CHAPTER VI
CHAPTER VI

ON HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS

6.1 Practising 'self-realization' on collective basis

In reading through the varied and various selection of the thinkers' writings and speeches, one is struck again and again by the passion and sincerity with which they pleaded the cause of better understanding among individuals and communities. Everywhere in the world individuals and groups are divided because of fear, suspicion and hatred. Feeling of insecurity is perhaps the major cause of individual and social dissensions. According to Rabindranath and Gandhi, a person who is integrated and sure of himself fears none and consequently provokes no fear. To the thinkers, salvation from 'ego' or the principle of 'self-realization' should not be regarded only as an individualistic aim, but as a collective aim. Both Gandhi and Tagore looked forward to a day when the principle of the identity of selves no more pertains only to the spiritual experiences of a few but finds its application in collective life as well.

In short, the theme of the thinkers' teaching is that, the individual must rise above fear, jealousy and hate by discarding his own egocentric impulses. When such
individuals combine themselves into a community, the problems of communal jealousy and discord will disappear. In its wider application, the principle of 'self-realization' denotes the act of moralisation of one's own surroundings also. The former does not contradict the latter, rather it embraces it. The individual is bound up with the life of the community and therefore one cannot expect his individual salvation except in relation to every other individual. The ideal of individual salvation and collective salvation as the thinkers believed was rolled into one.

6.2 Hindu-Muslim unity 'an end in itself'

Accordingly, both Rabindranath and Gandhi, regarded the issue concerning Hindu-Muslim unity as an end in itself. The doctrine of the end justifying the means had no appeal to the thinkers. They never thought of using the phenomena as an anti-British propaganda means for winning certain political gains.

The thinkers believed that the Hindus and Muslims were two blood-brothers. They had been born in the same country, their ancestors for many generations had lived and died in this country, they were sharing jointly all the happiness and sorrows of a common life. Rabindranath wrote that Hindu-Muslim unity was required not only for safeguarding minority interest but for internal growth and enrichment of Indian culture itself, which is a combination
of the Hindu and Muslim cultures as a whole. Paying heartfelt tributes to the 'Sufi-saints' of medieval period, Rabindranath pointed out that the "Muslims had come to India with a culture which was aggressively antagonistic to her own. But in her saints, the spirit of the Upanishads worked in order to attain fundamental harmony between the things that were apparently irreconcilable". The poet explained that it was 'love of God' and 'man' that inspired medieval saints of India like Kabir and Nanak to work for real unity "drowning the border-lines of separation between Hindus and Musalmans".

Born and brought up in a family which was known at one time, as 'Pirali Brahmins' for maintaining social relationship with the Muslims and having Rammohon Roy as their 'spiritual Guru' (who also had been inspired both by Islamic and Hindu scriptures and thoughts), Rabindranath always maintained a profound sympathy and fellowfeelings for his Muslim brothers and sisters. Rabindranath's father Debendranath Tagore who was also well-versed in 'Urdu' and 'Islam', once tried to evolve a common faith comprehending the essential truths underlying every religion including Islam.

In later days, when Rabindranath was entrusted with the responsibilities of looking after his family estates in rural Bengal (from 1890) he came in close contact with
the poor farmers, of whom majority were Muslims. As pointed out specifically by Maitrayee Debi, in her article entitled, "The Muslim Characters in Rabindra Literature"\(^3\), Rabindranath in his many short stories depicted the Muslim characters with his utmost and amazing sympathy, love and fellowfeelings for them. The poet always defended the cause of the poor Muslim community. He believed that they had always been economically and politically exploited by the so-called clever Hindu 'Samajpati' or leaders of the society.

In his many essays and articles dealing with the issues of Hindu-Muslim unity, like the Banga-bibhag (The Partition of Bengal) written in 1904, "The Byadhi-O-Pratikar" (Desease and Remedy) written in 1907, "Samasya" (The Problem) written in 1908-9, "Sadupay" written in 1908, The Hindu-Visva-Vidyalaya (Hindu University) written in 1911, Rabindranath appealed to his Hindu brothers to take the special initiative of dispelling some of the misgivings and distrust that incidentally grew up in the minds of the Muslims during their long association with the Hindus. It was unfortunate, as pointed out by Rabindranath, that having lived together for ages, taking fruits from the same orchard, drinking water from the same river, enjoying the same light, speaking the same language, suffering the same distress - "still we could not formulate a code of neighbourly conduct,
the code which is sanctioned by the right conduct. We have been harbouring for long a sin to the effect that we could not but remain aloof in spite of our living together.

Like Rabindranath, Gandhi was interested in establishing real unity of hearts between Hindus and Muslims. As one knows from Gandhi's writings that from his early childhood he made friendship with people of all communities. Gandhi wrote, "I do not remember a single occasion of a quarrel with a Muslim or Parsi boy in the schools." Even as a boy at school, he had many Muslim friends. He added that "Even since the days of my youth (I) had a longing to see the difference between Hindus and Mohammadans obliterated." Gandhi wrote in his Autobiography that he went to South Africa in charge of a case for Muslim friends of his brother. "I became a 'Coolie' barrister in order to serve my labourer friends there and I really served Hindus through Muslims whose employee I was. Hindu-Muslim unity was part of my very being," he explained. In South Africa, he came in close contact with the Muslim community and as he said, "There, I was able to learn their habits, thoughts and aspirations." Gandhi remembered and mentioned with profound honour the name of Sheth Cachalia and his other Muslim friends in his Autobiography, who joined him in his Satyagraha movement in South Africa and helped him in many ways. C. F. Andrews in his study on Gandhi, pointed out that Gandhi had profound admiration for the character of
Prophet Muhammad and for his son-in-law Ali, who had become to Gandhi the symbols of "Tender Love and Suffering". The story of Hasan and Husan and their extreme gesture of self-sacrifice and suffering which is recited annually at each "Muharram" celebration, as pointed out by Andrews, had been a source of permanent spiritual inspiration to Gandhi. In the words of Andrews, "Thus in his (Gandhi's) own way he has found the teaching of the Prophet of Islam fully compatible with the principle of Ahimsa". There was an Imam who had accompanied Gandhi from South Africa and took up his abode with him at his own Ashram. As pointed out by C. F. Andrews, Gandhi often used to meet him for quiet counsel, sympathy and help and their mutual regard remained constant and unchanging for over thirty years.11. Once, Gandhi was asked what did he mean by Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi replied that "It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows".12 Gandhi insisted that unless there was real unity of hearts between the two communities, India could not advance.

Even when Gandhi supported the "Khilaphat Cause", he had no intention to use the unity move as an anti-British drive. As one knows from Gandhi's Autobiography that during the Khilaphat Conference Gandhi was persuaded by some of his Hindu friends, to use the "cow protection" issue as a price for the Hindu's support to the Muslim's cause.
Gandhi plainly rejected the suggestion as he wrote, "I suggested that the two questions (the cow protection issue and khilaphat cause) should not be mixed up or considered in the spirit of bargain, but should be decided on their own merits and treated separately." His arguments appealed to those present and, as a result, the question of cow protection was not discussed at this conference.

During his long association with the Congress, Gandhi always discouraged its members not to exploit the unity cause as an instrument to be used against the British. Rabindranath, like Gandhi, always insisted as he observed, "It is futile to expect a lasting bridge between the two to be made with the feeble cement of brotherhood manufactured on the Congress Platform." In his innumerable writings and speeches of that time, Rabindranath like Gandhi appealed to his countrymen not to make the issue a political game or mix it with the political happenings of the day. Even Rabindranath was critical of the so-called Hindu's support to the 'Khilaphat cause'. He explained that mere political support to the 'Khilaphat movement' would not solve the real problem concerning Hindu-Muslim unity.

Rabindranath wrote in his article, "Way to Unity", "If there are differences between Hindu and Muslim which are real, they cannot be spirited away by jugglery. If in our anxiety to secure some convenience, we ignore the facts, the
facts will ignore our convenience . . . They may form an alliance for some immediate object of mutual self-interest but these alliances, like political alliances between countries, are not only transitory but in constant danger of ending in violent reaction".

6.3 The British game

Both Rabindranath and Gandhi maintained that the British rulers in India following its peculiar policy of 'divide and rule' always helped to widening the gap between the two communities. To the thinkers, the so-called Hindu-Muslim problem was an artificial growth of the late British period in India. In 1932, Rabindranath during an interview with the peasants in Russia, commented, "I find from personal observations that this strife (between Hindus and Muslims) has been going on for the past twenty-five years only. Before this period there was, as far as I can recall - and I have lived for many years in the village - no such animosity and enmity between them".17

6.4 Disunity a temporary phase

In his many articles and speeches of the time, Rabindranath appealed to the ruling authority i.e. the British administrators not to interfere in the matters related to Hindu-Muslim relationship. Let the matter be solved by themselves. The British administrator's
involvements in the so-called local matters would make the things worse and unmanageable. In the long run, it would also injure the interests of the British rulers, as a bad means could never fetch a good result.

As President of the Bengal Provincial Conference, at Pabna in 1908, Rabindranath observed: "This conflict is bound to die in course of time. Government would hardly be equal to fanning the flame for all time to come. . . . If the houses of subjects are set in flame, some time or other through uncertain directions the fire is likely to spread up to the premises of the king's palace." Gandhi like Rabindranath, believed that the conflict or disunity was only a passing phase in Indian history and it would die in course of time. Gandhi observed, "Hindus and Muslims are going more and more away from each other. But this does not disturb me. Somehow or other, I feel that the separation is going only to bring them all closer later on." He also maintained that the British government were fomenting the dissensions. "Let us recognize that there is an interest actively waking to keep us - Hindus and Musalmans - divided." He emphasized that there could be no unity "whilst the third party is there to prevent it.

*The underline has been given to emphasize the words.
It created the artificial division and it keeps it up. Gandhi also shared the opinions of some of the historians who believed that the British historians purposefully depicted Aurangzeb as a staunch anti-Hindu ruler. He was not as bad as the British historians interpreted him. Gandhi added, "There is nothing to prove that the Hindus and Musalams lived at war with one another before the British rule. The quarrel was not old it was coeval with the British advent.

6.5 Mutual tolerance and equality

Mutual tolerance and racial equality according to the thinkers, should be taken as the fundamental principles not as a temporary measure of establishing Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi observed, "Both the Hindus and Muslams should learn to stand alone and against the whole world. This unity is not to be between weak parties but between men who are conscious of their strength. Rabindranath, like Gandhi, maintained that real harmony and peace would be possible only when the Hindus and Muslims would be treated on an equal footing. The Muslims should be given equal opportunities and privileges in the society like that of Hindus and thus the root cause of fear, distrust and

*The underline has been given to emphasize the words.*
disappointment in the minds of the Muslims should be eliminated. Tagore appealed to his Hindu friends to extend job opportunities, education privileges, and honourable social and Governmental positions to their Muslim brothers, so that they could psychologically feel more assured and satisfied. "Then and then only will the two brothers join hands", emphasized Rabindranath.

6.6.1 Peaceful co-existence

Both the thinkers pointed out that total unity i.e. elimination of all differences in every sphere of life (i.e. in religion, customs, language, etc.) between the two communities was neither possible nor desirable. Real unity does not mean removal of all the differences. Gandhi observed, "The true beauty of Hindu-Muslim unity lies in each remaining true to his own religion and yet being true to other".

Rabindranath, like Gandhi, in his many essays of the time appealed to both the Hindus and the Muslims to cast off the shackles of or free their minds from the grip of un-meaning and non-essential traditions and customs of their religions and work for real unity. He wrote, "Religion unfolds the key to salvation whereas the religious system invites the bondage of slavery". The poet analysed the essential differences between a Hindu and a Muslim.
A Muslim is dominated by the externals of religion which make it difficult to establish channels of intimate relationship with the Hindus. In the same way, an orthodox Hindu lives insulated in the confinement of his conventional solitary cell. He is a world which has one gate of entrance, the gate of birth, though the gates of departure are innumerable, as pointed out by Rabindranath. The poet appealed to both of them to overcome their mutual exclusiveness or hindrances from within. Tagore wrote, "The country where religion (or sastric injunction) prescribes the hatred of man, where people are doomed to perdition for the drinking of water from the hands of neighbour . . . . Those who have isolated themselves, those who are overpowered by a spirit of exclusiveness rather than the spirit of oneness, they have no escape from the bondage of poverty, insult and slavery." Rabindranath also emphasized the fact that the British could not be blamed, as the sins of the two communities became the source of their strength; British rule was merely a symptom of the disease. The Hindu-Muslim conflict was deepening because the British were only fomenting the trouble which had already been there. It is interesting to note that Gandhi expressed the same truth only in different words, "Only those can be set by the ears by a third party who are in the habit of quarrelling". Gandhi added that he did not believe that the British government were solely responsible
for increasing dissension between the two communities.  

6.6.2 Interdinning, intermarriage, the cow-slaughtering issues

Gandhi clearly pointed out that inter-dinning and intermarriage were not necessary factors in Hindu-Muslim friendship and unity. He observed, "If we make ourselves believe that Hindus and Mussalmans cannot be one unless they interdining and intermarriage we create an artificial barrier between us which could hardly be removed at all."  

Although Rabindranath made no specific comment on intermarriage among Hindu and Muslims, he made it clear that to refuse food served by a Muslim friend on the ground of religion was itself a crime against humanity and God. Like Gandhi, Rabindranath was against the elimination of all kinds of religious and social differences between the two communities by coercion or by the logic of expediency. The poet explained that Hinduism in real sense asked every body to follow his own religion in the true sense of the term, and at the same time, not becoming a threat to others in doing the same. Hinduism recognises the differences between communities as real and beneficial to the common good of the society, it seeks to establish 'unity in diversity' or harmony among differences. On this basis both the thinkers argued that the Muslims should be allowed to
slaughter the 'cow', so long as they follow the rules of hygienic restriction and maintain good neighbourly behaviour towards the Hindus. It is interesting to know that Gandhi, who is often described as the great champion of Cow Protection Cause, observed, "I maintain that Muslims should have full freedom to slaughter cows". He explained that fullest recognition of freedom to the Muslims to slaughter cow was indispensable for communal harmony. Any coercive action taken by a Hindu to stop cow-slaughtering would lead to more chaos and confusion. Gandhi added, "I make bold to assert without fear of contradiction, that it is not Hinduism to kill a fellowman even to save the cow".

Similarly, Tagore explained that he had full faith in the good sense of Muslims. He did not share the views of those who argued that the Muslims did some acts including cow slaughtering only to provoke the Hindus against them. In Rabindranath's famous novel, The Home and the World, the hero Nikhilesh, said that the Muslims should be given full freedom to slaughter the cows. If the Muslims were given resistance by their Hindu brothers in the name of religion, it would create more trouble and difficulties in the way of communal harmony.

*The underline has been given to emphasize the words.
Rabindranath explained that the ideal of unity should always be placed before the so-called "religion" which preached separation and division. The poet wrote, "When religion tells me that I should be friendly with the Musulmans, I accept that reverently without a word of argument for the truth underlying the dictum is for me as the great ocean itself". But the poet added, that when religious orthodoxy asked him to reject food served by his Muslim friend, in the words of Rabindranath, they "are really placing the priest before deity" and thus insult "the religion in whose name they dare to speak".

6.7 Gandhi and the Khilafat movement

As it has already been pointed out, according to some critics including Rabindranath, who believed that Hindu's support to the Khilafat cause was only 'superficial' or motivated by some political gains and it would secure no real purpose for Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi, on the other hand, supported the cause with an utmost sincerity and honestly believed that the Hindus should always help their Muslim brothers in time of need and crisis. Gandhi did not take the 'support-move' as a 'marriage of convenience' or as a tool to be used as an anti-British drive. As one knows from Gandhi's Autobiography, Gandhi was approached by his Muslim friend Hasrat Mohani at the conference, that the 'Khilafat cause' should be used as a means against the
British. In the words of Gandhi, "His (Hasrat Mahani's) object was to wreak vengeance on the British Empire, in case justice was denied in the matter of Khilafat". Gandhi opposed the suggestion as he wrote, on the "score of principle". Or in other words, Gandhi on principle did not like to use the 'Khilafat cause' as a means of political expediency. In the same way, as he wrote in his *Autobiography*, he opposed the suggestions that "cow protection issue" or 'Punjab question' (the Zallianwalla Bag Wrong) should be tagged on to that of the Khilafat wrong.

6.8 The 'two nation' theory

Both Gandhi and Rabindranath were against the so-called "two nation" theory enunciated by some Muslim politicians of the time and supported by the British rulers. Rabindranath did not live long to see the birth of 'Pakistan' and Gandhi had to pay the price of partition of India by his own blood in 1948.

Rabindranath's views regarding the 'Partition of Bengal' in 1905, his active involvement in the anti-partition drive in 1905-6, his enthusiastic move to start 'Rakhi-Bandhan-Ceremony' in 1906, as a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity clearly indicate that he was totally against the 'two nation' theory the cause, so dearly upheld by the British rulers from 1905 and so enthusiastically supported by some Muslim politicians of the time.
In describing the farreaching effects of the partition of Bengal, Rabindranath wrote as early as in 1908, in his essay entitled 'Sadupay' (Good Ways) [42]. "Muslims are in a majority on the eastern side of Bengal . . . . This Muslim zone is bound up with Hindus on account of uniformity in language, literature and education. If Bengal is divided into two zones, the Muslim zone and the Hindu zone, then all the ties that bind Hindus and Muslims will be unloosened by and by . . . . if the 'king' proposes to widen the gulf . . . . in course of time Hindu-Muslim exclusiveness and intensity of mutual jealousy will be undoubtedly on the increase. In fine, in this unfortunate country it is not difficult to create disunity, the basic problem is how to achieve unity".

In his many writings of the time, Rabindranath emphatically pointed out that the Muslims might differ from the Hindus on religion and social customs but that did not mean that they constituted a separate nationality. The Muslims constitute an indivisible part of Indian nationality as do the Hindus, wrote Rabindranath [43]. In his famous article on "Banga-bibhag" (the partition of Bengal) Tagore appealed to his countrymen in 1311 B.S. (1904) to resist firmly the partition drive enunciated by the British rulers. He wrote appealing the both Hindus and Muslims;
"We shall remain firm where we have our own strength; we shall remain alive to our duty; we shall place reliance on those who are our own people. We shall not despair, nor shall we complain against the conduct of Government. We want no favours; governmental hostility will increase our prowess." Although Tagore's warning was uttered in 1904-8, it had a special significance, in the context of the demand of the Moslim League for the establishment of sovereign states in the Moslim-dominated areas in pursuance of the resolution, adopted at its Lahore session in 1940. Like Gandhi, Tagore could not accept disunity, as the last word on Hindu-Muslim relations. His basic apprehension was that the division of the country into different Muslim zones and Hindu zones would complete the phase of disruption, would bring a disaster to the age-old Indian civilization, based on the spirit of 'unity in diversity'.

It was Tagore's prophetic vision that he sensed in the Bengal partition the danger of division of India into Hindu zones and Muslim zones, which he condemned unequivocally, in the interests of lasting unity between the two communities. With him unity and inter-dependence were not questions of expediency, they were fundamental to the solution of the problems of the individual in relation to his society, country and the world.

He stood for the awakening of different sects,
different communities. Like Gandhi, Rabindranath believed that every particular community had its own distinctive features, special contribution to enrich human civilization. This consciousness of one's own culture and tradition helps one to rise to greatness. The realisation of diversity is not an antidote to real unity. Like Gandhi, Rabindranath insisted that unity could come only when the two parties were equally strong and enlightened. The Muslims should be given full opportunities and privileges to develop from within and then and then only an effective unity could be attained, wrote Rabindranath.

As every student of history knows, Gandhi from the beginning was against the partition of India on communal or religious basis as propagated by Muslim League leaders like Jinnah and others. Gandhi bitterly condemned the 'partition move' taken by the Muslim League. "I am firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand as put forth by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful", observed Gandhi. He described the "two nation" theory as a theory of "untruth". Gandhi repeatedly argued that 'religion' could not be taken as the basis of nationhood. He wrote that, "a Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike". He emphasized the fact that he often found it difficult to distinguish "a Bengali Hindu and a Bengali
A student of India's national movement, knows it very well, that Gandhi did not willingly give his consent to the decision taken by the British of partitioning India in 1946, while most of the congress leaders like Nehru, Patel and others accepted the proposal as the last course for solving Hindu-Muslim problem. Gandhi was dead against the proposed partition. He observed, "As a man of non-violence, I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For, it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God .... I must rebel against the idea that millions of Indians who were Hindus the other day changed their nationality on adopting Islam as their religion. But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of the Muslims who think that they are a different nation."" 

The above statements made by Gandhi on the partition of India indicate only, the unfathomable agony and sorrow he experienced during the time. It only aroused a feeling
of distrust in the minds of the Muslim and the Hindus alike, who regarded Gandhi only as their enemy. His anti-partition attitude displeased many Muslims and his sympathy towards the Muslims aroused suspicion in the hearts of some conservative minded Hindus. In fact Gandhi's noble death for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity proved how much sincere he was to the cause. Not only Gandhi's death but his whole life was dedicated to the sacred cause of Hindu-Muslim unity.

He undertook prolonged fast as a gesture of self-purification on behalf of Indian people as a whole, whenever communal riots broke out in any part of India. He observed, "When a Hindu or a Musalman does evil, it is evil done by an Indian to an Indian, and each one of us must personally share the blame and try to remove the evil".

It is interesting to note, while Rabindranath and Gandhi insisted on solving the Hindu-Muslim problem on social level, Jinnah, the supreme architect of 'Pakistan', elevated the issue to a political plane by demanding separate statehood for Muslim nationality. Rabindranath was against that which he termed as the 'spirit of the Nation' and 'nationality'. To him it was nothing but an 'intense consciousness of self-interest concentrated in political organisation'. According to the poet, "such an unlimited cultivation of over-consciousness of self by the whole people must inevitably produce its harvest of suspicion,
Unquestionably, the present policy of Pakistan government towards India is based on this spirit of conflict, suspicion, exclusiveness and hatred, which Rabindranath described as the 'spirit' of the modern nation, several decades ago. It proves in other way that the birth of Pakistan did not come from within but was imposed from outside by some frantic Muslim politicians who used 'religion' of 'Islam' as an artificial means for winning some political gains. The last 25 years history of 'Pakistan', the recent rebellion of the East Bengal against the military rulers of West Punjab proves the futility or the emptiness of the 'logic' on which 'Pakistan' was created.
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APPENDIX - VI

Rabindranath: Hindu-Muslim unity is an end in itself

"Peace is true and not conflict, Love is true and not hatred; and Truth is One, not the disjoined multitude".

Creative Unity, p.15.

"The true way to maintain a harmonious unity is by according due respect to the true distinctiveness of the different parts . . . . At the period of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal, we experienced a desire to make the Muslims one with ourselves but we did not succeed in doing so. Doubtless a coalition with them would have been very convenient for it to be feasible. If there are differences between Hindu and Muslim which are real, they cannot be spirited away by jugglery. If in our anxiety to secure some convenience, we ignore the facts, the facts will ignore our convenience. We failed, because the invitation which we extended to the Muslim was for serving a purpose, not because it was inevitable as is the invitation of mutual good feeling in common service........ Peace between the two sections of the population can be had either through apathy and forgetfulness or through fear of foreign rule and common hatred against it. They may form an alliance for some such immediate object of mutual self-interest but
these alliances like political alliances between countries are not only transitory but in constant danger of ending in violent reaction".

Rabindranath Tagore, 'The way to unity'.

"For ages we (Hindu and Muslims) have lived together taking fruits from the same orchard, drinking water from the same river, enjoying the same light, speaking the same language suffering the same distress - still we could not formulate a code of neighbourly conduct, the code which is sanctioned by the canons of right conduct. We have been harbouring for long a sin to the effect that we could not but remain aloof in spite of our living together".

Rabindranath Tagore, 'Diseases and Remedy'.

"The country where religion (shastras) prescribes the hatred of man, where people are doomed to perdition for the drinking of water from the hand of a neighbour . . . . Those who have isolated themselves, those who are overpowered by a spirit of exclusiveness rather than the spirit of oneness, they have no escape from the bondage of poverty, insult and slavery".

Ibid.

"Dharma is the innermost nature, the essence, the implicit truth of all things. Dharma is the ultimate purpose
that is working in ourself. When any wrong is done we say that dharma is violated, meaning that the lie has been given to our true nature".


Gandhi: *Hindu-Muslim unity is an end in itself.*

"My longing is to be able to cement the two (Hindus and Muslims) with my blood, if necessary".

_The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi_, p.398.

"(Hindu-Muslim unity) consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal by sharing of one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration".

_Ibid._

"Communal pacts . . . . are valueless unless they are backed by the union of hearts".


Rabindranath: *Disunity a temporary phase.*

"When I (Rabindranath) was young I never saw such brutalities as are perpetrated today. In those days, in villages and towns there was no lack of goodwill between the two communities (Hindus and Muslims). They attended
their mutual festivals and shared their daily joys and sorrows. This ugly affair has become about since the political movement began in our country".

_Letters from Russia_, p.30.

"The solution (of Hindu Muslim conflict) may come only with a change of heart or with the change of time . . . These (the age-old barriers and inhibition) we must shake off before we can hope to attain freedom in any sphere. Such a radical change can come only with true education and spiritual discipline. We must discard such worn-out conventions as teach us to hug the cage and forget the wings. And then and then only we shall attain real well-being for all. Hindu Muslim amity waits for the fulness of time".

- From a letter of Rabindranath to Dr. Kalidas Nag. 

Gandhi: _Disunity a temporary phase._

"This (Hindu Muslim disunity) however, is no cause for the slightest despair. I know that the demon of disunion is at his last gasp. A lie has no bottom. Disunion is a lie. Even if it is sheer self-interest, it will bring about unity".

"Hindus and Muslims are going more and more away from
each other. But this does not disturb me. Somehow or other, I feel that the separation is growing only to bring them all closer later on”.


“For I believe with the late Poet Iqbal that Hindus and Muslims, who have lived together under the shadow of the mighty Himalayas and have drunk the waters of the Ganges and Yamuna, have a unique message for the world”.

Ibid.

Rabindranath: The British game.

“We should not lose heart if this disunity between Hindus and Muslims is turned into a conflict by a third power - we shall certainly be able to overcome the created disorder if we can banish the evil of disunity from our midst. The conflict is bound to die in course of time. Government would hardly be equal to fanning the flame for all time to come. If they encourage this conflagration, time will soon come when they shall have to call firebrigade to quell it in their own interests. If the houses of subjects are set in flame, sometime or other through uncertain directions the fire is likely to spread up to the premises of the king's palace”.

Gandhi : The British game.

"Let us recognize that there is an interest actively working to keep us - Hindus and Muslims - divided".

M. K. Gandhi, The way to communal harmony, p.194.

"It should not be surprising if the Government fomented the troubles, it being their policy to divide us . . . Only those can be set by the ears of a third party who are in the habit of quarrelling".

Ibid., p.195.

"I am firmly of opinion that there is no unity whilst the third party is there to prevent it. It created the artificial division and it keeps it up."

Ibid., p.197.

Gandhi : "Two nation" theory.

"The two-nation theory is an untruth . . . . A Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike, I have often found it difficult to distinguish by outward sign between a Bengali Hindu and a Bengali Muslim . . . . The Hindus and Muslims of India are not two nations. Those whom God has made one,
man will never be able to divide".


"I have always held that there is no distinction between the two (Hindus and Muslims). Even though their observances differ, these do not separate them. They undoubtedly profess different religions, but they like others come from the same root".


"We are not two nations. Those who behave the Hindus and Muslims to be two nations harm both communities and India".


"Why is India not one nation? Was it not during, say, the Moghul period? Is India composed of two nations? If it is, why only two? Are not Christians a third, Parsis a fourth, and so on? Are Muslims of China a nation separate from the other Chinese? . . . . How are the Muslims of the Punjab different from the Hindus and the Sikhs? Are they not all Punjabis, drinking the same water, breathing the same air and deriving sustenance from the same soil? What is there to prevent them following their respective religious practices? Are Muslims all the world over a separate nation? Or are the Muslims of India only to be a
"Can we have separate nation distinct from others?"


**Rabindranath: Two nation theory.**

"Muslims are in a majority on the eastern side of Bengal . . . . This Muslim zone is bound up with Hindus on account of uniformity in language, literature and education. If Bengal is divided into two zones, then all the ties that bind Hindus and Muslims will be unloosened by and by. It is difficult to separate the Hindu from the Hindu by drawing a line in the map, because there is social cohesion amongst Bengali Hindus. But there is disunity amongst Hindus and Muslims. That disunity cannot be felt in all ugliness because of contiguous living, both the parties are somehow united. But if the king (British rulers) proposes to widen the gulf that exists and make both the parties independent of each other, then in course of time Hindu-Muslim exclusiveness and the intensity of mutual jealousy will be undoubtedly on the increase. In fine, in this unfortunate country it is not difficult to create disunity; the basic problem is how to achieve unity."