty years or so, than any other factor has done.

All this thinking and reading led me to believe that it was my first duty to serve Hindudom and Hindus both as a patriot and as a world citizen. To secure the freedom and to safeguard the just interests of some thirty crores (three hundred million) of Hindus would automatically constitute the freedom and well-being of all India, one fifth of the human race. This conviction led me naturally to devote myself to the Hindu Sanatanist ideology and programme, which alone, I came to believe, could win and preserve the National Independence of Hindustan, my Motherland, and enable her to render true service to humanity as well. Since the year 1920, that is, after the demise of Lokmanya Tilak, Gandhi's influence in the Congress first increased and then became supreme.

His activities for public awakening were phenomenal in their intensity and were reinforced by the slogan of truth and non-violence, which he paraded ostentatiously before the country. No sensible or enlightened person could object to these slogans. In fact there is nothing new or original in them. They are implicit in every constitutional public movement. But it is nothing but a dream if you imagine the bulk of mankind is, or can ever become, capable of scrupulous adherence to these



lofty principles in its normal life from day to day. In fact, honour, duty and love of one's own kith and kin and country might often compel us to disregard non-violence and to use force. I could never conceive that an armed resistance to an aggression is unjust.

Godse's mind game on Gandhiji

He expressed that "I would consider it a religious and moral duty to resist and if possible, to overpower such an enemy by use of force. (In the Ramayana) Rama killed

Ravana in a tumultuous fight and relieved Sita. (In the Mahabharata) Krishna killed Kansa to end his wickedness; and Arjuna had to fight and slay quite a number of his friends and relations, including the revered Bhishma, because the latter was on the side of the aggressor. It is my firm belief that in dubbing Rama, Krishna and Arjuna as guilty of violence, the Mahatma betrayed the total ignorance of the springs of human action. In more recent history, it was the heroic fight put up by Chhatrapati Shivaji that first checked and eventually destroyed the Muslim tyranny in India. It was absolutely essential for Shivaji to overpower and kill an aggressive Afzal Khan, failing which he would have lost his own life. In condemning history's towering warriors like Shivaji, Rana Pratap and Guru Govind Singh as misguided patriots, Gandhi has merely exposed his self-conceit".

He was, paradoxical, as it may appear a violent pacifist who brought untold calamities on the country in the name of truth and non-violence, while Rana Pratap, Shivaji and the Guru will remain enshrined in the hearts of their countrymen forever for the freedom they

brought to them. The accumulating provocation of thirty-two years, culminating in his last pro-Muslim fast, at last goaded me to the conclusion that the existence of Gandhi should be brought to an end immediately. Gandhi had done very good work in South Africa to uphold the rights and well-being of the Indian community there.

But when he finally returned to India, he developed a subjective mentality under which he alone was to be the final judge of what was right or wrong. If the country wanted his leadership, it had to accept his infallibility; if it did not, he would stand aloof from the Congress and carry on in his own way. Against such an attitude there can be no halfway house. Either Congress had to surrender its will to his and had to be content with playing second fiddle to all his eccentricity, whimsicality, metaphysics and primitive vision, or it had to carry on without him. He alone was the judge of everyone and everything; he was the master brain guiding the Civil Disobedience movement; no other could know the technique of that movement. He alone knew when to begin it and when to withdraw it. The movement might succeed or fail, but that could make no difference to the Mahatma's infallibility. 'A Satyagrahi can never fail' was his formula for his own infallibility and nobody except himself knew what a Satyagrahi is.

Thus the Mahatma became the judge and the jury in his own case. These childish insanities and obstinacies, coupled with a most severe austerity of life, ceaseless work and lofty character made Gandhi formidable and irresistible. Many people thought that his policies



were irrational, but they had either to withdraw from the Congress or place their intelligence at his feet to do with as he liked. In a position of such absolute irresponsibility, Gandhi was guilty of blunder after blunder, failure after failure, and disaster after disaster. Gandhi's pro-Muslim policy is blatantly illustrated in his perverse attitude on the question of the national language of India. It is quite obvious that Hindi has the most prior claim to be accepted as the premier language.

Godse Vs Gandhian Hindu and Muslim policy

He presented in the court that "In the beginning of his career in India, Gandhi gave a great impetus to Hindi, but as he found that the Muslims did not like it, he became a champion of what is called Hindustani. Everybody in India knows that there is no language in India called Hindustani; it has no grammar; it has no vocabulary. It is a mere dialect; it is spoken, not written. It is a tongue and a crossbreed between Hindi and Urdu, and not even the Mahatma's sophistry could make it popular. But in his desire to please the Muslims he insisted that Hindustani alone should be the national language of India. His blind followers, of course, supported him and the so-called hybrid language began to be used. The charm and the purity of the Hindi language were to be prostituted to please the Muslims. All his experiments were at the expense of the Hindus.

From August 1946 onwards, the private armies of the Muslim League began a massacre of Hindus. The then Viceroy, Lord Wavell, though distressed at what was happening, would not use his powers under the Government of India Act of 1935 to prevent the rape, murder

and arson. The Hindu blood began to flow from Bengal to Karachi with little retaliation by the Hindus. The Interim Government formed in September was sabotaged by its Muslim League members right from its inception, but the more they became disloyal and treasonable to the government of which they were a part, the greater was Gandhi's infatuation for them.

Lord Wavell had to resign as he could not bring about a settlement and was succeeded by Lord Mountbatten. King Stork followed King Log. The Congress, which had boasted of its nationalism and secularism, secretly accepted Pakistan literally at the point of the bayonet and abjectly surrendered to Jinnah. India was vivisected and one-third of the Indian Territory became foreign land to us from 15 August 1947. Lord Mountbatten came to be described in the Congress circles as the greatest Viceroy and Governor-General this country ever had.

The official date for the handing over of power was fixed for June 30, 1948, but Mountbatten with his ruthless surgery gave us a gift of vivisected India ten months in advance. This is what Gandhi had achieved after thirty years of undisputed dictatorship and this is what the Congress party calls 'freedom' and 'peaceful transfer of power'. The Hindu-Muslim unity bubble was finally burst and a theocratic state was established with the consent of Nehru and his crowd and they have called it 'freedom won by them with sacrifice' - whose sacrifice? When top leaders of Congress, with the consent of Gandhi, divided and tore the country - which we considered a deity of worship - my mind was filled with direful anger.



One of the conditions imposed by Gandhi for his breaking of the fast related to the mosques in Delhi occupied by the Hindu refugees. But when Hindus in Pakistan were subjected to violent attacks he did not so much as utter a single word to protest and censure the Pakistan Government or the Muslims concerned. Gandhi was shrewd enough to know that while undertaking a fast unto death, had he imposed some conditions on the Muslims in Pakistan, here would have been found hardly any Muslims who could have shown some grief if the fast had ended in his death. It was for this reason that he purposely avoided imposing any conditions on the Muslims.

He was fully aware from past experience that Jinnah was not at all perturbed or influenced by his fast and the Muslim League hardly attached any value to the inner voice of Gandhi. Gandhi is being referred to as the Father of the Nation. But if that is so, he has failed in his paternal duty in as much he has acted very treacherously to the nation by his consenting to the partitioning of it. I stoutly maintain that Gandhi has failed in his duty. He has proved to be the Father of Pakistan. His inner-voice, his spiritual power, his doctrine of non-violence of which so much is made of, all crumbled against Jinnah's iron will and proved to be powerless.

Briefly speaking, I thought to myself and foresaw that I shall be totally ruined, and the only thing I could expect from the people would be nothing but hatred and that I shall have lost all my honour, even more valuable than my life, if I were to kill Gandhiji. But at the same time I thought that the Indian politics in the absence of Gandhiji would surely be practical, able to retaliate and would be powerful with the armed forces. No

doubt, my own future would be totally ruined, but the nation would be saved from the inroads of Pakistan. People may even call me or dub me as devoid of any sense or foolish, but the nation would be free to follow the course founded on the reason, which I consider necessary for sound nation-building.

After having fully considered the question, I took the final decision in the matter, but I did not speak about it to anyone whatsoever. I took courage in both my hands and I did fire the shots at Gandhiji on 30th January 1948, on the prayer-grounds in Birla House. I do say that my shots were fired at the person whose policy and action had brought rack and ruin and destruction to millions of Hindus. There was no legal machinery by which such an offender could be brought to book and for this reason I fired those fatal shots. I bear no ill will towards anyone individually, but I do say that I had no respect for the present government owing to their policy, which was unfairly favourable towards the Muslims. But at the same time I could clearly see that the policy was entirely due to the presence of Gandhi.

I have to say with great regret that Prime Minister Nehru quite forgets that his preaching and deeds are at times at variance with each other when he talks about India as a secular state in season and out of season, because it is significant to note that Nehru has played a leading role in the theocratic state of Pakistan, and his job was made easier by Gandhi's persistent policy of appeasement towards the Muslims. I now stand before the court to accept the full share of my responsibility for what I have done and the judge would, of course, pass against me such orders of sentence as may be considered proper. But I would like to



add that I do not desire any mercy to be shown to me, nor do I wish that anyone should beg for mercy on my behalf.

My confidence about the moral side of my action has not been shaken even by the criticism levelled against it on all sides. I have no doubt that honest writers of history will weigh my act and find the true value thereof someday in future."

Nathuram Godse was hanged a year later, on 15 November 1949; as per his last wishes, his family and followers have preserved his ashes for immersion in the Indus River of a re-united India".

Discussion on Psychological behaviour of Godse

As per the *jaz Ashraf is a journalist from Delhi, his book The Hour Before Dawn, published by HarperCollins, will be available in bookstores from this week*, to fathom Nathuram Godse's patriotism and love for India, we must delve into aspects of his personal history. It is important to comprehend the psychology of a boy who was named Ramachandra Godse but who came to be known as Nathuram. Before he was born, in a small village of the Bombay-Pune belt, his parents had three sons, all of whom died in infancy. To ensure death did not claim Ramachandra as well, they brought him up as a girl, had his nose pierced, and made him wear the nose ring or *nath* until they had yet another son. It was because of the nose ring he wore that Ramachandra became Nathuram.

Godse may have defied the jinx of death haunting his family, but the role of girl he was made to play must have bred in him immense confusion and a complex about his sexuality. In a fascinating

psychoanalysis of Godse, political psychologist Ashis Nandy in his book, *At The Edge of Psychology*, wrote, "Perhaps it was given in the situation that Nathuram would try to regain the lost clarity of his sexual role by becoming a model of masculinity."

This was, as Nandy showed in his book, most likely the source from which sprang his opposition to the Gandhian ideas of pacifism and nonviolence. Unable to vanquish the ideas which Godse thought were emasculating the Hindus and turning them effeminate, he killed the man who propagated them.

Decline in social mobility

In a way, Godse's confusion about his sexuality was mingled with his extreme religiosity as well as anxiety about his own social status. It is possible his parents inculcated in him the feeling of being the chosen one – after all, he, unlike their other three sons, had defied death. Godse became a devotee of the family gods, would go into trance, and play the role of an oracle, or became the medium through which the gods spoke to the family. It must have reinforced his sense of being special to gods. Yet this uniqueness his life did not seem to affirm. The Godses were Chitpavan Brahmins, a social group that had once enjoyed social prestige and ascendancy, but had become anxious about its status because of the gradual transformation of the country's socio-economic milieu. This was both because of the modernising influence of the British rule and the Congress's attempts to give a mass base to the anti-colonial struggle, thus making it imperative for its leaders to rope in social groups on the margin. The rigid social hierarchy, and privileges flowing from it,



stood undermined, generating anxieties among the traditional elite.

This anxiety Godse personally experienced in his early life. At the age of 16, he opened a cloth shop – for a Brahmin to enter business was a marker of downward social mobility. Worse, his cloth shop failed and he took to tailoring, deemed to be a lower caste profession. There was thus an enormous gap between Godse belonging to the traditional elite group of India and his actual socio-economic status. “It is from this kind of background that the cadres of violent, extremist and revivalist political groups often come,” wrote Nandy.

Using power to instill fear

Godse joined the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, left it because he did not find it militant enough and entered the Hindu Mahasabha. He started a newspaper, *Hindu Rashtra*, which argued against and opposed Gandhi because he was perceived to be emasculating Hindus, turning them effeminate. By contrast, the militant traditions of urban middle-class Bengal, Punjab and Maharashtra impressed him immensely.

Gandhi and Godse represented two contrasting ideas of politics and religion. For Godse, politics was about harnessing power to drive fear into opponents, to inflict manifold losses on them through means legitimate or illegitimate. He neither interrogated nor redefined the extant notions of power and their functions. Instead, his idea of power mimicked that of the British, employing force to defeat the rulers, to give them a taste of their own medicine, so to speak.

For Gandhi, though, politics was not so much about defeating the British as it was about transforming the rulers, about making the colonial ruler realise the sheer immorality of the power they exercised. It was not about the end justifying the means. Then again, Gandhi did not perceive Hindus as a religious group, in the way followers of Semitic religions are, but a people spread over a land who believed in an open-ended system that forever incorporated new elements or reinterpreted the existing or old ones. There was no one book, no one way of praying, no one body of rituals.

By contrast, Godse’s idea of religion resembled that of Semitic faiths. Erroneously believing that the unity, organising capacity and missionary zeal of Muslims and Christians had enabled them to conquer India, he wanted Hindus to become a rigidly closed religious group as the followers of those religions were. However, the problem of caste had to be overcome to achieve this unity. Godse sought this by participating in programmes such as inter-dining. His second method of uniting Hindus was to identify and define the other, the Christians and Muslims, by subjugating them for the pain and torment their ancestors were supposed to have inflicted on the Hindus. In other words, Godse’s anxieties were to be expressed and overcome in the political-religious realm.

Sacrifice for militant Hinduism

In assassinating Gandhi, Nathuram gave his otherwise ordinary life a new meaning. This was perhaps the reason why he pleaded with the government not to show him mercy and send him to the gallows. His masculinity had been asserted. He had sacrificed himself for promoting the idea of militant



Hinduism. He had killed the man who was sacrilegiously turning Hindus effeminate.

Godse acquired esteem through the assassination of Gandhi. His new-age followers can find their esteem by turning militant, by vanquishing Muslims and Christians in the 21st century, or by converting them and bringing them back into the Hindu fold, in the hope of effacing these religions from the country. It will then turn India akin to a modern European nation-state – one country, one religion – which is the model a large segment of the Hindu Right favours. Godse's brand of assertive, militant Hinduism finds an echo in such slogans as "*Garv se kaho hum Hindu hain*" – *say with pride that we are Hindu*.

Undoubtedly, Godse was a misguided patriot, fired by a warped love for the "motherland". This is as true of his new-age followers. His love, as also that of his followers, is destructively obsessive. They can neither accept competing ideas in the religious realm nor the free choice of the other. It was this illegitimate passion of Godse which inspired him to kill Gandhi. It is this which usually inspires myriad outfits worldwide to hitch religion to the creed of violence (scroll.in).

References

Rama Lakshmi (2015), why some Indians want to build a statue of Mahatma Gandhi's killer,
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/01/30/why-some-indians-want-to-build-a-statue-of-mahatma-gandhis-killer/>

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qFsSho6YFpkNRFjrUdn0sjV_pI_jfUyamVtn1hsbOAM/edit?hl=en_US

<http://scroll.in/bulletins/17/five-foods-that-could-be-incorporated-into-your-balanced-breakfast-today>

<http://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/why-exactly-did-godse-kill-gandhi/293200>

<http://scroll.in/article/696839/why-did-nathuram-godse-kill-mahatma-gandhi>