

# Sri Aurobindo on the Islam Problem

Let us see what Sri Aurobindo had to say on the Hindu–Muslim problem.

In the course of a conversation, a disciple observed: “There is also the question of Hindu–Muslim unity which the non-violence school is trying to solve on the basis of their theory”.

Sri Aurobindo replied: “You can live amicably with a religion whose principle is toleration. But how is it possible to live with a religion whose principle is ‘I will not tolerate?’ How are you going to have unity with these people? Certainly Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be arrived at on the basis that Muslims will go on converting Hindus while Hindus shall not convert Mohammedans. You can’t build unity on such basis. Perhaps the only way of making the Mohammedans harmless is to make them lose their faith in their religion”.<sup>1</sup>

Later he said:

“The attempt to placate the Mohammedans was a false diplomacy. Instead of trying to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity directly, if the Hindus had devoted themselves to national work, the Mohammedans would have gradually come of themselves.... This attempt to patch up a unity has given too much importance to the Muslims and it has been the root of all these troubles”.<sup>2</sup>

Again in 1923 Sri Aurobindo remarked:

“I am sorry they are making a fetish of this Hindu-Muslim unity. The best solution would be to allow the Hindus to organize themselves and the Hindu-Muslim unity would take care of itself, it would automatically solve the problem. Otherwise we are lulled into a false sense of satisfaction that we have solved a difficult problem when in fact we have only shelved it”.<sup>3</sup>

In 1926, Sri Aurobindo remarked:

“Look at Indian politicians: all ideas, ideas—they are busy with ideas. Take the Hindu-Muslim problem: I don’t know why our politicians accepted Gandhi’s Khilafat agitation. With the mentality of the ordinary Mahomedan it was bound to produce the reaction it has produced: you fed the force, it gathered power and began to make demands which the Hindu mentality had to rise up and reject. That does not require Supermind to find out, it requires common sense. Then, the Mahomedan reality and the Hindu reality began to break heads at Calcutta. (This refers to the riots in Calcutta the previous month). The leaders are busy trying to square the realities with their mental ideas instead of facing them straight”.<sup>4</sup>