



Schools Or Hate-Labs?

Apoorvanand

In India, the school textbooks are considered more as propaganda material meant for spreading certain social ideas and viewpoints and less as educational instruments meant for imparting knowledge. In this regard, much emphasis has been given to schoolbooks of history, social science and languages. It is believed that books on subjects like geography, economics, science and mathematics do not help much in this respect. But through the study and analysis of school textbooks on these subjects, it has been found that such textbooks have actually been used to propagate dominant ideas.

This kind of interpretation, as articulated in the schoolbooks, has made parents, teachers, journalists and politicians cynical. They consider it quite obvious and to some extent acceptable, that with the change of governments, textbooks do and can change as per the ideology of the government. However, the story of Indian textbooks is not that straightforward. Since India is a federal nation and education is a subject on the concurrent list, there has been ample possibility of diversity in the school textbooks of the different states. But when you read textbooks of the geographically and culturally different states, you will find evidence of uniformity and homogeneity rather than diversity. Certainly these books try to create an imprint of the Indian nation on the minds of the students, which is primarily made up of the beliefs of the 'upper caste Hindu male'. It would be wrong to say that this happened due to the changed curriculum of schools, since 2000 AD, when the BJP-led coalition came to power. A similar image of Indian nation can be found in the textbooks of the earlier period too.

* Fascism does away with the demerits of Democracy

* In situations of crisis, immediate decisions are required and Fascism is

आ सिंधु सिन्धुपर्यन्तायस्य भारत भूमिका।
पितृ भूः पुण्यभू चैव स वै हिन्दूरितिः स्मृतः॥

appropriate for it

* In Fascism the spirit of nationalism develops

* Fascism prevents free competition

* The nation remains secure if the government is in the hands of an able person
* Italy developed economically and industrially in the age of Mussolini. In this way, though Fascism was a short-term system, yet its significance will continue all the times

"The activities of the RSS disseminated the spirit of organisation, unity, brotherhood, patriotism, unity and homogeneity in Indian society and on every occasion of national crisis, the RSS proved its utility beyond all debate."

पितृभूत्वं पुण्यभूत्वं द्वयं यस्य न विद्यते।
तस्य स्वत्वं तत्र राष्ट्रे भवितुम न किलाहति॥



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**Analysis of the
school textbooks of Rajasthan**

Schools or hate-labs?

Apoorvanand



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Apoorvanand

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INTRODUCTION

In India, the school textbooks are considered more as propaganda material meant for spreading certain social ideas and viewpoints and less as educational instruments meant for imparting knowledge. In this regard, much emphasis has been given to schoolbooks of history, social science and languages. It is believed that books on subjects like geography, economics, science and mathematics do not help much in this respect. But through the study and analysis of school textbooks on these subjects, it has been found that such textbooks have actually been used to propagate dominant ideas. This has been confirmed by the findings of a Delhi-based organisation, Nirantar through one of its research projects related to the study of textbooks.

This kind of interpretation, as articulated in the schoolbooks, has made parents, teachers, journalists and politicians cynical. They consider it quite obvious and to some extent acceptable, that with the change of governments, textbooks do and can change as per the ideology of the government. However, the story of Indian textbooks is not that straightforward. Since India is a federal State and education is a subject on the concurrent list, there has been ample possibility of diversity in the school textbooks of the different states. But when you read textbooks of the geographically distinct and culturally different states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, you will find evidence of uniformity and homogeneity rather than diversity. Certainly these books try to create an imprint of the Indian nation on the minds of the students, which is primarily made up of the beliefs of the 'upper caste Hindu male'. It would be wrong to say that this happened due to the changed curriculum of schools, since 2000 AD, when the BJP-led coalition came to power. A similar image of Indian nation can be found in the textbooks of the earlier periods too.

At the central level the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been preparing school textbooks for over 40 years or

so. Yet you would be disappointed if you sought to know what were the debates behind the selection of chapters, their sequencing, formation of exercises based on these and their entire structure. No records of the debates of textbook committees are available. Were they prepared under some central guidelines? Did they take into consideration certain educational theories? You have no option but to rely on analysis of chapters, exercises and structure of these books to identify the educational perspectives and politics inherent in them. The story of textbooks of different states is hardly any different.

In 2004, when the Congress-led government replaced the BJP-led government and the director of the NCERT was removed, it was said that school education was bound to change drastically since the government had changed. In the same year, the review and change in the National School Curriculum — 2000 was declared. With this, again it was said : "See, the government has changed, and the syllabus is being changed too". And this was said so stoutly that people could not pay attention to the fact that the document of the National Education Policy 1986 clearly states that each clause of education policy will be reviewed every five years. Since the national curriculum is also an important part of this policy, it is quite correct that this also be reviewed every five years and necessary amendments brought to it.

It would have been more appropriate if the NCERT had initiated the process of reviewing the national curriculum since 2003, so that there would be enough time for review, and every part of the country could participate in this process. But this was not done, may be because the leadership of the NCERT believed that the political party under which it was working was going to stay in power and the education minister was quite satisfied with the school curriculum of the year 2000. Hence, the NCERT higher ups thought that there was no need for review. But if they had been cautious enough, then a great part of this task could have been accomplished in the year 2003-2004 itself. However, this did not happen and the task of review and changes in the national curriculum were accomplished under the supervision of the new director, Prof Krishna Kumar. If you read the debate initiated over the curriculum since November 2004, you will find it quite interesting.

It was being hoped that the review of the curriculum-2000 would lead to a revival of the earlier textbooks, particularly those of history, which were in use before the year 2000. But as the process of review proceeded, it became amply clear that things were not going to be any different this time. A large section of the Leftists became angry with the new NCERT director and even alleged that he was only re-implementing the curriculum-2000 in a somewhat changed form. As expected, much of the debate focussed on history. An assumption, which was not stated explicitly yet felt by all was that since the new director was a socialist, nothing could be expected from him.

From among the irritated and frustrated historians, some sarcastically pointed out that the Prof. Yashpal Committee report of 1992, which is being made the basis of this review, is itself faulty. Comments were made on Yashpal being made the head of this process and questions were raised over his academic excellence. From among the Leftist historians and educationists, many expressed the view that the curriculum-2005 mixed up disciplines like history and social sciences and violated the very 'discipline' of these disciplines. It was also said that superstition, conservative practices and so on were being legitimised through them, in the name of giving importance to local or indigenous knowledge system.

While the Leftists were upset with the curriculum-2005 due to the above-mentioned reasons, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were accusing the curriculum for being a document that undermined Indian values. When this document was presented for debate in the meeting of the National Education Advisory Council, the education ministers of the BJP-ruled states rejected it without actually going through it, saying that the curriculum did not meet the standards of the Indian value-system.

The education minister of Rajasthan was among those education ministers of the BJP-ruled states who, boycotting the meeting of the National Education Advisory Council, declared that they would not implement the national curriculum in their respective states and would not allow the NCERT's new textbooks to be taught in their schools.

HATE- LABS IN THE MAKING

The Rajasthan education minister, after BJP-ruled states' education ministers' declaration in August 2005 in the National Education Consultants' Council, initiated the process of making new school textbooks. In 2006, some books on certain subjects came out in the market. The Congress party and its students' organisation raised objections regarding one of these — the second part of political science-II textbook for Class-XI titled India's National Movement and Constitutional Development. The objections pertain to the portions on Mahatma Gandhi in Chapter 13 of the book. They have objected to the following statement regarding Mahatma Gandhi made in the book — "Gandhiji was an associate of the British Government till 1918 and because of his cooperation during the First World War, the British Government honoured him with the title of 'Kesar-e-Hind'." The Congress party's opposition is to Gandhiji being called an associate of the British government. But this opposition of the Congress is not correct as Gandhiji really did arrange ambulance services for the British army during the Boer War. A just opposition could only be regarding the fact that he was actually awarded Qaiser-e-Hind and not Kesar-e-Hind. But one soon loses any expectation of attention to the nuance between 'Ke' and 'Qai' from this book as well as other books published by the Rajasthan Secondary Education Board, Ajmer. As we sift through them, we find that grammatical errors and linguistic mistakes are petty things for these books, as their attention is focussed on 'much bigger things'. You will find incomplete sentences at many places. Let alone any hope of straight and attractive language, on many occasions it seems as if the forgetful writer begins at one place and then gets lost somewhere midway. It is a waste of time to give such examples because it will only increase the size of this booklet.

The question of language, however, is important because the BJP raises slogans quite often in support of Hindi language with a view to stress nationalist fervour. The former HRD Minister Murli Manohar Joshi criticised the new books of the NCERT on Hindi and the new curriculum saying that grammar was removed from them. Is removing the superficial emphasis on grammar

while retaining lively and effective language preferable or a lifeless and broken language that sacrifices every thing for the sake of grammar?

This is a different debate, but we hope that Mr Joshi will think a bit about the aesthetics and purity of language after reading the textbooks of the state of Rajasthan and give some advice to his colleagues there.

The Congress party found none but that single issue of objection in these textbooks, and later fell silent. Its objection was weak on the basis

of facts. The book to which it objected is comparatively more balanced and written from an academic perspective, where there is an attempt to represent the ideas and contributions of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Krishna Gokhale in an impartial manner. But when you read the section written on Annie Besant a little carefully then this impartiality goes asunder.

Giving special emphasis to her 'devotion towards the Indian culture', parts of two of her lectures have been quoted. Overtly these seem to present her ideas regarding the concept of nation. But if you read the chapters on the rest of the leaders, you will find that with the exception of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, their ideas regarding the nation are not expressed in such details. On page 136 it is written - "In her lecture to the students of the Central Hindu College, Banares, Annie Besant, considering Hindutva and India to be synonymous said: "You must not remain in any sort of doubt. There is no future for Bharat without Hindutva. Hindutva is the soil in which Bharatvarsha (India) is deeply rooted. If we remove this soil, then the tree of Bharat will dry up. There are many religions that have found



refuge in India, many ethnicities are here, but nobody's roots penetrate deep into the past of India ... Bharat will remain Bharat even if all of them get merged into it. But if Hindutva gets lost, then what will be left?"

After this, the writer gives the clarification that considering Hindutva and Bharat as synonymous is not an example of communalism. But in the very next sentence, it is stated: "Actually she (Annie Besant) believed in cultural nationalism committed towards the Motherland."

Possibly the students of Class-XI and many teachers would not be aware of the fact that this concept of 'cultural nationalism' which is being insidiously inserted here, is the concept of the RSS regarding the nation-state. Concepts and mottos related to the RSS are similarly planted at different places in such

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a manner that they do not draw one's attention easily. Take for example Chapter 7 of the same book on "Revolutionary, Democratic and Peasant Movements in Rajasthan". In this chapter, evaluating the contributions of revolutionaries of Rajasthan it is written on page 99 : ... the indomitable courage of revolutionaries, their strong anti-British voices and sentiments committed towards Indian nationalism, and the hellish sufferings which they endured in dungeons and exile in Andaman Islands make it evident that the only ideal of their lives were "Namaste sada vat-

sale matribumi" (Salute to the motherland who always nurtures) and "Tera vaibhav amar rahe ma, hum din char rahe ya na rahe" (May your glory, o motherland, live for ever —no matter whether we live a mere few days or not). These are the most popular lines of songs sung in the Shakhas (training sessions) of the RSS. It seems as if the ideal of these revolutionaries was similar to that of the RSS. You will find that elsewhere too there are many examples of inclusion of those words and sentences in the textbooks, which are generally recited in the Shakhas of RSS. The very

names of two Chapters of Book II on Sanskrit for class-XI are - 'Sanghe Shakti' (power lies in organisation) and 'Uttishthan Jagrit' (Arise and awake). These two occur frequently in Shakha usage.

As we mentioned earlier, the language and perspective of this textbook appear to be an attempt to be balanced. But caution has been taken to present a particular conception of nation more prominently. There is a discussion of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal in Chapter 10 and that of Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Subhash Chandra Bose, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Bhikaiji Cama in Chapter 11. By including them all together in Chapter 11, the attempt is to make it appear that all these figures adhered to the same ideological stream. But the truth is that Bhagat Singh had no sympathy with Subhash Chandra Bose. In the same manner,

... section does not tell us that Bhagat Singh had sharp differences with Lala Lajpat Rai over his concept of nationalism and he had also written an article attacking Lalaji's ideas. Bhagat Singh's greatest contention with Lalaji was over his (Lalaji's) communal perspective of nationalism. It seems that telling this fact to schoolchildren was considered to be dangerous

we find this written on page 152 - "The act of attacking the sharply nationalist Aryasamaji scholar Lala Lajpat Rai was like suppressing Indian nationalism itself. Thus, to take revenge for this humiliation, Bhagat Singh, Shivram Rajguru and Sukhdev killed the deputy superintendent of police, Saunders, in place of police superintendent Scott, while he was coming out of the police station in Lahore."

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SAVARKAR'S DEFINITION OF THE HINDU NATION

About Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the textbook says, Savarkar gave the "definition of the Hindu nation" in the following Shloka or verse:

आ सिंधु सिन्धुपर्यन्तायस्य भारत भूमिका ।

पितृ भूः पुण्यभूश्चैव स वै हिन्दूरितिः स्मृतः ॥

(Only that person is a Hindu who accepts the land lying between the Sindhu river and sea, as his fatherland as well holyland).

On this, the footnote of the book says - "The above mentioned definition of Hindu is cultural as well as nationalistic. In this way, apart from being secular, it is also a symbol of national unity." Here the writers are possibly aware of the kind of debate on Savarkar's concept of nation. It may be for this reason that they declared the holyland-fatherland-based definition of nation by Savarkar to be secular. In the same manner, it has been said evaluating him - "Veer Savarkar was not only revolutionary, but also a socio-political thinker and also a social revolutionary. He was a nationalist of the first order. He never begged pardon of the British government." In the last sentence, one can clearly see the guilt-complex of the writers exposed. The writers should have discussed the controversy regarding Savarkar's apology before declaring that he never apologised to the British government. Similarly, a description of the suspected involvement of Savarkar in the murder of Mahatma Gandhi and later his release through the benefit of doubt due to the lack of evidence, also called for discussion within the book. But these inconvenient episodes have been omitted to avoid casting a shadow on Savarkar's 'nationalist' past.

While evaluating all national leaders, the ideas of their critics have also been given, which is the correct method. But this has not been done in case of Savarkar. The definition of nationalism by Savarkar, which equates holyland and fatherland, faced powerful criticism, but the government textbooks do not want to give this information to the students of Rajasthan.

Savarkar's definition of nation has already been established strongly in Chapter 4 of the Sanskrit textbook for Class-X 'Sanskritamritam'. The language is taught as the third language. In this chapter named 'Swarashtram' (one's nation) it is written:

समान संस्कृतिमतां भावती पितृपुण्यभूः ।
 तावतीं भुवमावृत्य राष्ट्रमेकं निगद्यते ॥
 पितृपुण्यभुवं व राष्ट्रं यन्मन्यते चयेनराः ।
 तेषां नराणां राष्ट्रं तत्स्वीयं भवति सर्वथा ॥

(A nation (राष्ट्र) is an encircled land of the people of the same culture, which includes their whole fatherland and the holyland. And the nation is of those who accept this as their holy and fatherland.)

It is not enough to say that when somebody believes some specific part of a land to be his fatherland and holyland, only then it is his nation. It is also necessary to say that if he does not believe in these i.e. if these two are not same for him, than he cannot claim 'own-ness', 'right' over that land.

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पितृभूत्वं पुण्यभूत्वं द्वयं यस्य
 न विद्यते ।
 तस्य स्वत्वं तत्र राष्ट्रे भवितुम्
 न किलार्हति ॥

(The nation can't be of those to whom this is not both the fatherland and holyland.)

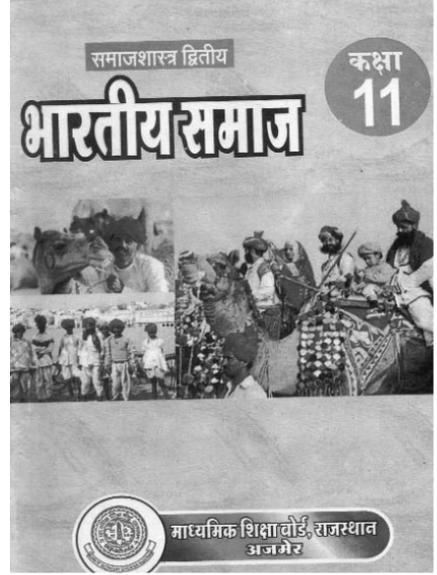
The task of declaring nation, language and religion as equal to each other, is done on different levels in different ways. The books of Sanskrit language do this work in most effective manner. Many a time, they seem to be holy books of the Hindu religion. In Chapter 15 of the

'Sanskritamritam' of Class-IX, a call is made for the construction of a 'Sanskrit Bhavanam' (Sanskrit Building); without even bricks and sand. The foundation of this building is Sambhashan (speech), its stairs are Shraavan (hearing) (which is in fact an abridged version of Shraavan Manannidhidhyasan of the Upanishadam) and its apex is the unity of all Hindu folk.

मूल शिला सम्भाषणस्य
हिन्दूजनैक्यं शिखरमुन्नतम्
सोपानं श्रवणादि विधाम्
रचयेम संस्कृत भवनम् ।

(Let us build the building of Sanskrit

of which, the base of error free speech, the top is of the unity of Hindus and the stairs of different genre like hearing, etc.)



At the end of the chapter, while telling the meaning of difficult words, the meaning of 'Hindujana Aikya' (Unity of the Hindu folk) is given as - Hindujana Aikya - Bhartiyanam Aikyam (Unity of all Indians). Hindu and Indian are just the same — textbooks of political science and Sanskrit of course propagate this line, but most explicitly the Social Science-I book of Class-X is expressing this. We find that in its first chapter "Foundations of Indian culture" it is written: "Our culture is known as 'Aryan culture', 'Indian culture' and Hindu culture. Factually, these three nomenclatures have become synonymous of each other. The evolution of Indian culture is achieved mainly by the Aryans. That is why it is called Aryan culture."

This formula of Indian culture = Hindu culture = Aryan culture makes it evident that the sketch of nationalism which is being drawn in the school books of Rajasthan not only gives 'third-grade citizens' status to Muslims and Christians as they do not have their 'holyland' here, it also rejects their claim

of own-ness over India. In the same manner, it keeps non-Aryans also outside the purview of nation. Dalits, tribals, etc., in this way would either be third-grade Indians like Muslims and Christians or they would be termed as the 'conquered' people. Or otherwise, the task of their reform and eradication of their vices has to be done by the upper-castes. The term tribal has not been used here and they are either termed as 'forest-dwellers' (vanavasi) or the forest-folk (vanyajati).

Secularism has been praised in almost all of the textbooks. But as we have seen above, this secularism is based on Savarkar's holyland-fatherland formula. In the sociology textbook-II of Class-XI, the 'religious diversity' in India has been described thus : "The western scholars consider religion to be belief in some supra-natural power, while Hindu texts consider that religion is the fulfilment of socio-cultural responsibilities given to a person. India is a country that believes in different religions. Of these, there are six main religions i.e. Hindu religion (way of life), Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. The majority of the country's population is Hindu. That is why India is a secular nation as Hindus are not fanatics but tolerant towards other religions. The greatest reason for this is that they consider religion not as religion per se, but as a lifestyle or pattern of living."

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All other religions are mere religion alone, but Hindutva, over and above being a religion, is a lifestyle just as Chittorgarh (a large fort in Rajasthan) is the only fort and the rest are mere citadels! It is not difficult to understand that in this manner, Hindutva is considered as self-evidently superior to others. In the same text book of sociology, the basis

of 'unity in socio-cultural diversity' is explained as under "combined family system, caste system, Varnashram system, spiritualism, heaven-hell, and faith in God or some supernatural power, these all are inherently located in the life and thinking of all Indians. Festivals like Holi, Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, Dussehra, Ramnavami, Eid, Christmas, Chetichand, etc., are celebrated all over the country. Ram, Krishna, Hanuman, Durga, Sita, Saraswati, etc., are worshipped by all people. The popular unrest against the nude painting of Goddess Saraswati by MF Hussian signifies this social, cultural unity of India. Though certain changes did happen because of the different cultures which came to India along with many external aggressors, all of these changes are merely superficial."

... textbook expresses satisfaction that those cultures, which came to India with 'external aggressors', had only a superficial impact. But in the very next chapter, it is not difficult to observe while reading the description of continuity and change in the Indian society, that the main constituent of Indian culture is Hindu culture and more specifically the culture of Brahminical dominance

The same textbook expresses satisfaction that those cultures, which came to India with 'external aggressors', had only a superficial impact. But in the very next chapter, it is not difficult to observe while reading the description of continuity and change in the Indian society, that the main constituent of Indian culture is Hindu culture and more specifically the culture of Brahminical dominance. It has been stated — because of Jainism and Bud-dhism, the Vedic religion was purified(!), rituals were reduced and the Vedic religion became more thoughtful. The Maurya age and the Gupta age are accorded special

praise, as is evident from this passage : "In this period, a greater India was established, Hindu religion rose up again and religious tolerance emerged. The hegemony of Pali language, which it gained under the influence of Jainism and Buddhism, ended and Sanskrit recaptured its lost glory." The textbook writers' soft corner for Hindu 'religion' or 'Vedic religion' (as it may well be) becomes evident on many occasions: "the Shankaracharya accepted the challenge given to Vedic religion by Buddhism and Jainism and this took the form of the Bhakti (devotion) movement". After claiming the Shankaracharya to be the propounder of the Bhakti movement, the textbook expresses satisfaction over the fact that - "In the contemporary Indian society, there was a revival of political consciousness amongst Hindus because of which it became possible for the Vijayanagar state to come into existence in South India."

There is also no dilemma regarding the Middle Ages: the Middle Ages are described as Dark Age of Indian society and culture... "The Mughals fully exploited the stagnation in culture and society of medieval India. Since

The Maurya age and the Gupta age are accorded special praise, as is evident from this passage: "In this period, a greater India was established, Hindu religion rose up again and religious tolerance emerged. The hegemony of Pali language, which it gained under the influence of Jainism and Buddhism, ended and Sanskrit recaptured its lost glory"

Mughals had come to India with the motive of establishing permanent rule, the first thing they did was to try to destroy whatever vestiges of religious unity there remained. Whatever be the form of Purdah (veil) system in India earlier, the form which was propagated during the Mughal period, was never seen before." In the later Mughal period conditions became even worse. "The motive of education now was to educate Muslims, to propagate Islam, to gain material facil-

ities and to achieve political goals." Which political goals? The book does not deem it necessary to elaborate.

There is also no dilemma regarding the Middle Ages – the Middle Ages are described as Dark Age of Indian society and culture...

In the very next page, it becomes clear where the book is headed - "With the

fall of Gupta Empire, India ceased to exist as a single political entity...The phase of harassment of Hindus by turning them into inferior, third grade citizens, which began with the Mughal period, continued till the time of the Britishers, due to their policy of divide and rule. In such an environment, Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar established a socio-cultural organisation named Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, to awaken a nationalist spirit in Indian society.

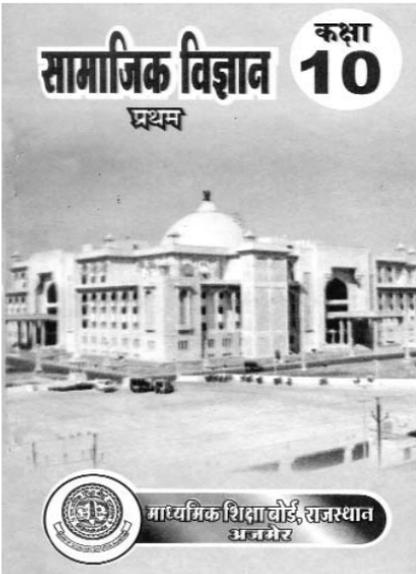
"The activities of the RSS disseminated the spirit of organisation, unity, brotherhood, patriotism, unity and homogeneity in Indian society and on every occasion of national crisis, the RSS proved its utility beyond all debate."

In this manner, it is indicated that a new attempt has been made to complete the unfinished project of Maurya and Gupta empires.

In the various textbooks of different subjects and different classes, approving mention of the RSS as a great nationalist organisation and praise for its various major and minor organisations along with their activities, are quite common.

HINDU RELIGION AS MORE INDIAN RELIGION

In 'Indian society', the Sociology Part-II textbook of Class-XI, the third chapter (Indian social institutions: Marriage, family and relationships) employs academic cunningness to try to establish the Hindu religion, again, as the more-Indian religion, or the representative religion of India. The chapter begins with a strange linguistic mistake. It seems as if the writer is trying to copy something from some English book, but has not understood what he is writing: "Marriage, like the family, has been a basic and all time institution ... the prevalence of marriage has been both historical and contemporary." The meaning of the second sentence, it seems, has remained in the mind of writer. Later it is said : "The western society is materialistic and that is why western thinkers have viewed marriage also in the same sense. In contrast to this, the Hindus give more importance to the other world rather than this world. That is why Indian religious texts and their interpreters have viewed marriage on a religious basis." (Note the connotation: western vs Hindu, who automatically becomes Indian later.)



The marriage-related notions of different religious and ethnic groups are discussed in detail. The study of this chapter is quite 'educative'. All tribal communities are taken into the fold of the Hindus. The motive behind all this can be gauged by the exercise questions that follow this chapter. Just take a few into account:

- * What is the supreme objective of life for Hindus?
- * How many types of Purusharthas are there?

* What are the objectives of Muslim marriage?

* Describe the objectives and types of Hindu marriage?

The most meaningful question is this: Give the definition of Muslim marriage and explain the differences between Hindu marriage and Muslim marriage.

The objectives of Muslim marriage are as under:

* Establishing sexual relations

* Reproduction

* Giving legitimacy to the offspring

Students are told that while Muslim marry to establish sexual relations and give birth to the offspring, Hindu marriage keeps sexual relations as its last objective. The three objectives of Hindu marriage, according to their significance are: (i) observing the injunctions of religious texts (ii) reproduction ... (iii) establishing sexual relations. In this way, the superiority of Hindu marriage over Muslim marriage is established. The religiosity of Hindu marriage relations is described in much detail. To make it more clear and understandable, it has been repeated twice and thrice: "Hindu religious texts, while laying down the objectives of marriage, give primacy to the observing of religious duties. Yajna (ceremonial fire) is most important in all religious acts. These are five yajnas, Brahma yajna (for supreme cosmos), Dev yajna (for gods), Bhootyajna (for spirits), Pitra yajna (for ancestors) and

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In the book titled '*Indian social institutions: Religion, education and law*', the age and superiority of Hindu religion vis-à-vis other religions and the equivalence of 'Hindu' with 'Indian' is again emphasised

Atithi yajna (for guests). The wife is required for the performance of these yajnas and she is gained through marriage. But some religious texts have interpreted these five Maha yajnas for the Grihastha (Married man, householder). This interpretation clearly declares that Hindu marriage is a religious ritual."

In the fourth chapter of the same book, titled "Indian social institutions: Religion, education and law", the age and superiority of Hindu religion vis-à-vis other religions and the equivalence of 'Hindu' with 'Indian' is again emphasised: "Hindu religion is the oldest religion. It is the outcome of piety in social-cultural behaviour and a long process of evolution of spiritual beliefs. According to Lokmanya Tilak, all Indians, who live on the land stretched between the origin of Sindhu (Indus) river and the Indian ocean and consider it as their motherland and holyland, are called Hindus and their religion is Hindu religion or Hindutva."

Even after this, if you are too dumb a student to get the point, the significant points are again repeated at the end of the chapter: "Hindu religion is the path bearer of Indian society and culture which has had widespread influence over the organisation, social unity, morality, change in social control, spirit of piety, character building of individuals and development of virtues, development of duties, emotional security, entertaining activities and security of Indian society."

This chapter also tells about Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism but when you look at the section of questions related to the chapter, then the hidden motive of this chapter is revealed. Among the questions, there are merely two questions regarding one of the religions:

* Which religion is called the Sanatan (permanent) religion?

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a. Islam | b. Buddhism |
| c. Hinduism | d. Christianity |

* Give a brief introduction of beliefs and practice of Hindu religion.

* In what sense is Hindu religion different from other religions?

As seen by us, the basic concept of these textbooks is that the Aryan culture is synonymous with Indian culture. Possibly this is the reason why this sociology Part-II textbook falls into an ideological confusion in the chapter on caste. While giving an academic analysis of the institution of caste through the ideas of the main western sociologists, the writers seem to be trying to avoid taking any side. Take a look at the merits of caste system enumerated in the section on the merits and demerits of the caste system: "Hindu life was given a solid continuity through the religious basis of the caste system. In Hindu culture, traditions and customs are sanctioned through religion, and maintained by it(!). The ritual of Shraddh — purification through religious values and criteria, Tarpan (paying homage) to ancestors through Pooja (worship), the oral transfer of their practices, traditions, prayers and rituals from father to son, the practice of making this ancestral and granting religious basis to it, all this has kept Hindu ideas and knowledge alive since centuries. Since the ancient period, skills and arts have been kept secure through father and son."

The demerits of caste system have been described later,

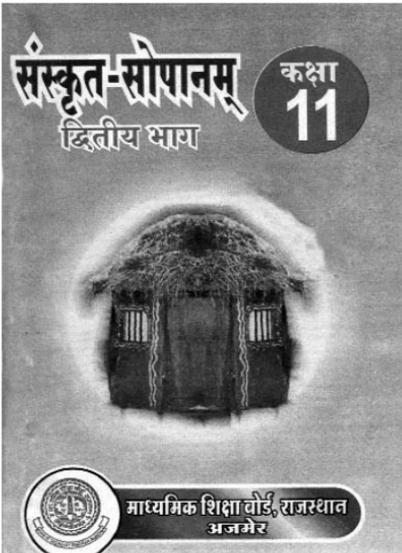
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but its merits are described in such a highly glorifying language earlier, that they automatically overshadow these demerits. Read the following section also carefully and try to locate other inherent meanings, particularly in the backdrop of concept of Indian society formulated according to the logic of RSS : "The caste system provided to different people opportunities of living together in contentment, and this enabled the maintenance of stable and fraternal relations between them."

How ironic such claims appear in the light of incidents like Khairlanji.

"Though India is home to innumerable ethnicities, religious and linguistic communities, yet caste system reduced struggle between different communities. Because of the caste system, a strong unity in community and a sense of responsibility developed in all castes. The members of castes and sub-castes used to help each other on all occasions of marriage, death rituals and festivals, etc. In this way, members of different castes come close to each other and stable social relations develop between them, through which they feel a sense of collective security and unity.



"The caste system lessened the ill will. The system also did not approve of individual preferences. Their pro-

fession, marriage and social status were all pre-determined which was helpful in the management of all spheres of society. Since the path of life of each individual was pre-determined, he was saved from the situations where adjustment was difficult and this gave him freedom from the frustrations."

In the questions given as exercises at the end of this chapter, there is no scope for criticism of the caste system. A conceptual uniformity can be found in the schoolbooks circulated by the state's Board of Secondary Education, Ajmer and the concept is that of an Indian nation based on Aryan culture. That is why it has been kept in mind that Manu must be accorded academic legitimacy. Excerpts from the Manusmriti are obviously there in Sanskrit books, but he is also introduced as the original or early economist in the Economic-I Book of Class-XII, titled "Theories of economics". His economic thought has been

described in the Chapter 20 of the same book. But if you are not going to study religious texts in the future, than you will be inducted into the fold in Class-IX itself, with the social science textbook, which introduces you to Manu in Chapter 8 -- "Economic thought in ancient India".

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THE CONTEXT OF DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAYA

Chapter 8 of the social science textbook of Class-X mixes up history, myths and Puranas to lump together Chhatrapati Shivaji, Guru Govind Singh, Ramachandra, Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. BR Ambedkar, etc. The logical culmination of such a methodology can be seen in Chapter 20 of Economics-I of Class-XII, which says - "The personality of Manu is great among all Smriti givers. He is rich in multifaceted talents. In Indian literature Manu is known as the originator of the human race. Manu has been called as father of humanity in the Rigveda. He is descended from the line of mortal (human) sons of Lord Brahma." How did the universe come into existence? The Social Science-II book of Class-IX attributes it to that same Brahma from which Manu is said to have been descended, saying, "after Brahma created the universe, Manu created theology, Vrihaspati created economics and Nandi created the Kamashastra (science of desire)."

Defying all theories of the origin of human beings, development of human mind and origin of language, culture and civilisation, Chapter 3 of "Theories of economics" declares definitively - "In this way, the Manusmriti was written lakhs of years ago." Amartya Sen might be happy to know that the economics textbooks of Rajasthan schools have placed him in the clan of Manu after Shukracharya, Kautilya, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and AK Mehta. While Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya appears here as an economist, the entire chapter, Chapter 14 of political science-I of Class-XI, "National movement and constitutional development in India" has been devoted completely to him. This chapter ends the fifth unit of this book in which the main thinkers and personalities of the Indian national movement are introduced. In this unit, in the Chapter 8, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Vivekananda figure together. In the ninth unit Ferozeshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Annie Basant, while Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal are in the tenth unit. Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Subhash Chandra Bose, Savarkar and Shivaji are

in the eleventh unit. In the twelfth unit there are Sardar Patel, Ambedkar and Abul Kalam Azad while in the thirteenth there are Gandhi and Nehru. Only Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya enjoys the honour of having a whole chapter devoted to him though this chapter does not tell us about his contributions to the Indian national movement. Though he was born in 1916, the one great national task accomplished by him before Independence, according to this book, is his contact with the RSS in 1937.

The actual motive of this chapter is to describe in detail the nationalism of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and explain its significance. The unity of fatherland-holyland, which is the basis of Savarkar's Hindutva-based nation and the motto of the RSS, appears here in a different version of 'chiti' (soul) - "Before all human communities, one pledge, idea remains as ideal. And when a human community views some specific land with motherly inclination, then it becomes a nation." Later it has been emphasised that nation could not be a reality in the absence of any of these elements.

"Deen Dayalji believed that nation is built on the foundation stone of some permanent values and ideals, which can be considered as the nation's soul. Deen Dayalji named the soul of the nation as chiti. Chiti is that nature of any nation which is foundational and originating at its birth, it is not determined by geographical and historical factors."

The notion of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya that the book tries to emphasise is this: "All attributes, which get associated with the nation in various phases of its history could not be included in the characteristics of that nation and these conditions could not be named as the culture of the nation also."

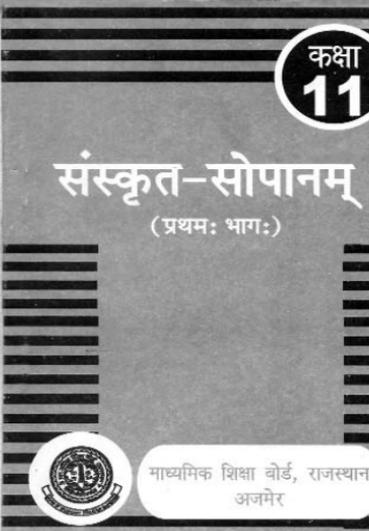
This makes it clear what is

... book tries to present Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya as an extremely generous and serious scholar and that is why it considers it necessary to tell us that he "did not want to present a narrow conception of nation."

meant by India's national culture. Its 'chiti' is comprised of Hindu ideals. Then how to look at the various instances of arrival of Islam and Christianity in India and their participation in the daily life of Indian people? Deen Dayal Upadhyaya ... propagated that those facts, which have got naturally associated with national life though historical events of past canaries, could not be negated, but it would be wrong to define Indian nation on the basis of these.

This book tries to present Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya as an extremely generous and serious scholar and that is why it considers it necessary to tell us that he "did not want to present a narrow conception of nation." It is written that he "did not want to negate all those characteristics, which have been generated in the national life in the past one thousand years." If you pay attention you will find that these one thousand years are portrayed as years of slavery. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya says: "It would not be logical to say that with slavery, the bond with our own life that preceded these one thousand years is totally broken... In the changed conditions, we have spent our life in maintaining our lives and struggling for freedom."

Is there any doubt left as to who is this 'we' of Deen Dayalji? He says generously : "The flow of our lives never remained blocked. It always kept moving forwards. The Ganga at Banares may not be as clear and clear as that at Haridwar, but is equally holy and liberating. It has internalised all tributaries and drains mixing in it, one must not take notice of the garbage and blackness of these. They have become Ganga themselves after merging in Ganga."



Who are these dark and dirty drains and canals, which are getting mixed up in the holy Ganga-like India or India-like holy Ganga, for the past one thousand years? What is the nature or 'chiti' of the Indian nation itself?

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's notion of swaraj (independent State) is as follows - "(i) The State must be run by those who are parts of the nation; (ii) the running of nation must be done in accordance with national interests only; and (iii) the State must have in itself the capacity to secure and enhance the interests of nation."

... in case of most thinkers some space has been given to their criticism while evaluating them, but there is no criticism of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and this is the last chapter on Indian thinkers. It would also be contextual to say that there is no criticism of Savarkar as well

Before this, we have read that the 'chiti' of nation is not made up of impacts, which come upon it; these remain to be external to the nation. In this way, the cultural virtue or chiti which would be the basis of running the Indian nation, could not be anything but Hindu itself. The influences of external ethnicities are described only as dirty drains and tributaries and since they could not enter into the very soul of nation, they are not the part of it. You must remember that part of the Sanskrit textbook, which said that if somebody has either his holyland or his fatherland outside the nation, then he has no right over the nation. In this way, who is authorised to have all rights of running the affairs of the Indian nation?

It must also be kept in view that though in case of most thinkers some space has been given to their criticism while evaluating them, but there is no criticism of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and this is the last chapter on Indian thinkers. It would also be contextual to say that there is no criticism of Savarkar as well.

THE MOTHER INDIA AND NATIONAL SYMBOLS

The Social Science-I of Class-X also laments the pollution of the India-like Ganga. In the eighth chapter (Social awareness) it is written that - "Social awareness could be accomplished through infusion of devotion, commitment and dedication towards 'mother India', into all individuals of society. We have to infuse a sense of respect and devotion towards great national personalities, holy places and national symbols ... a sense of ownership has to be developed through education, print and electronic media, sports and stage programmes and through other activities by showing and propagating ancient glorious traditions of society and tales of greatness of mother India."

But before doing all this, it is necessary to know that "attempts were made consistently to destroy Indian religion and culture during the period of slavery and foreign invaders. The dignity of women suffered heavily due to the invaders."

Those invaders, who consistently attempted to destroy "Indian religion and culture" or one thousand years, are still trying to do it again and again even in the twenty-first century. Now these 'invaders' have turned into a 'specific community'. In Chapter 8 of Social Science-I of Class-X, this 'specific community' is described in this way: "The international border touches 13 tehsils of Sri Ganganagar, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Barmer districts in Rajasthan. The residents of these border areas are extremely poor, uneducated and even superstitious due to religious faith. The appeasement of a specific community(!), social discrimination, religious conversions(!), sectarianism, infiltration, terrorism, etc., have become serious problems today."

The writers are hesitant about taking name of the 'specific community'. But the population which is poor and uneducated in the description above, suddenly becomes prosperous in the very next page: "There is famine, poverty, unemployment and very much less population on the Indian

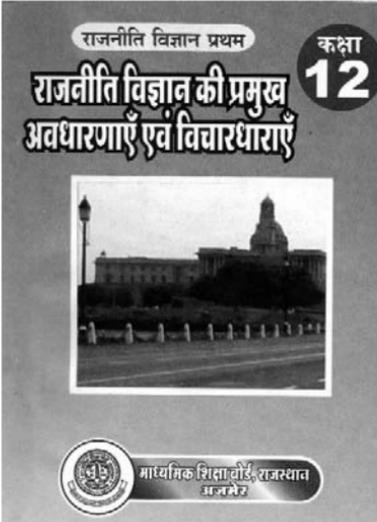
border. ...on the border of Rajasthan the people of a specific community are prosperous and politically influential. Their relatives live on the Borders with Pakistan who went there during Partition and wars. These people successfully carry out smuggling, spying and other anti-national activities. They get patronage easily from both sides. Their to and fro movements, legal or illegal, remain continued on occasions such as marriages." It is quite clear who this specific community' is?

When our journalist friend, Mr. Narayan Bareth, met the director of the Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education, and said that Muslims were angry about such descriptions, then the director replied shrewdly saying that the books referred only to a 'specific community', and there were many communities who live on the borders. If Muslims take offence, this only revealed their 'guilt'. This 'community' was earlier doing heinous crimes like 'smuggling of cows and minor girls'. It has also been written that "the Pakistani 'Doordarshan' and 'Akashvani' are spreading anti-India propaganda". The fact that the Doordarshan and Akashvani are brand names of India's official television and radio networks! For sure, these names for television and radio are not used in Pakistan.

The problem regarding 'specific community' is serious. That is why the population expansion of the 'specific community' must be studied carefully. In 1971, the population growth rate in Rajasthan was 22% and in Jaisalmer was 19%. According to the data of 1981 census, the population growth rate of the state was 32.9% and that of the border region (!) Jaisalmer district was 42.5%, that of Barmer district (!) 47.7%, and Bikaner district's 48.9%. These data are proof of a large scale infiltration.

The thrust of the infiltration of the 'specific community' has shaken up even the language of the book. That is why we should pay attention to the emotion and not to the language.

It is hard to understand how terrorism, infiltration and so on got included in the chapter on "social awareness". But in the very beginning itself, the meaning of awareness is equated with devotion, commitment and faith in the



'motherland'. Through this logic, the struggle against terrorism is also a part of 'social awareness'. Tracing the causes behind terrorism, the book tells us : "The enmity of Pakistan has grown so much that while singing songs of friendship, it began a proxy and undeclared war (!). From the Kashmir valley, three lakh Hindus were evicted through terror and fear, by means of rape and violence. The citizens of our own country became refugees." The next sentence is more important - "The horrible aspect of terrorism is inspired by religion and sect". The general definition of terrorism that is

given is - "Terrorism is an undeclared proxy war, which is sponsored by secret agency of Pakistan, ISI."

Later, while writing on 'Terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir' it is written - there are more than 100 militant organisations in Kashmir and 70 of them are active. The most interesting lines are these, which should be read by the government and political parties of Jammu & Kashmir. "The government of Jammu & Kashmir works under pressure of terrorists. Some leaders make pacts with them due to which the 'Rehabilitation Bill' was passed. The temporary Article-370 of Constitution is being maintained under pressure and appeasement. There is a heavy imbalance in favour of the Kashmir valley in the legislative assembly and Lok Sabha as compared to the Jammu and Ladakh regions. There is also heavy imbalance and discrimination in revenue expenditure, administrative system, development, tourism, education, etc., (!) which the contemporary governments have been doing under the pressure of terrorism."

Later, Jagmohan, a BJP leader and former governor of Jammu & Kashmir, has been quoted as saying "In India, a strange terrorism was nurtured. Such terrorism is a result of the soft and flimsy policy of appeasement and cravenness by the governments."

While reading this section on social awareness it is not your fault if you start feeling as if reading a pamphlet of the RSS. The measures to end terrorism are : "Proper action after formulation of strict laws to stop religious conversion and infiltration. End of all types of appeasement, political interests and interventions. Suppression of anti-national organisations like ULFA. Removal of names of intruders from voter-lists ... immediate suspension of Article-370 ... equipping army and security forces with modern means and giving them full freedom to eliminate terrorism."

Forget the big movements are going on for the repeal of draconian laws like the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958 and Illegal Activities Prevention Act, 2004. Also ignore the fact that Atal Behari Vajpayee, who is equated with the 'Father of the Nation', went to Pakistan by bus; since it is being suggested here - "Talk with Pakistan in the language of might." It has also been suggested that — "proposals and suggestions of nationalistic organisations must be thought over seriously." Who are these nationalistic organisations - on page 147 of the same chapter, name of a Border People's Welfare Committee has been given which is actually an offshoot of the RSS. In the same manner, the Emotional Unity Committee has also been described, which is again an RSS outfit.

The logic for such examples is clear from the very beginning of the chapter titled "Social awareness" - "An aware society is secure, self dependent, self-esteemed and organised. Chhatrapati Shivaji established 'Hindu Pad Padshahi' in the period of slavery through equal awareness and organisation. Guru Govind Singh also fought the Mughals through society's awareness and society's organisation. Rama achieved victory over a huge and mystical demonical power like Ravana only through awareness and organisation of forest dwelling communities. In the same manner, other saints and reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Ambedkar, Jyotiba Phule, Dr. Hedgewar, etc., all accomplished the task of social reform and ensured the end of wrong practices only through social awareness and social organisation."

THE CULTURAL LEGACY OF RAJASTHAN

This book, in its third chapter describes the 'Cultural legacy of Rajasthan'. Is it sheer coincidence that the names of prominent persons like Vijaydan Detha and Komal Kothari are left out from among those who have discovered the cultural uniqueness or legacy of the state. Is it just because of haste or because these people are not helpful in a particular type of cultural discovery? In the same manner, the popular gods and popular men of Rajasthan are mentioned here, but popular goddesses and popular women are absent. The role of women is dignified because "pilgrimage, yajna, rituals are not considered fruitful without woman." If the Rajasthani culture is described and even the mere mention of Kabir is absent, then is it still a coincidence? Any research on Kabir is considered incomplete without the traditions of Rajasthan, but perhaps he is not fit for the project of a specific type of cultural nationalism. In the same way, when women of Rajasthan have to be described as those who commit sati, or as those brave women who do Jauhar, in that case a mere mention of 'love crazy' Meera, would of course be polluting. That is why she is mentioned only in the musical tradition of Rajasthan, and that too only symbolically.

Are we objecting to the fact that the cultural nationalism of the RSS is being taught in the textbooks of Rajasthan? Should students not be allowed to know the ideas of the RSS, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Savarkar, etc.? The RSS is legally active in this country, though many of us are against it. It has the freedom to propagate its ideas through its own resources, even when they go against the secular Constitution of India. Anti-Sangh ideas also have to confront them on the basis of argument. But can money and resources of a secular nation, in which every one including Hindus, Muslims, Christian, dalits, tribals have contributed equally, along with the educational institutions and its various organs, would be used to declare a specific religion as superior to others? A Muslim mother can ask : Why should I pay taxes to such a State that is using my own taxes to spread hatred against me." Similarly a

dalit or Dravidian can ask why and how should he/she read these books, which say that Indian culture is synonymous to Aryan culture?

These are not superficial questions. The arrangement for education of a complex and diverse society like India is the constitutional responsibility of State. A class in Rajasthan is no exception to an average class of India, as it is also comprised of Hindu, Muslim, tribal, dalit boys and girls. The word 'we' used in the textbook of this class should mean all communities and identities. If any of these communities were excluded from this 'we', would not it be impossible to run the system of education?

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The tragedy of the Indian education system is that it is totally based upon textbooks and that too on particularly one set of textbooks. Since education at every level culminates in exams in which certain questions are asked and good marks and the value of education of a particular standard are judged through the ability to deliver answers deemed to be correct and 'satisfactory', according to the evaluators, the whole energy of the teacher is devoted towards fixing the correct answers in the minds of students. It is these correct answers, which comprise the textbooks. In this way, the total knowledge of school education means mere acquiring of these correct answers. The answers learned in schools later act as the construction materials that constitute the students' mental horizons.

The first generation school goers have no other option except the State-supplied cheap textbooks as they can't buy anything else to read. In this context, the makers of textbooks must themselves ask as to whether they have made the textbooks rich enough; are they succeeding in arousing the curiosity of their readers or not? Are they providing reliable information?

In the report of first Secondary Education Commission, its chief Mudaliyar had assumed that more than one set of textbooks would be used in the schools. It could not happen even after 60 years of Independence. In this context, the responsibilities of textbooks have increased manifold. In those states, where the majority of population going to schools is actually the first generation of their communities to get this chance, the load on textbooks is great. These first generation school goers have no other option except the State-supplied cheap textbooks as they can't buy anything else to read. In this context, the makers of textbooks must themselves ask as to whether they have made the textbooks rich enough; are they suc-

ceeding in arousing the curiosity of their readers or not? Are they providing reliable information? Is their language attentive? Is the use of words accurate and is it beautiful?

How can ideas be correct in those books where neither the name of writers nor their context have been given, where data are presented without the mention of their sources, where nothing is correct whether it be the use of masculine or feminine gender, or the difference between differently pronounced alphabets, or the adjustment of genders in subject and object, etc.? Just reciting the words like 'pure Indian culture' cannot culture one.

SHOWCASING THE FASCISM

The books of Rajasthan for 2006 from the Secondary Education Board, Ajmer do not fulfil the basic requisite conditions of school textbooks. It is a matter of sorrow and anguish that the public money has been used to make such books, which propagate the ideas of a militaristic upper caste (Aryan) male and Hindu nationalism in an extremely crude manner. They actually culminate in describing the attributes of those ideas that we call Fascism, which are no longer relevant even in its own place of origin. The points of criticism of Fascism are mentioned in Chapter 15 (Fascism) of Book I of Political Science, but this chapter ends while "mentioning the significance" of Fascism: Despite numerous criticisms, it has its own place in political thought. The contribution of fascism could be understood on the basis of following points:

- Fascism does away with the demerits of democracy
- In situations of crises, immediate decisions are required and Fascism is appropriate for it
- In Fascism the spirit of nationalism develops
- Fascism prevents free competition
- The nation remains secure if the government is in the hands of an able person
- Italy developed economically and industrially in the age of Mussolini. In this way, though Fascism was a short-term system, yet its significance will continue all the times

Is the description of significance of Fascism in the last book of the last year of school education a mere coincidence or it is the logical culmination of the cultural nationalistic project of new schoolbooks of Rajasthan? If we keep in mind the doubts and cynicism which exist in the minds of the middle class, then does it not seem logical to try Fascism to remove the demerits of democracy? When the educated Indian middle class accepted the alliance led by the BJP to come to power at the Centre, were they not seeing Fascism as a potion for a vicious democracy?

If we keep in consideration the fact that the presence of youth in the Shakhas had decreased, then the use of classrooms in BJP-ruled states becomes significant. The material of the Sangh Shakhas' 'Bauddhik' (class) will now be disseminated through textbooks, level by level. A dangerous perspective of schools emerges from the analysis of school books of Rajasthan: the majority of the boys and girls will come out of schools with a complex, considering themselves superior to the others, while students of other communities accept their inferiority due to the lack of options and then decide that they neither study in these schools, nor read these text books. Every class would be an invisible scene of a silent hate-lab. Is the educated community of India, Rajasthan willing to go to this extent?

Since our childhood, we have been hearing that India had all riches that the world has today. Who would like this to be taught to their children? This is the sheer bad luck of the students of Rajasthan that they are forced to read at almost all levels in Sanskrit, social science, etc., that - "Many sages of ancient India were scientists. Many scientific discoveries were made in India but later, due to a conspiracy, these scientific achievements were forgotten." In Chapter 4 of the Social science textbook for Class-X, which tells about the 'contribution of India to the world', it has been written "in the Samhita code of sage Agasta (actually Agastya), whether it be Yantra Shastra or metallurgy or zinc, iron, mercury, gold, all of these were discovered first in India, as also in the case of veterinary science, writing, aeronautics, shipping, botany, etc. 'Plastic surgery' was already here, and an example of 'organ transplant' is present in the extremely old incident of transplanting an elephant's head over Ganesha's body."

The Hindu mythical characters like Brahma, Vishwamitra, Ganesha, Bakasur, etc., are all described as historical characters in different places. The Science-I textbook of science for Class-X begins with the life of Sushruta who is described as a predecessor of the Vedic sage Vishwamitra. Similarly, Sanskrit is described as the mother of all Indian languages, not only in Sanskrit textbooks, but elsewhere too, while anyone with even a superficial knowledge of linguistics knows that this is not correct.

What they say

Fascism was criticised vehemently and with the fall of Mussolini after the end of World War II, it ended. Despite numerous criticism, it has its own space in political thought. The contributions of Fascism could be understood on the basis of following points.

- **Fascism does away with the demerits of Democracy**
- **In situations of crisis, immediate decisions are required and fascism is appropriate for it**
- **In Fascism the spirit of nationalism develops**
- **Fascism prevents free competition**
- **The nation remains secure if the government is in the hands of an able person**
- **Italy developed economically and industrially in the age of Mussolini. In this way, though Fascism was a short-term system, yet its significance will continue all the times**

While sending one's children to schools, no mother or father wants that their children should study the pamphlets distributed on roads. For example, if someone believes that the Vedas are the most ancient texts of the world, or that Sanskrit is the oldest language, then nothing can be gained by fighting with him, but we will think a thousand times before appointing him as a tutor of our children. The Sanskrit book of Class XI declares - "whatever science and education are here, their origin lies in our Vedas. Our religion is the oldest religion of world. Whatever religions are there in the world, all have originated from the Vedas."

Is this book supposed to be read by only those who consider the Veda-based

religion as their own? Otherwise in which manner shall a tribal, a Christian, a Parsi, a Muslim read this as 'our religion' described here? Shall he read it altogether? Or read it even if he considers it wrong, because whatever is written in the textbooks is taught without questioning?

The textbooks of Rajasthan pose a serious moral question before MPs, for the representatives of people and educationists of the country. What is the crime committed by us, whose repercussion our children have to face? Is there still courage and energy within us to initiate a campaign to scrap these textbooks? Shall the Supreme Court of India and High Court of Rajasthan not take into cognisance such an obscene, vulgar and crude distortion of the right of the children of Rajasthan for availing good education?

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